

Parkhead Community Primary School

Park Lane, Winlaton, Blaydon-on-Tyne, Tyne and Wear, NE21 6LT

Inspection dates 25–26 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	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.

- The excellent vision and determination of the headteacher has led to considerable progress since the previous inspection, in the drive to eradicate past underachievement.
- Good teaching with occasional elements of splendid thought-provoking practice enables all pupils to achieve well.
- Children enter the Nursery and make good progress from their below typical starting points. This good progress continues through the school to enable pupils to reach average standards by the time they end Year 6.
- Pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs progress as well as their classmates because they receive the right sort of help.
- Pupils' behaviour in classrooms and around school is good. Their above average attendance reflects their high levels of enjoyment of school.
- The interesting range of first-hand experiences which are provided meet pupils' varied needs well. The good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development successfully underpins their good personal development.
- Good and sometimes high-quality care and support ensures that all pupils can feel safe, thrive and achieve well.
- The headteacher and the governing body form a strong team. Their decisive actions have had a positive impact improving the quality of teaching and learning.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Now and again opportunities are missed to add to the demands made of pupils, be imaginative when shaping tasks to capture pupils' interest, practise essential skills and precisely scrutinise pupils' progress and achievement.
- Work is not always adapted quickly enough, when it is too easy or too hard, to enable pupils' thinking to be constantly stretched and their understanding deepened.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 22 lessons, including seven paired observations and work scrutiny carried out with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. In addition, they made a number of short visits to lessons and undertook learning walks around the school in order to check the quality of what is provided for pupils.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils and had discussions with the headteacher, parents collecting their children, subject leaders, staff, governors, the local authority external link primary adviser and the local authority service director for learning and schools.
- They also examined a range of documents including those related to safeguarding, the school's view of how well it is doing, the monitoring of staff performance, the school's improvement plan and records relating to pupils' progress and behaviour.
- The inspectors took account of 39 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and 18 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Clive Petts, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Deborah Bailey

Additional Inspector

Debra De Muschamp

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a much larger than average-sized primary school,
- Almost all children are of White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is well below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below that usually found.
- Currently, twice the average proportion of pupils is eligible for pupil premium funding. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school met the government's current floor standards in 2013, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school provides a breakfast and an after-school club each day.
- Blaydon Day Care Centre is a privately run day-care facility located on the site, but is not managed by the governing body. It is subject to a separate inspection

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to at least good so that the rising trend of faster progress and higher achievement is sustained by:
 - raising even higher staff expectations of what pupils of all abilities can do and achieve
 - share the inspiring thought-provoking practice that exists in the school even more widely
 - quickly adapting tasks when pupils find the work too simple or too difficult to ensure that their thinking is relentlessly challenged and stretched
 - improving the accuracy of layout and presentation in pupils' books, especially in mathematics
 - maximising the opportunities available to apply literacy and numeracy skills in practical activities, including when learning in woodland areas
 - sharpening the skills of teachers, including those of subject leaders, when they are measuring the impact of any action taken to speed up pupils' progress and raise their achievement
 - engaging parents even more widely in the learning and development of their children.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The skills of children entering school are below those typical for their age. Their speech, language and understanding of the world around them are not well developed. Children settle rapidly and confidently to make good progress which prepares them well for Year 1.
- In the 2013 Year 1 phonics check, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard was higher than the national average. This is because the teaching of the blending letters and sounds together (phonics) to form words is systematic, motivating and successful. Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 is rising and is typically broadly average. Standards in reading and writing are improving quickly as a result of the more inventive and effective teaching.
- Standards at the end of Year 6 in 2013 national tests were broadly average. This was an improvement on the previous year. This trend of improvement is continuing with pupils in the current Year 6, on course to reach average standards in mathematics and reading and above average standards in writing.
- More pupils are on track to exceed what is expected of them with increased proportions of the most able pupils reaching higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics. This is the result of the resolute school action taken to increase the level of challenge in tasks and activities presented to pupils in more interesting and thought-provoking ways.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make the same good progress as their classmates, because their needs are accurately identified and their support carefully thought out and managed. The very few pupils who are from minority ethnic groups also make good progress as their needs are effectively addressed.
- The school provides effective support for those eligible for the extra pupil premium funding. For example, booster classes in mathematics are arranged after school and these pupils are given the opportunity to enjoy a residential experience. In Year 6 in 2013, those pupils entitled to free school meals reached standards which were close to three terms behind their classmates in mathematics and reading and one term in writing. Current school assessment information shows that gaps in attainment are closing steadily for older pupils, and more rapidly for younger pupils, as the impact of improved teaching and richer learning opportunities are fully embedded.
- The positive action taken to foster a passion for reading is paying dividends as standards rise quickly. At the age of six, although skills are broadly average, pupils are demonstrating the necessary skills and enthusiasm to be successful readers. Pupils in Year 6 readily and eagerly discuss their choice of book, author and themes. They appreciate the wide range of interesting books available in school. Boys are increasingly conscientious in practising their skills.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good and sometimes thought-provoking and inspiring. Past weaknesses in teaching, particularly in the setting of high enough expectations for pupils, are being successfully tackled. The headteacher has worked tirelessly to ensure that the work set for pupils is interesting and challenging and constantly building upon their earlier learning. As a result, achievement is rising, although a few inconsistencies remain, such as in the accuracy of layout and presentation of work in pupils' mathematics books.
- Classrooms are well organised, stimulating, lively and happy places in which to work. Relationships between pupils and with staff are often excellent. Pupils are increasingly encouraged to share and discuss their ideas with a partner and work things out for themselves. Consequently, pupils are keen to learn and willing to work hard.
- When pupils' progress is fastest and achievement exceeds expected levels:
 - engagingly inventive methods are used to set challenging demands for what each pupil can achieve
 - pupils' progress information is used skilfully to tailor tasks to meet individual abilities

- questioning constantly checks and tests knowledge and deepens understanding
- problem-solving tasks inspire pupils to think critically, explain their thinking and make decisions.
- When progress is occasionally a little variable and achievement requires improvement:
 - methods adopted do not sufficiently provoke thinking, encourage meaningful discussion and stretch understanding enough
 - insufficient demands are made of pupils or tasks quickly adapted to closely match up to their abilities and needs
 - questions do not check and test pupils' knowledge and understanding consistently enough
 - opportunities are missed to practise essential skills when pupils are engaged in practical activities or learning in the woodland environment.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage adults provide high-quality care and guidance. As a result, children settle confidently, develop often excellent self-control and acquire good early independence. Whether in or outdoors children are encouraged to pursue their curiosity and to investigate and explore for themselves. Increasingly, parents play an active part in their children's learning and development.
- Regular and consistent marking of pupils' books identifies what is correct and explains what is wrong. Pupils respond positively to advice and correct any misconceptions and mistakes. Clear advice is given for improvement, although now and again for those most able pupils opportunities are missed to provide even more challenge.
- The strong focus on reading since the previous inspection ensures that pupils have good opportunities to practise their skills. Increasingly, parents play a crucial part listening to their children reading at home. Quiet corners are provided in classrooms and corridors for pupils to sit uninterrupted and read from a wide selection of books. Nevertheless, this practice is not always regular enough to ensure rapid progress acquiring reading skills.
- Inspiring themes, such as considering the plight of families when fathers and brothers were recruited during the First World War, capture and hold the interest of pupils really well. Yet, this inspiring practice is not always fully enough shared across the school.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils' above average attendance illustrates their keenness to learn. The breakfast club provides a calm, happy start to the day and the after-school clubs such as photography add to the level of pupils' interest, skill and enjoyment of learning.
- Disruption in any form is uncommon in lessons and at social times. In conversations with parents almost all reported that they experienced very few problems and when they did have any worries or concerns staff were always on hand to resolve any problems.
- Discussions with pupils reveal that they feel safe in school. They are well informed about bullying in its various forms and observe that any bullying incidents are uncommon. Pupils express confidence that staff always listen to any concerns or worries they may have and take prompt action to resolve any inappropriate behaviour. School records demonstrate that unacceptable behaviour is infrequent.
- The school's work to ensure that pupils are kept safe and secure is good. A very large majority of parents agreed in their responses to the online questionnaire that their children are safe and happy in school.
- Pupils are well-informed about risk and danger and are safety conscious. They respond well to staff guidance and advice. For example, in the woodland area two boys were observed sawing a log held in a trestle, closely following instructions to ensure their hands were kept well away from the bow saw blade when they were pushing and pulling the saw.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and a confident, hands-on governing body have driven forward significant improvements in school performance since the previous inspection. The headteacher’s resolute approaches have transformed the quality of teaching by establishing a robust vision, clear direction, high expectations and rigorous performance checking to improve pupils’ achievement.
- Subject leaders are increasingly effective, adding to the school’s drive to sustain faster progress and eliminate any inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. This is evident in the good and rising achievement in pupils’ writing. Their expertise is developing well, although their skills are not always sharp enough measuring the impact of their actions on pupils’ progress and achievement in their subject areas.
- Staff are committed and respond positively to the training opportunities that exist, such as when using local authority specialists. Consequently, the pace of school improvement is increasingly speedy. The correct school improvement priorities have been established together with a clear timescale and measurable benchmarks to check improvement. As a result, judgements of school performance are accurate.
- Teaching is well managed and performance management used effectively. There is no automatic pay progression.
- The curriculum provides a wide and diverse range of interesting experiences, including inspiring first-hand experiences. Themes and topics link subjects together well, although now and again opportunities are missed to be even more inventive when applying and practising pupils’ essential, literacy, mathematical and scientific skills. Pupils’ personal development is well-thought-out and effective.
- The primary school sport funding is used well to increase rates of participation, enhance staff coaching skills, promote healthy lifestyles and foster higher skills in a range of sports, for example, participating in area-wide dance and athletics festivals.
- Senior leaders display much determination making certain that all pupils have an equal chance to achieve success. Discrimination in any form is not tolerated. Any differences in pupils’ performance are closely checked and responded to by leaders.
- In their responses to the online questionnaire, a minority of parents did raise concerns about the school’s performance. The inspectors found that in their conversations with parents and parent governors, the school’s own recent parent surveys, the views of pupils and the views of the local authority, confidence in the effectiveness of the school was rising appreciably as pupils’ achievements and the quality of teaching improve.
- Safeguarding and child protection meet requirements. Procedures are clearly and firmly established and much good practice is adopted in the day-to-day management and care of pupils.
- The local authority has an accurate view of school performance and has been very proactive since the previous inspection, challenging and supporting the school in equal measure. For example, checking the quality of the leadership and management of teaching in all classes.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has an accurate view of school performance because it has taken full advantage of the school performance scrutiny training provided by the local authority. Governors appreciate that in the past they have been insufficiently challenging. Consequently, they are well aware of the importance of holding leaders and staff to account in robust ways for pupils’ performance. They analyse performance data, check the quality of teaching over time and make certain that pupil premium funding is having the intended impact. They make certain performance management is rigorous. They have a clear-cut view of the priorities for continued improvement and the essential action necessary to sustain a pattern of rapid progress and achievement.

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	131466
Local authority	Gateshead
Inspection number	442312

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	342
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lesley Bowden
Headteacher	Paula Bailey
Date of previous school inspection	16 October 2012
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