

# Bloemfontein Primary School

The Middles, Craghead, Stanley, Durham, DH9 6AG

**Inspection dates** 2–3 April 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	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.

- Pupils' achievement is good. From well-below average starting points, by the end of Year 6 pupils reach standards that are at the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teaching and pupils' learning and progress are generally good and some is outstanding, particularly between Year 2 and Year 6.
- Teaching assistants are well trained; they work closely with teachers and give good quality support to help all pupils achieve well.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils behave well in classrooms and around the school. They are kind and considerate with each other, which creates a warm and welcoming atmosphere in the school.
- Good pastoral care makes this a safe and happy school. Pupils say they feel safe and the majority of their parents agree that their children are safe in school.
- The well-planned curriculum provides good opportunities for pupils to extend their basic skills and enjoy memorable learning experiences.
- Senior leaders and governors have worked effectively to raise pupils' achievement and improve teaching in recent years. They have made accurate evaluations of the school's weaknesses and have acted promptly to enlist support to tackle these quickly.
- Governors are knowledgeable about the school and many visit regularly to check on its work. They are highly supportive and eager to help the school continue to improve.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Progress is slower in the Reception class and Year 1. As a result, a significant minority do not reach the expected level in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 1.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 11 lessons or parts of lessons, three of which were observed jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Discussions were held with the Chair, and other members, of the Governing Body, senior and middle leaders, staff and pupils.
- The inspector observed the school at work and looked at a range of documentation, including that relating to the school's safeguarding policies and procedures, information about pupils' progress and attainment and the school's own evaluation of its performance and development plan.
- The inspector examined work in pupils' books and listened to pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 read.
- There were insufficient responses to the online questionnaire Parent View. The inspector took account of the school's recent parent survey when conducting the inspection, and of 23 questionnaires returned by staff.

## Inspection team

Moira Fitzpatrick, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is above average. The pupil premium provides additional funding for those pupils who are eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is above average; so, too, is the proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The vast majority of pupils are from White British heritage, and no pupil speaks English as an additional language.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6.

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

- Improve learning and progress and thereby raise standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 1 by:
  - sharing the good planning practice that already exists in the school, so that children and pupils in Reception and Year 1 are provided with the right level of challenge and support to help them make consistently good progress, especially in reading, writing and mathematics
  - providing teachers and teaching assistants with training to improve their checks on pupils' learning, so they are more alert to when they are ready to move on in lessons
  - providing further training for teachers and teaching assistants so that they teach the recently introduced early reading programme more effectively and help the younger pupils to improve their listening skills

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the Reception class with skills that are well below those typical for their age. Each year a large proportion of children join with low language and communication skills. By the time they start Year 1 only about one third reach the expected level for their age and are ready for learning the National Curriculum.
- Progress across the school is good, and it accelerates rapidly from Year 2 onwards. Inspection evidence indicates that the significant improvement in pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics in 2013 will be repeated this year, and that pupils at the end of Year 2 will reach the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Inspection evidence and school data indicate that pupils in Year 6 are on course to exceed last year's results in reading, writing and mathematics, with a greater proportion reaching the higher Levels 5 and 6 than formerly.
- The recently introduced programme to teach letters and the sounds they represent (phonics) is still embedding as staff establish routines and expectations. In Reception and Year 1 progress is slower than in other classes. In part, this is because pupils' listening skills are not good enough to help them to begin to understand what they read.
- Elsewhere in the school, reading develops quickly because of the regular timetabled slots for reading each day and teachers' expectations that pupils will read frequently. By Year 6, pupils read fluently and with good understanding.
- The most able pupils benefit from an increasing level of challenge as they move through the school. Teachers make regular checks on their progress in lessons and provide timely advice and guidance that pushes their learning on further. By Year 6, the most able have additional sessions to improve their mathematics and writing. A group of four pupils recently delighted their parents, teachers and themselves by winning the Mathematics Challenge at a local secondary school.
- Pupils who are eligible for free school meals are supported to make similar progress to their peers. However, because they usually join Year 2 with lower levels of attainment than their classmates, a gap in attainment still exists. In 2013, the in-school attainment gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and other pupils was a little wider than the gap seen nationally and was also wider than the in school gap in 2012. In part this was due to the fact that pupils not eligible for free school meals reached higher standards in 2013 than they did in 2012. However, current school data shows that the gap is narrowing and all pupils are doing better than they were at the time of the previous inspection.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are supported well by teaching assistants to make similar progress to their peers. In 2013, those supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs made significantly better progress than their peers nationally by the end of Year 6. Overall, the school promotes equality well.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Improvements to the quality of teaching have had a positive effect on pupils' progress and achievement since the previous inspection.
- Pupils of all abilities in Year 2 made excellent progress when writing instructions for how to decorate an Easter egg. They had been well prepared through designing and drawing what their egg would look like. This helped them to work out the correct order for instructions and check if they had included everything. Decorating their eggs later in the day completed the activity and brought great pleasure to the pupils who were delighted with their own and other's results. Such links between topics are frequent and do much to consolidate pupils' developing skills and their enjoyment of learning.
- Pupils' learning mostly benefits from well-pitched tasks which allow them to work at just the right level, so they are able to work at a good rate. Year 6 pupils made good progress in

calculating the area of different shapes, and were quickly moved on to more challenging work when it was clear they had mastered the first level. This motivated them to work harder to show what more they could do.

- Pupils' work is marked regularly and comments tell pupils where they have achieved well and what they can do to improve further. In the best examples, time is routinely given to allow pupils to make improvements.
- Sometimes, in Reception and Year 1, activities are not planned in enough detail to take account of the range of abilities in each class. When this is the case, children do not make the good progress seen at other times. They either lose interest or finish their work too quickly without moving on to the next step in their learning. Teachers' knowledge of what pupils can already do is not always as sharp as it could be and, occasionally, pupils repeat work they can already do. The result is that by the end of Year 1, a larger than expected proportion is below where they could be in their basic skills. Senior leaders have enlisted the support of local authority advisers to accelerate progress with weaknesses.
- Teaching assistants are used well and they carefully guide pupils' learning. The work of some teaching assistants is of an exceptionally high quality as a result of good planning and shared objectives with teacher colleagues. Teaching assistants know their pupils well and are effective in helping them make the same good progress as their peers.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They manage their own behaviour well in and out of the classroom and in the playground. School records show that this is typically the case over time.
- Pupils' good, and sometimes excellent, attitudes to learning make most lessons move at a good rate. Pupils are eager to start on tasks; they follow teachers' instructions well so that they make a prompt start and work hard to please their teachers. Occasionally, pupils, and children in the Reception class lose concentration when work does not interest them or explanations are not clear.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Staff show a genuine concern for pupils' well-being. They know pupils well and quickly spot when they may need extra support. Prompt action and well-thought-out strategies for individual pupils help them to keep up with their classmates.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, including on the internet. They say that bullying is rare. They have a good understanding of the different types of bullying and are confident that staff would tackle it quickly should it occur.
- Older pupils willingly take on responsibilities, such as caring for younger pupils and working on the school council to improve the school.
- Good pastoral care and supportive links with parents mean that pupils whose circumstances might put them at risk of becoming vulnerable are well supported to overcome barriers and make the same good progress as their friends.
- Pupils' attendance dipped in 2013. This was mainly due the impact of a persistent absence matter that has now been resolved. Consequently, current levels of attendance are back up to the broadly average levels seen in 2012.
- Parents strongly agree that their children are safe and happy in school.

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

- Senior leaders have successfully led improvements to teaching and pupils' achievement since the previous inspection.
- Good systems are used to check pupils' progress and action is taken where pupils' progress slows. This is helping to close the gap in attainment between pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium and others. Senior leaders recognise that raising the attainment of these and other

groups of pupils by the end of Year 1 will help to close this gap more quickly.

- Senior and middle leaders make regular checks on how well the school is doing, so they know the strengths and weaknesses well. They use information from these checks to set appropriate targets for further improvement, for example to what is provided in the Reception class, so that the school continues to improve its overall effectiveness.
- Senior leaders carry out regular checks on the quality of teaching and learning, which provide an accurate view of its quality. Where improvements are needed, teachers are being provided with support from within the school and from local authority advisers. Salary progression is linked to pupils' progress.
- The curriculum is well planned to link pupils' learning across subjects. Since the last inspection this has helped improve pupils' progress and achievement in reading, writing and mathematics because they have good opportunities to practise these skills regularly. In Reception, sometimes planning lacks a clear learning purpose for activities, so that children do not always benefit as much as they might from activities.
- The primary sport funding is being used to involve more pupils in after-school sports activities. For example, a large group of Reception children thoroughly enjoyed their introduction to football skills in an after-school session.
- The local authority is providing expert and effective support to help the school improve identified weaknesses quickly.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body is effective. Governors share the ambition and determination to improve the school further. They are well informed about all aspects of the school's work and are due to have update training on how to use school performance data. They monitor the school's performance and challenge the school over weaknesses. Governors are knowledgeable about the quality of teaching and what the school is doing to improve this. They hold teachers to account for pupils' progress and award pay increases for good teaching. Governors oversee the spending of additional pupil premium and are aware of the positive impact this is having on pupils' achievement. They ensure that all safeguarding requirements are met.

## 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>	114034
<b>Local authority</b>	Durham
<b>Inspection number</b>	442235

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>	124
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Tracy Davinson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Diane Abbott
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 December 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01207 232198
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