

Grangetown Primary School

St George's Road, Grangetown, Middlesbrough, TS6 7JA

Inspection dates 19–20 March 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils' achievement is not high enough. Children do not get off to a rapid start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and progress is not fast enough in Key Stage 1.
- Teaching is not consistently good or better over time, as activities are not always sufficiently challenging for all pupils or provide enough interest for boys, so they can make faster progress and reach a higher standard in their work.
- Pupils are not given clear advice on how to improve their work when it is marked so they can learn from their own mistakes and reach higher levels in their work.
- Pupils' skills in spelling, punctuation, handwriting and grammar are not good enough to help them write fluently and accurately.
- Standards in English at Key Stage 1 are not high enough. Pupils have weak phonic knowledge (understanding the sounds that letters make) and the teaching of reading and writing is not challenging enough to ensure that pupils reach a higher standard.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have weak literacy skills. They do not have enough opportunities to develop their reading and writing skills in lessons, small-group activities and through play.

The school has the following strengths

- The new headteacher's drive and rigorous approach to improving the school is improving teaching and driving up standards.
- A skilful deputy headteacher and the middle leaders have supported this drive for improving teaching and morale in the school is high.
- Accelerated progress in Year 6 has ensured that standards are now broadly average at the end of Key Stage 2. Progress in mathematics is good and standards are rising across the school, owing to better teaching in mathematics.
- Pupils' behaviour is good as they enjoy coming to school. They are courteous, well-mannered and work well in lessons. They have a good understanding of how to keep safe and know about different types of bullying.
- Governors provide good support and challenge and are very committed to the school. They have made good strategic decisions regarding the appointment of new staff and this has strengthened the quality of teaching and is helping to raise standards.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors watched 28 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 three governors as well as teaching staff, including middle leaders and the headteacher. The inspector also met with a representative of the local authority.
- 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 were unable to take into account the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) as there were too few responses. They did, however, consider the school's parent, pupil 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. A well-above average proportion of pupils is supported at school action plus or has a statement of special educational need.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The school has achieved the Healthy School status, Anti-Bullying Charter and Leading Aspect award for behaviour management.
- 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 a Reception and a Nursery class that share the same indoor and outdoor learning areas.
- The school has a breakfast club managed by the governing body.
- The school has a specially resourced learning support base, with 15 places, where some pupils are taught alongside other pupils who transfer from nearby schools.
- The school has a resourced provision (the early intervention support base) which offers places for 10 pupils (or more if part-time) whose misbehaviour puts them at risk of being excluded from schools in the locality.
- The school appointed a new headteacher in September 2012.
- There have been a number of staff changes since the last inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that it is consistently good or better by:
 - ensuring that activities challenge all pupils, including boys, to reach higher standards in their work
 - improving pupils' spelling, punctuation, handwriting and grammar skills so they can write more efficiently and effectively
 - ensuring that all teachers follow the school's new system for marking and that in all classes pupils are given time to think about their teachers' comments and improve their work.
- Improve standards in English at Key Stage 1 and children's literacy skills in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - improving the teaching of reading, writing and phonic knowledge (understanding the sounds letters make), so that pupils learn to read and write more quickly
 - ensuring that children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have more opportunities for developing their reading and writing skills in lessons, small-group activities and through play.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement as standards in English at Key Stage 1 are not high enough. Pupils' progress picks up in some classes and then slows in others. Consequently, pupils do not reach the standards they are capable of by the end of Key Stage 1.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage do not get a good enough grounding in developing their reading, writing and phonic knowledge (understanding the sounds that letters make) to prepare them for Key Stage 1.
- 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 and personal and social development. Settling them into learning is done well, so that they are ready to learn and they make good progress in their personal development. Overall they make expected progress in all other areas, although better than this in speaking and listening. Their skills are still below average by the time they leave the Reception class.
- Pupils make expected and occasionally good progress through Key Stage 1. Standards have been rising over time, but they are still below and sometimes well-below average, particularly in English, by the end of the key stage. Tasks set do not sufficiently challenge pupils to work at higher levels in reading and writing. In 2013, leaders quickly picked up on the weak performance in the national screening check for phonics in Year 1 and introduced a new systematic approach that is beginning to make a difference. Pupils now have better skills and are on track to perform closer to the national average this year. Standards in mathematics are higher, as teaching is now more consistent.
- Pupils continue to make at least expected progress across Key Stage 2, and in this key stage the number of pupils making good progress is increasing. They make accelerated progress in Year 6 in reading, writing and, particularly, in mathematics. They reach standards that are broadly average by the time they leave the school. However, pupils' performance in the spelling, grammar and punctuation test was well-below average at the end of Key Stage 2. These aspects of writing are not taught well enough across the school and restrict pupils' fluency.
- Boys do not perform as well as girls, as they are insufficiently challenged. Girls outperform boys. Boys reach standards that are below the national average at both key stages. Leaders are aware of this and are taking good steps to improve boys' performance across the school.
- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, typically make expected and sometimes good progress across the school, particularly at Key Stage 2. As a result, these pupils reach standards that are close to those of similar pupils nationally and half a term ahead of their peers in reading, writing and mathematics overall.
- The most able pupils make expected and sometimes better progress at Key Stage 2, particularly in mathematics. Some are on track to reach the highest level in mathematics by the end of this school year. In Key Stage 1, the most able pupils make expected progress, but are not always challenged to reach high enough levels, particularly in reading and writing.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs usually make good progress. Progress is stronger across Key Stage 2, with pupils reaching standards close to those of similar pupils nationally. Pupils in both the resource bases make good progress. Teachers have a good understanding of pupils' needs and provide learning tasks that get the best out of them. In the afternoons, these pupils are integrated into school life where they make progress similar to that of their peers.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Although teaching is improving, it still requires improvement as it is not yet consistently good over time. Aspects of good teaching vary from class to class. For instance, the school has agreed on new ways of marking, but this is not always carried out well throughout the school.

- Work in pupils' books and the checks that the school carries out show that on occasions expectations are not high enough of what pupils can achieve and this results in pupils not reaching a high enough standard in their work.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have weak literacy skills as there are too few opportunities for them to develop their reading and writing skills by practising these on a daily basis, including when they choose to play. The daily sessions in phonics have improved, but have not yet had an impact on children's understanding and their acquisition of these skills to ensure that they make good progress.
- Pupils' spelling and grammatical skills are weak across the school. In a Years 1/2 writing lesson on description, pupils' progress was slowed because they were not confident enough to apply these skills as they put down their ideas on paper. While the pupils have been taught the skills they need, they have not been given enough time or opportunities to become confident in using them.
- In all classes, weak handwriting skills often hamper pupils' opportunities to deepen their understanding of different types of writing. For example, in a Year 5 lesson on writing a persuasive letter, pupils' lack of fluency in writing, including their handwriting, lessened their enjoyment in the task and their learning slowed. Work in books typically shows that pupils do not always produce sufficient writing owing to this weakness.
- Where boys are challenged to write and are highly engaged, they make typically outstanding progress. In a Year 6 writing lesson, for example, boys were keen to write instructions about how to journey through a labyrinth. The boys' learning was deepened as the work was exciting and demanded that everyone worked to a high level. This is not typically seen however. Boys do not always make good progress, as they are not sufficiently challenged or interested in their tasks and their concentration fades.
- Pupils benefit from a new lesson-planning system that the school has put in place which ensures that pupils make better progress because lessons are modified daily to deepen their understanding. Pupils typically respond well to the sharpness of teachers' questioning that makes pupils think more. They are keen to learn when teachers provide stimulating and exciting activities that motivate and accelerate their learning and progress, as is often the case in mathematics.
- The new system for marking work is effective and where it is applied, it helps pupils to understand their mistakes and make faster progress. It is not applied consistently in all classes and so not all pupils have the benefit of learning from their mistakes and improving their work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They enjoy coming to school and work and play harmoniously. They cooperate in lessons and readily share ideas about their work. They have good attitudes to learning as the school has a strong emphasis on this. Pupils work hard. In some classes they produce a lot of work. Pupils demonstrate sustained thinking and persevere with problems and tasks set, particularly in Key Stage 2.
- Pupils are very orderly as they move around this large school building, whether supervised or on their own. They are courteous, polite and well-mannered and have respect for adults and each other. They enjoy taking responsibility for various tasks around the school which help develop them as caring citizens.
- At playtimes, all pupils are happy to participate and enjoy the equipment provided by the school to enable them to engage in various activities. The school is currently training some 'playground buddies' to further support others at playtimes and dinnertimes. Pupils enjoy a healthy school meal and relate well to each other in the dining hall. They also benefit from a good start to their day in the school's breakfast club. Pupils in the two resource bases are included in school life, wherever possible.
- Attendance is improving and is now below average after a period of being very low. The school has developed a wide range of strategies, including rewards, to ensure that pupils are punctual and attend well. The pastoral manager leads the school's drive for improving attendance and is

having a very positive impact by working with parents to make sure pupils attend well.

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. It has made pupils' understanding of how to keep safe a priority. Pupils have many opportunities to experience a variety of activities in order to learn how to manage risk in a wide range of situations. Pupils have a good understanding about fire and water safety and how to keep safe on the Internet.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school. They also say that there is very little bullying in school and that if it does arise, they are very confident that staff will sort it out. The school has a very strong commitment to ensure that pupils do not experience bullying. They have 'anti-bullying ambassadors' who support pupils avoiding bullying and resolve any problems.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher is relentless in his drive for improvement and is passionate for pupils to achieve well. This drive is raising standards and improving teaching in a relatively short period of time. He is supported by a skilful deputy headteacher who has focused on improving teaching through direct support. Together they have eradicated the weakest teaching and increased the amount of good and better teaching so that the school is set to improve even further.
- Middle leaders have also played a pivotal role in developing teachers' subject knowledge and ability to teach particular subjects. The subject leader for mathematics has a good knowledge of her subject. She provides valuable support and guidance as well as being a proficient classroom practitioner. As a result, the teaching of mathematics has improved across the school.
- Leaders use performance management to good effect and this has contributed to improvements in all aspects of the school's work. Where teachers reach their targets, they are rewarded appropriately for their work in the classroom and as a leader.
- A new system for tracking pupils' progress, alongside meetings to discuss any pupils who are falling behind, is ensuring that all pupils make better progress. It also informs the school on what it needs to do to improve further. Well-constructed plans to improve the school show that leaders know what needs to be done. There are regular reviews to ensure that improvements are effective. The school has initiated many good changes which are beginning to have a positive effect.
- The school's curriculum provides rich and varied activities both in and out of school time, but does not always promote boys' achievement sufficiently well. Visits and visitors enhance the school's work. The school provides an increasing amount of sporting activities by using their own sports coach and a teacher who takes lessons in the afternoon. Recent improvements to the teaching of reading, writing and phonics have not yet had sufficient time to impact on standards, but progress is picking up rapidly.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is enhanced by the school's commitment to ensuring that pupils get regular lessons which promote their personal development. Pupils get access to good quality music lessons and cultural events that promote their understanding of other cultures.
- The school has a good relationship with parents. It provides breakfast mornings in the Early Years Foundation Stage, curriculum afternoons and 'Let's Cook Together' sessions to involve parents in their child's education. This is helping pupils to attend school more regularly and to work hard in lessons.
- The school links with a good range of partners that provide good support for pupils with specific needs. A strong partnership with 13 other schools is helping the school to use a wide range of expertise to support further improvements in the school.
- The leaders of the school get good support from officers of the local authority, who are increasingly confident that the school is moving forward.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors know the school well as they visit the school often and are given valuable information by the headteacher. They have a wide range of experience and skills and are well-trained. They participate in 'learning walks' to further understand the school's work and look at

work in books and talk to teachers. They have a good understanding of the school's data. They appreciate that teaching needs to develop further and that despite pupils' improved progress standards still need to rise. Since the previous inspection they tenaciously appointed a new headteacher whom they have supported in appointing new staff. They have developed a pupil premium committee which is enabling them to use the pupil premium effectively to improve outcomes for these pupils. Finances are used effectively. The primary sport funding has improved skills in teaching physical education and increased the number of pupils participating in various sporting activities. Performance management is used judiciously and governors reward only those teachers who achieve their targets.

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	111647
Local authority	Redcar and Cleveland
Inspection number	430922

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	201
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Campbell
Headteacher	Jason Murgatroyd
Date of previous school inspection	13 March 2012
Telephone number	01642 455278
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