

Seascape Primary School

Ellison Road, Peterlee, County Durham, SR8 5NJ

Inspection dates 5–6 March 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- From typically very low starting points, pupils achieve well. Although over time, pupils' standards leaving in Year 6 have been low, they have been and are now rising at a faster rate than nationally. Currently, pupils are on track to reach broadly average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they leave the school.
- Good and sometimes outstanding teaching has helped the majority of pupils of all abilities and groups to make at least good, and in many cases, outstanding progress over the last three years. The teaching of reading is a strength of the school.
- Typically, behaviour is good and makes a major contribution to pupils' learning and personal development.
- The headteacher, senior staff and the governing body have led the school well through a period of change that has resulted in much new staffing, raised expectations and new ways of working. Leaders and managers have successfully worked to improve pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching, and have been wholeheartedly supported by the staff.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Over time, pupils' achievement has been uneven and progress is not yet consistently outstanding.
- There has not been sufficient good or outstanding teaching over time and a small minority still requires improvement.
- Senior leaders do not yet check on the ongoing progress of groups of pupils often enough to fully identify any underachievement and ensure that timely action is taken to support their learning.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 19 classes, of which two were conducted with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors spoke to groups of pupils and to parents as they collected their children from school in the afternoon. There were insufficient responses from parents to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) to be statistically valid. Inspectors considered 35 responses to the staff questionnaire in planning the inspection.
- Meetings were held with representatives of the governing body, staff and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of school documentation, including the school's records of pupils' performance, evaluations of the quality of teaching over time and its short-and long-term plans for improvement and safeguarding procedures were scrutinised.
- An extensive scrutiny of pupils' work was carried out by inspectors.
- Inspectors listened to two groups of pupils read and checked the school's information about progress in reading.

Inspection team

Nigel Cromey-Hawke, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Deborah Bailey	Additional Inspector
Steven Horne	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are White British, with small groups of others of mixed heritage, a few of whom speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well above average and currently makes up over three-quarters of the school's population. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average.
- The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above average and currently makes up over one-quarter of the school's population.
- The number of pupils who join or leave the school partway through any year is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress
- The school provides a breakfast and after-school clubs.
- There is an independently managed children's centre on site, which is subject to a separate inspection. The school also operates a workforce crèche for its staffs' children, which is subject to a separate inspection.
- There have been a significant number of staff changes over the last two years.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further raise pupils' attainment and improve achievement by;
 - ensuring that pupils have a clear understanding of what they should be learning in lessons and that the work set helps them to make the best possible progress whatever their ability
 - ensuring that pupils are clear about the next steps in their learning through detailed feedback and the marking of their work.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that senior leaders have an accurate picture of the ongoing progress and attainment of groups of pupils across the school, so that they can better respond to the changing learning needs of these groups.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are very low compared to those typically expected. This is the case across all areas of learning but especially so in literacy and numeracy. Children make good and sometimes outstanding progress through nursery and reception. There is a strong focus upon developing basic skills and establishing clear routines for learning and behaviour which prepares children very well for the next stage in their learning.
- This good progress continues throughout Key Stages 1 and 2. Attainment at the end of Year 2 is low but rising rapidly. Overall attainment often reflects the very high proportion of pupils in Year 6 who have significant special educational needs, as was the case last year. Inspection evidence, the school's tracking data and work scrutiny show that attainment across the school is improving at a faster rate than nationally over a sustained period of time. The vast majority of pupils in the school currently are on track to meet the challenging targets the school has set and to reach broadly average levels of attainment by the time they leave the school in Year 6. The very small number of the most able pupils exceed national expectations in the progress they make.
- The teaching of reading is a strength of the school. Although the Year 1 national assessments of pupils' use of phonics (letters and sounds) to help in their reading show that the vast majority are still well below the levels typical for their age, inspection evidence and school's performance data shows that by the time pupils reach the end of Key Stage 2, this rises to broadly average levels.
- Good, and in many cases accelerated levels of progress over time can be seen in reading, writing and mathematics. This is especially so for those pupils supported by the pupil premium. Last year the very considerable number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, attained above the level of others not within this group in the school and showed higher rates of progress than nationally for this group. This pattern is typical across the school currently.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is also good. Pockets of no better than expected progress were identified with some of these pupils in Year 6 in mathematics last year. The school has responded strongly to this by restructuring staffing and reviewing its provision, the success of which is shown in the high quality of teaching and learning in this area witnessed during the inspection.
- Pupils in local authority care and those whose first language is not English also make progress in line with others in the school, as do those who join the school partway through the year. This is because of the highly structured support they receive, especially from highly skilled teaching assistants. The extensive range of support for all groups of pupils is highly effective in closing the gaps in these pupils' learning, often showing considerably accelerated learning taking place. They clearly demonstrate the school's very strong commitment to equality of opportunity.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching over time is good and currently much is outstanding. Teaching has been further improved over the last two years as a result of many changes in staffing, and extensive coaching by the senior staff to model good practice, especially in the teaching of reading and mathematics. Consequently, weaker teaching evident in some areas of the school at the time of the previous inspection has been virtually eliminated and only a very small minority still requires improvement.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good, with some that is outstanding. Excellent facilities and resources, good staffing levels and well-planned activities ensure that children enjoy their learning enormously.
- English and mathematics are taught well, with reading, writing and mathematics being the focus over the last two years. This has resulted in significantly higher rates of progress being made by pupils in these areas across the school, which has become a centre of best practice in the

teaching of reading within the local authority.

- Where pupils make very good progress in Key Stages 1 and 2, their interest is held from the start of the lesson and tasks appropriately challenge them to extend their understanding. Pupils learn at a good pace, and are often spurred on by probing questioning. Pupils' understanding is often advanced by the use of interesting tasks and activities that have a real-life application that makes the relevance of learning obvious to pupils.
- Learning is most effective where adults ensure that the objectives of a lesson are clearly understood and they then closely check on the progress being made by pupils and adapt tasks and activities to suit all pupils. Detailed feedback and marking ensure that pupils know how successful they have been and what they need to do to further improve their work. In mathematics, outstanding learning was evident as a result of rapid mental calculations being followed by pupils' explanations of the methods they had used to reach their answers. Feedback to those pupils who struggled to grasp concepts quickly cleared up any misunderstanding and pupils were given learning targets that reflected their new level of understanding.
- Less effective learning occurs where pupils are not clear about what they are doing or are doing work that is either too hard or too easy for them. Marking and feedback to pupils on their work is also sometimes variable in quality and does not always help pupils to know how well they are doing and what they have to do to move on to the next stage in their learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. It is often exemplary when they are greatly enjoying learning and during assemblies.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well, and pupils respect one another and get on very well together. As a result, the school is a warm, inclusive and harmonious community.
- Relationships between pupils and adults are good. Pupils with complex learning needs and those with personal or behavioural difficulties benefit enormously from extensive support from trained counsellors and specialists.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. There were insufficient responses to the on-line questionnaire for parents (Parent View) but those that returned school surveys clearly expressed their feelings that their children felt safe at school. This was supported by pupils' discussions with inspectors.
- Strong links with the nearby children's centre mean that children's needs when they enter school are well known and are incorporated into the school's thinking about the children in their care.
- Pupils take on a wide range of responsibilities for the running of the school, helping build their maturity, confidence and social skills. This includes acting as pupil representatives on the 'Chatty Council' to ensure that the views of pupils are heard.
- Bullying is rare and when it occurs, pupils say it is mostly name-calling. They understand the different forms of bullying and know who to go to if they have a problem. Pupils have a good understanding of e-safety across the school.
- Attendance is below average, but the school pursues absence vigorously, including using texting services to communicate with families.

The leadership and management are good

- The experienced headteacher is driving improvement through the school with energy, determination and skill. She is very well supported by the deputy headteacher and staff. Together they have considerably reshaped staffing, raised expectations and introduced new ways of working to help raise achievement. Staff morale across the school is high as the impact of these changes is shown. This was demonstrated by the almost unanimous support for the school shown through the staff survey returns, and the recognition of the value of the staff

crèche that helps recruitment and retention of staff.

- The school knows its strengths and weaknesses well and leaders check on the quality of teaching frequently, often in conjunction with other members of staff in order to share expertise. Local authority support has been light touch for the last few years but the school continues to buy-in additional support to help in their continuing drive for improvement. There are well focused, whole-school and subject development plans in place to help this happen.
- Since the previous inspection, the role of middle leaders in checking on both provision and pupils' performance has been significantly enhanced. This group is highly effective in identifying when and where pupils are falling behind and play a significant part in improving achievement. Senior leaders have not, however, retained an overview of the ongoing progress of groups of pupils, with the result that they do not always have a clear understanding of this situation and how to fully respond to any groups' changing needs.
- The school makes very good use of its pupil premium funding, providing an extensive programme of support and specialist training for teaching assistants, many of whom are being trained within the school to become qualified teachers. Professional development, especially coaching to improve the quality of teaching, is of a high quality within the school and many teachers considered this the most powerful force in raising pupils' achievement and in improving their practice.
- The breakfast club is well attended and is used by the school to help raise pupils' attendance. The after-school clubs are wide ranging and promote pupils' involvement in sport and give many of them opportunities to develop skills and activities they would not otherwise be able to access. The primary school sport funding is used to good effect here, as well as in providing staff training for specialist sports and weekly swimming sessions for Years 2 and 3 pupils.
- The curriculum is rich and varied and contributes significantly to pupils' enjoyment of their learning. The impact of this is very well monitored and enhanced by pupils' involvement in the planning of each theme or topic being studied. The curriculum supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well, with a comprehensive range of visits and visitors that especially extend pupils' experiences of different faiths and cultures.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body takes a very active interest in the school and has played an important part in its improvement. Governors ensure that safeguarding requirements are met. Under-representation by parents and the community identified at the previous inspection has been successfully addressed.
 - Governors have a good understanding of the work of the school, especially of the schools' performance in relation to national comparisons. They have held it to account well, notably over improvements needed in mathematics that have now been successful. They have supported the robust performance management used by the headteacher to bring about improvements especially in teaching and ensured that it is meaningfully linked to any increases in salary.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	133701
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	440892

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	309
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Freda Maddison
Headteacher	Yvonne Ryle
Date of previous school inspection	25 September 2012
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