

# Simonside Primary School

Glasgow Road, Jarrow, Tyne and Wear, NE32 4AU

## Inspection dates

12–13 March 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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.

- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage settle into school routines well, they learn in a warm welcoming classroom where they thrive and develop as confident learners. They make good progress due to the good teaching they receive.
- Pupils continue to make good progress across Key Stage 1. Across Key Stage 2, pupils make at least good and outstanding progress in Year 6. Standards, by the end of Year 6, are well-above average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teaching is good and sometimes outstanding. Perceptive questioning promotes pupils' learning and understanding and activities engage pupils well in lessons. Strong relationships foster pupils confidence and so they learn well. Teaching assistants support and guide the learning of pupils with specific learning needs very effectively.
- Pupils who attend the Hearing Impaired Unit make outstanding progress as their complex learning needs are well understood by staff. They are fully involved in lessons and school life.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They enjoy coming to school and have good attitudes to learning. They work and play together well and have a good understanding of how to keep safe. They say they feel safe and secure in school.
- The headteacher's drive and enthusiasm is making a positive impact on improving the school. She is very well supported by a strong team of staff and a skilful deputy headteacher. Together they are securing improvements in teaching and standards are rising. In a short period of time they have lifted the school's overall effectiveness to good.
- Governors provide good support and challenge to leaders. They have been instrumental in appointing new staff and making sure that teaching and standards are rising.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding to secure rapid progress for all pupils, particularly in Key Stage 1. Teachers' marking does not always help pupils to improve their work. Sometimes pupils' weak handwriting skills limit their progress.
- In Key Stage 1, activities do not always challenge pupils to work hard enough, especially the most able. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to investigate and solve mathematical problems.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors watched 27 lessons or parts of lessons, of which two were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Inspectors observed groups of pupils, as well as individual pupils, working with teaching assistants. They listened to Year 2 pupils read, and heard pupils in other year groups read in lessons.
- Inspectors talked to a range of pupils about their work and play in school, including the school council. They also studied a range of pupils' work across the school.
- Meetings were held with six governors as well as teaching staff, including middle leaders and the headteacher.
- Inspectors observed the overall work of the school and studied a number of documents including the school's data about pupils' current progress. They also examined documents relating to safeguarding, governance, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors took account of 10 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). They also considered the school's parent and staff questionnaires.
- Inspectors looked at school displays, its website and a range of other evidence relating to the wider work of the school.

## Inspection team

David Shearsmith, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Graeme Clarke	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- A well-above average proportion of pupils is known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which is additional funding for those pupils eligible for free school meals, children in the care of the local authority and children of service families.
- A well-above average proportion of pupils is supported through school action. An above-average proportion of pupils is supported at school action plus or has a statement of special educational needs.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The school has achieved the Healthy School status and Green Tree Eco School awards.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is taught in one Reception class and a class that also includes Year 1 pupils.
- The school has a breakfast club managed by the governing body.
- The school has a Hearing Impaired Unit for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils taught in two separate classes.
- The school appointed a new headteacher in September 2013.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching further so that more is outstanding by:
  - making sure that marking enables pupils to improve their work and reach higher standards
  - improving pupils' handwriting and presentation skills.
- Improve standards at Key Stage 1 by:
  - making sure that activities challenge pupils to work hard and reach their potential, especially the most able
  - ensuring that pupils have more opportunities to investigate and solve mathematical problems.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Achievement is good. Leaders carefully track and check the progress pupils make to ensure that no-one is underachieving. They provide extra support to ensure that anyone falling behind is supported to improve their learning. Consequently, the school ensures equality of opportunity for all pupils to achieve well.
- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are well-below what is typical for their age. They have particular weaknesses in their literacy skills. Teaching is adept at helping children to learn new skills. Children enjoy learning and make good progress; this prepares them well for their learning in Year 1.
- Pupils make good progress across Key Stage 1. By the time they leave Year 2, standards are below average overall being relatively weaker in mathematics. Although standards have been rising over time, they could be higher in all subjects. This is because activities do not always challenge all pupils to reach the higher levels in their work, especially the most able.
- Pupils make good and sometimes better progress across Key Stage 2. They make accelerated progress in Year 6 because teaching is outstanding. By the end of Year 6, standards are well-above average in reading writing and mathematics.
- The school has a good system in place for teaching phonics (sounds that letters make) and this has had a very positive impact on results in the annual reading check. In the last two years pupils reached well-above average standards. Older pupils are able to successfully apply their reading skills to deepen their understanding and knowledge.
- Pupils' literacy skills are developed well overall. However, more could be done to enhance pupils' handwriting and presentation skills.
- Across Key Stage 2, teachers challenge and extend pupils' mathematical knowledge and skills well. However, in Key Stage 1, pupils are not always sufficiently stretched in their mathematical work and there are insufficient opportunities for them to practise their skills by solving mathematical problems and investigations.
- The school makes good use of its funding for pupils supported by the pupil premium, including those known to be eligible for free school meals. They typically make good and sometimes outstanding progress across the school particularly at Key Stage 2. Teaching assistants provide flexible support through individual teaching sessions as well as targeted help in the classroom. Consequently, pupils reach standards that are two terms ahead of pupils nationally and close to their peers in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The most able make good and sometimes outstanding progress at Key Stage 2 and reach high standards in their work, particularly in mathematics. In Year 6 some pupils are on track to reach Level 6 this year. While progress for the most able is good in Key Stage 1, it could be better. This is because pupils are not given work that is sufficiently demanding to ensure they fulfil their potential.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs usually make good progress. Individual and small-group teaching generally ensures that these pupils achieve as well as their peers, particularly at Key Stage 2. Pupils make outstanding progress in the Hearing Impaired Unit. Teachers fully understand their complex needs and give them work that gets the best out of them. In the afternoons pupils are fully integrated into school life where they happily learn alongside their peers.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is typically good and sometimes outstanding. Pupils respond well to their teachers' skilful questioning that often promotes pupils' deeper understanding and progress. Pupils have good attitudes to learning because their work is usually interesting and fun.
- In the Reception class, children are typically taught in small groups for literacy and mathematics.

They benefit from this close interaction, which enables them to successfully increase their skills in these areas.

- In a Year 1 lesson pupils were thoroughly enjoying writing about the different seasons. They were highly engaged and keen to learn. Pupils had been given a helpful introduction to writing a non-fiction text. Their concentration on the task was sustained as the teacher and teaching assistant provided support to develop their writing skills during the lesson. Pupils were also given a check-list to use to ensure they had included the features of a non-fiction text. This enabled pupils to make faster progress as they understood exactly what was required of them.
- For the most part, carefully planned work enables pupils to make the best progress that they can. However, in Key Stage 1, when activities do not challenge pupils, including the most able, to work hard enough, their learning slows.
- In a mathematics lesson in Year 6, pupils were challenged to tackle very difficult problems involving multiplication. Pupils responded exceptionally well to the challenges and quickly warmed into rapidly solving the problems. They were able to confidently explain their thinking when challenged. They were also very competent at applying different methods of multiplication. However, in Key Stage 1, pupils do not have enough chances to investigate and solve number problems to extend their skills.
- In a Year 3 writing lesson, pupils were retelling a story. Having previously planned their story they were now redrafting it using their plan. Most pupils made good progress during the lesson. Some pupils, however, were hindered by weak handwriting skills and this slowed their learning and progress. Weaker handwriting skills are a feature for some pupils in all classes.
- Pupils' presentation skills, particularly in mathematics where they mix up columns in their calculations, inhibit some pupils' learning and progress across the school.
- Pupils welcome their work being marked so they know how to improve. Teachers typically mark pupils' work diligently. Comments on how to improve are not always targeted well enough to enable pupils to reach the next level in their work. Some teachers give pupils the opportunity to improve their work, but this is not always the case and this slows pupils' learning and progress.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- Pupils' behaviour is good. They behave well over time in this organised school. Pupils enjoy coming to school to work and play with their friends. They are supported at playtimes and lunchtimes by 'playground buddies' who help them to play harmoniously with their friends. Prefects are also keen to take on responsibility and support the work of the school.
- Movement around the school is good with pupils being well-mannered and courteous at all times. They sit and listen attentively in assembly and respond well to their teachers. Pupils are well-behaved in the dining hall. They enjoy playing outside with a range of equipment at playtimes.
- Pupils' attendance is now average, as the school has put rigorous systems in place to ensure pupils attend well. The school's learning mentor has been instrumental in improving attendance by working with parents and rewarding pupils for good attendance.
- Pupils conduct themselves well in lessons and when discussing their learning with staff. They enjoy working with partners in discussions and as groups when they have problems to solve together. Pupils enjoy the school's breakfast club which gives them a good start to their day.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered well across the school. Leaders make sure that pupils develop a good understanding of right and wrong and are developing the pupils' growing awareness of other cultures. Pupils have many opportunities through the school's curriculum for personal development.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe is good. Pupils have pertinent opportunities, through the school's curriculum, to recognise how to manage risk in different situations. They know about fire and road safety and have a good understanding of how to keep safe on the internet.
- The school's records show that bullying is rare. Pupils confirm that if it does occur that members of staff will support them in resolving it. Leaders make sure that it give due regard to anti-

bullying, with regular discussions about what constitutes bullying and different types of bullying. Consequently, pupils are very knowledgeable about this.

- The school is very diligent in ensuring pupils are safe and secure at school with good systems in place. Governors give it due regard investing in fencing and ensuring that safeguarding procedures are followed.

## **The leadership and management** are good

- The new, highly motivated headteacher has quickly established how well the school is doing and has a very accurate picture of its strengths and weaknesses. She is very well supported by a strong team of teachers and a skilful deputy headteacher. Within a short period of time they have already improved the quality of teaching and standards are continuing to rise.
- Middle leaders who are responsible for subject areas provide good support in their subjects. They check on the quality of work in pupils' books as well as helping to improve the quality of teaching and raising standards. The school's plans to improve are clear and are based on a very accurate understanding of the school's performance and its priorities.
- The school uses performance management effectively to improve the work of the school. Teachers have clear targets for improvement based on school priorities as well as their own training needs. Teachers are rewarded appropriately for their work in the classroom as well as any leadership responsibilities they may have.
- The school's curriculum provides extensive opportunities for pupils to develop their skills. There are, however, not enough chances for pupils in Key Stage 1 to solve mathematical problems. More could be done to enhance pupils' handwriting and presentations skills across the school. The school offers a whole range of activities during and after school to enrich pupils' learning. Sport is important in the school. Pupils participate in a wide range of activities out of school including competitive sporting events and the school also hosts some local events.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, and social development is strong. Pupils enjoy a diverse range of musical and creative experiences which enrich their learning. The school has links with schools in other countries and this is contributing to pupils' cultural experience.
- Leaders are very keen to engage with parents and welcome every opportunity to involve them in the school's work. Family learning events are held regularly. The school makes sure that staff are readily available to talk to parents.
- The school works with a range of partners and particularly with those that support pupils with specific needs from the local authority. It also links with a range of other partners to support pupils' wider learning needs particularly in sport, where pupils access a wide range of physical activities.
- The local authority gives good support to the school. It has provided school reviews and other activities that have contributed to its on-going improvement.
- Safeguarding meets requirements as the school gives due regard to pupils' health, well-being and safety.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors have a wide range of experiences which they use to good effect to support the work of the school. They have attended various training events to further their skills. Governors have been instrumental in appointing new staff to enhance the school. They know the school well and understand its key strengths and how it needs to develop further. They are keenly aware of the need to improve their skills further and support and challenge the school to do even better. They have a good understanding of the school's data as the headteacher provides thorough information about the school in her reports. They know about the quality of teaching from observing lessons and about the overall work of the school from 'learning walks' and discussions with staff. Consequently, they understand how the pupil premium funding has been spent and its impact on pupils' progress. They manage the school's budget well. The primary school sport funding has been spent wisely to increase pupils' participation and teachers' skills in delivering physical education lessons. Performance

management has been used appropriately with governors rewarding teachers for their endeavours in the classroom when targets have been achieved.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	108698
<b>Local authority</b>	South Tyneside
<b>Inspection number</b>	430933

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	184
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Layla Hassan
<b>Headteacher</b>	Harriet Bland
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 March 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 4898315
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