

# Ellington First School

Warkworth Drive, Ellington, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 5HL

**Inspection dates** 7–8 May 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school.

- The headteacher and teaching staff are uncompromising in their continual and successful drive to provide outstanding academic and personal development for all pupils.
- Pupils' achievement is outstanding due to the rapid progress they make from generally below average starting points. By the end of Year 4, they reach standards that are well above the expectations for their age.
- Teaching over time is outstanding. Lessons are extremely well planned and teaching meets the needs of all groups of pupils.
- Teachers' skilful use of questioning and their development of pupils' vocabulary help all to learn quickly.
- Highly skilled teaching assistants provide excellent support, both in and out of lessons, enabling those pupils who have specific needs to make fast progress.
- Pupils behave extremely well in lessons and around school. They feel safe in school and are respectful towards each other and adults.
- Parents speak highly of the school's ability to keep their children safe and happy.
- The school provides a curriculum that meets the needs of the pupils extremely well. It is highly motivating, widens pupils' opportunities and enables them to learn outside the classroom.
- All work is marked regularly although the guidance that is given is not always as helpful as it could be.
- Very strong leadership and governance means that the school has maintained the high standards of teaching and achievement seen at the time of the previous inspection.
- Governors are highly supportive and ambitious for the school. They ensure resources, including the pupil premium, are used well so that they contribute to the excellent achievement of the pupils.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 11 lessons, one of which was a joint observation with the headteacher. In addition, the inspection team observed groups of pupils working with teaching assistants and listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors talked to a range of pupils about their work and play.
- The inspectors met with the Chair of the Governing Body, teaching staff, the deputy headteacher, headteacher, and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspection team took account of 36 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) when planning the inspection, and examined staff questionnaires. The inspectors also talked with parents as they dropped off their children at school for a residential trip.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school and looked at a number of documents, including the school's data about pupils' current progress. They also looked at documents relating to safeguarding, governance, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors looked at a range of other evidence including school displays, the website, and evidence representing the school's wider work and achievements beyond the classroom.

## Inspection team

Lucie Stephenson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Ann Muxworthy

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a first school that is smaller than the average-sized primary school. There is a greater proportion of boys in school than girls.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support through pupil premium funding is below average. The pupil premium funding is additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is just above average.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage with almost no pupils believed to speak English as an additional language.
- The school provides breakfast and after-school clubs that are managed by the governing body and the provision in which was part in this inspection.
- Nursery education is provided in the school.
- The school has achieved the Basic Skills Quality Mark, Healthy School's status and Active Mark.

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

- Provide pupils with every opportunity to reach even higher standards of attainment by making sure that teachers' marking is more focused on helping pupils to refine and improve their work further and that pupils have sufficient time to respond to advice and make the suggested improvements.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Pupils' achievement is outstanding, both academically and personally. Their needs are identified early and tailored support is used highly effectively to ensure rapid progress. Consequently, their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics are above the expectations for their age at the end of Year 4.
- Children join the school in the Nursery class with skills and knowledge that are below those typical for their age. They make fast progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and are well prepared for their start in Year 1.
- At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is broadly in line with the national average and by the time pupils leave school at the end of Year 4, their attainment has risen even higher and is firmly above expectations for their age.
- The high-quality teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) has a very positive impact on the progress pupils make in their reading. Consequently, as pupils move up through the school, they read widely, and to a high standard, in a range of subjects.
- Pupils acquire knowledge rapidly because they are offered many worthwhile and varied activities that stimulate their interest and prompt their curiosity and exploration. The basic skills in literacy and numeracy are woven through these activities and have a strong presence in the Nursery and Reception classes.
- Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals reach similar standards to other pupils. At the end of Key Stage 1 in 2013, for example, the in-school attainment gap in reading and mathematics was much narrower than the gap seen nationally, although it was similar to the national gap in writing. By the end of Year 4, all groups of pupils exceed age-related expectations.
- Over time, those pupils who have been identified as having a special educational need or disability have notably shown outstanding progress from their starting points. The impact of extra support from early on, and excellent support from highly skilled teaching assistants, are key factors in driving this strong progress.
- The most able pupils make excellent progress from their starting points because the work they are given challenges them to do their very best. By Year 4, they are achieving well above age-related expectations.
- A range of different subjects provide excellent opportunities to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills to a high standard and this is evident across the school, from the Nursery to Year 4.

### The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Teaching over time is outstanding because teachers have high expectations. Very detailed planning, that lead to tasks that challenge all groups, means that all pupils make rapid and sustained progress.
- Highly inclusive, positive relationships and a vibrant environment, contribute to a very stimulating and exciting atmosphere for learning across the whole school.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is highly effective in developing children's speaking and listening skills. Topics are carefully chosen to interest and engage the children, increase their vocabulary, and extend their knowledge and understanding of the world; such well-organised and interesting activities, coupled with superb teaching, leads to rapid progress.
- Skilful questioning and oral feedback is a notable feature of teaching at this school and ensures that pupils are interested and engaged. This has a very positive impact on pupils' achievement and behaviour for learning.
- Pupils are often involved in solving problems and investigating which helps to extend their learning. In Year 3, for example, pupils made outstanding progress in an imaginative session

exploring ways to construct a sarcophagus. In the Nursery class, gift bags containing 'surprises' created much awe and wonder as the children delighted in their learning.

- Highly-skilled teaching assistants provide top-quality support that develops pupils' learning and skills, particularly in literacy and numeracy, and also supports the development of pupils' social skills. This not only leads to rapid learning but also promotes pupils' well-being.
- Teachers diligently mark pupils' work, making very positive comments; this builds and supports pupils' confidence. However, not all comments enable pupils to achieve higher levels in their work and they are not always given sufficient opportunity to make further improvements to their work.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to this highly inclusive, caring community school, where every pupil is valued as an individual. The school is uncompromising in ensuring that the personal needs of the pupils are extremely well catered for; pupils' welfare is at the heart of the school's work.
- There is a genuine love of learning. The headteacher's motivating presence throughout the school, engaging with the children in their learning, has a very positive impact on the behaviour and exemplary attitudes of all.
- The school has robust systems in place to promote and increase levels of attendance and punctuality. Consequently, attendance has improved and, in the current school year, pupils' attendance is well above the national average.
- Pupils are extremely keen to take on roles and responsibilities in school and enjoy applying and being interviewed for buddy positions. They wear their buddy coats with pride and enjoy helping others. Pupils are also proud to wear their school uniform and look smart.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Parents are in agreement that this is a happy, safe school and feel proud to be members of the school community.
- Pupils recognise the different forms of bullying. They say that bullying is extremely rare and is usually restricted to occasional name-calling, which is dealt with quickly and effectively by staff.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a great strength of the school. Pupils are extremely well mannered and supportive of one another and have a very clear understanding of right and wrong. The breakfast and after-school clubs well to the well-being of those pupils involved.

### **The leadership and management are outstanding**

- The headteacher is passionate and whole-heartedly committed to the school and the needs of the pupils. He is supported extremely well by the deputy headteacher and a dedicated team of staff.
- Outstanding teaching and learning are driven by a supportive leadership team who engage positively with all staff to move improvements forward. This continual drive for ongoing improvement has led to outstanding teaching and outcomes for pupils over time.
- Middle leaders are a very committed, strong team of staff, who provide excellent support to senior leaders and help staff to keep standards high.
- The excellent curriculum provides countless opportunities that enrich children's well-being as well as boosting their academic achievements. A wide range of out-of-school activities supports the school's continual drive for further improvement, and enhance and extend pupils' opportunities. For example, pupils in Year 4 particularly look forward to their residential visit to 'Ford Castle' where they learn different outdoor adventure skills.
- School leaders and staff display a strong commitment to ensuring that all pupils receive equality of opportunity. The curriculum and other activities on offer are particularly effective at meeting pupils' needs and interests and also serve to broaden their horizons. Consequently, pupils

achieve well, are extremely interested and involved in their work and no one falls behind.

- Safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural experiences are extensive and underpin their personal development. Strong links with the local community provide pupils with an excellent understanding of their locality and its history.
- The local authority provides light-touch support to this outstanding school.
- The pupil premium is allocated effectively to focus on the literacy, numeracy, and personal development of eligible pupils through a range of support activities. As a result, the progress made by pupils eligible for support through this funding is excellent.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The experienced governing body has a wide range of skills, which enables it to support and challenge the school extremely well. Governors are well trained and are very ambitious for the school and its pupils.
  - Governors are very effective at monitoring the school's performance. They check data and undertake regular visits to the school, so they know about the quality of teaching and pupils' progress.
  - The governing body manages its finances efficiently and rewards staff appropriately. They ensure that the pupil premium funding is used very effectively to ensure the best possible outcomes for pupils who are eligible for support.

## 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>	122198
<b>Local authority</b>	Northumberland
<b>Inspection number</b>	443808

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.

<b>Type of school</b>	First
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–9
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	200
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Barry Nelson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kevin Vardy
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	20 October 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01670 860769
<b>Fax number</b>	01670 862940
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