

# Horton Grange Primary School

Kitty Brewster, Blyth, Northumberland, NE24 4RE

**Inspection dates** 25–26 June 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 make a good start in the Nursery class because they have good support for their personal needs. Speaking and listening skills are developed well. As a result, children make good progress across the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Pupils make good progress across the school due to consistently good teaching. School leaders rigorously check on pupils' learning and progress. By the time pupils leave Year 6, standards are average and are rising rapidly across the school.
- Teaching over time is good and improving. Teachers have high expectations and use questioning well to deepen pupils' understanding. Teachers plan exacting activities to further promote pupils' learning and progress. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively across the school to support pupils with specific needs.
- Pupils work and play harmoniously together. They enjoy coming to school, are courteous and behave well. They respond well to teachers in lessons and have good attitudes to learning. They have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe and say bullying is rare.
- The headteacher's passionate, determined and effective leadership has significantly improved the school. She is exceptionally well supported by a strong leadership team and a dedicated staff. They have relentlessly improved teaching and standards are rising rapidly.
- The very committed Chair of the Governing Body is well supported by a skilful team and has significantly engaged in this drive for improvement. Governors know the school well and have made good strategic decisions to support leaders in improving teaching and driving up standards and achievement.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not outstanding. Marking does not consistently help pupils to see how to reach higher standards in their work. Pupils are not always given advice on how to check their learning and progress.
- Standards in writing for boys at Key Stage 1 are not high enough. Their handwriting and presentation skills are not efficient enough. Tasks set do not always help boys to reach a higher standard in their writing.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors watched 30 lessons or parts of lessons, of which two were observed jointly with the headteacher and others with the deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher.
- Inspectors observed groups of pupils, as well as individual pupils, working with teaching assistants. They listened to six pupils in Year 2 read, and heard pupils in other year groups read in lessons.
- Inspectors talked with a range of pupils, including the school council, about their work and play in school. They also studied a wide range of pupils' work across the school.
- Meetings were held with seven 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 29 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). They also considered staff questionnaires, the school's parent questionnaires and they spoke to some parents.
- 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
Geoffrey Seagrove	Additional Inspector
John Pattinson	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is larger than most primary schools.
- A well-above average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium which is additional funding for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children in the care of the local authority.
- An above average proportion of pupils are supported at school action, school action plus or have a statement of special educational needs.
- Most pupils are from White British heritage.
- The school has achieved Healthy School and anti-bullying status.
- 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 comprises two Reception and Nursery classes sharing the same outdoor learning area.
- The school has a breakfast club managed by the governing body.
- There have been a number of staffing changes since the last inspection.
- The headteacher also supports four other schools to help them advance their performance.

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

- Improve teaching so that it is outstanding by:
  - improving the marking of pupils' work so that they can develop their skills and so reach higher standards
  - ensuring pupils know how to be successful in their learning so they can check on their own learning and progress in lessons.
- Improve standards in writing at Key Stage 1 for boys by:
  - improving their handwriting and presentation skills so they are more efficient writers
  - ensuring boys undertake activities that consistently stretch them.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Achievement is good because there are rigorous systems for checking on pupils' progress across the school. Teachers meet regularly to make sure all pupils are on track to achieve as well as they can. Consequently, pupils' progress is good. Standards are rising quickly as the school continues to improve further, ensuring all pupils have an equality of opportunity to achieve as well as they can.
- Children enter the Nursery with skills well below those typical for their age. They frequently have significant weaknesses in literacy and are often immature, with weak personal skills. Staff are adept at making sure children settle quickly into learning and have a strong focus on developing their speaking and listening skills. As a result, children make good progress throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Pupils continue to make good progress across Key Stage 1 due to consistently good teaching with a strong focus on developing pupils' reading, writing and mathematical skills. By the end of Year 2, pupils have reached standards that are just below average overall. Boys do not perform as well as girls in writing and their standards are below average. They have weaker handwriting and presentation skills; these sometimes slow boys' progress. Boys do not always tackle activities that are tailored specifically to their needs and this prevents them from reaching a higher standard in their writing.
- The teaching of phonics (sounds that letters make) has made a significant difference to pupils' reading skills. In the Year 1 phonics screening check, pupils performed better than the national average.
- Pupils make good and increasingly better rates of progress across Key Stage 2. By the end of Year 6, pupils reach standards that are broadly average. In 2013, they reached standards that were above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils are on track to perform well this year with a continuing picture of faster progress and higher standards in all subjects.
- The most able pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. They performed well last year and this year they are on track to reach standards that are above similar pupils nationally. This will include an increased proportion of pupils achieving Level 5 and a number of Level 6 (the highest level) in all subjects.
- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, typically make at least good progress across the school. As a result, they reach standards in English and mathematics that are one term ahead of similar pupils nationally. The gap in attainment in English and mathematics between pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and other pupils in the school is closing rapidly as there is a strong focus on ensuring all pupils achieve equally well.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good and sometimes better progress. Teaching assistants support these pupils well and, as a result, they reach standards that are above similar pupils nationally.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers typically have high expectations and plan lessons that ensure the majority of pupils make good or better progress. They effectively question pupils about their learning and check pupils' understanding, which further promotes good progress for pupils.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children have a rich diet of language with a strong focus on developing their literacy and mathematical skills. They make good progress in their mathematical learning. Children benefit from a variety of activities to understand how to add and subtract and tackle other calculations. Children learn about phonics to enable them to speed up the development of their reading skills. They deepen their understanding of the world through play both in and out of the classroom.

- Pupils display a thirst for knowledge and a love of learning when they tackle problems together in groups and as partners. A good example of this was in Year 2 where pupils were discussing problems in groups. They were developing reasoning and problem-solving skills through looking at obscure pictures and sharing what they thought they were. Pupils were absorbed by the task and typically keen to learn. As a result, they made outstanding progress in their learning. The task was challenging and motivated pupils to share ideas about the pictures and solve other problems as the morning progressed.
- Pupils typically make good or better progress where the clarity of teachers' instructions mean pupils can get down to learning straight away. An example of this was in Year 5 where pupils were writing a horror story. Pupils developed a plan of the story after watching a video. Discussion of powerful words to create effects and to capture the reader's interest followed. Pupils then used a check-list so they could check their own learning and progress. Consequently, all pupils made good progress and some produced high-quality writing. In some lessons, pupils are not given advice on how to be successful in their learning and so progress slows as they cannot check on and accelerate their own learning and progress.
- Teachers diligently mark pupils' work and, in most books, this ensures that pupils make good progress in their learning. Where pupils have and use a clear point for improvement, they make faster progress, particularly in writing. This is not the case in all pupils' books where progress slows and standards are not as high. Marking in mathematics is not as effective as it is in writing, because teachers do not always give clear enough instructions on how to improve.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school because there are rich and varied activities both in and out of school that inspire them to learn. Pupils develop on a personal level through a wide range of residential visits and activities that raise their aspirations and broaden their horizons.
- Pupils readily take on responsibility around the school. They 'apply' for roles that contribute to the work of the school. Pupils assist in the Nursery, at lunchtimes and on the school's main reception, enabling them to benefit from real-life work experiences.
- There is a range of rigorous systems to ensure pupils attend regularly and are punctual. Staff work closely with parents to make certain they understand the importance of their child not missing any time in school. Most parents are supportive of this and attendance is now average.
- Pupils respond well to teachers in lessons. They are very keen to learn, try to do their best and have good attitudes to their work. Pupils work cooperatively when asked to discuss their work by the teacher. They enthusiastically tackle new challenges as partners or in groups.
- Pupils move around the school quietly and responsibly. They are polite, well mannered and are proud of their school. They enjoy their meal times with their friends and get a good start to their day at the well-attended breakfast club.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Staff ensure that pupils have access to various agencies, such as the police and fire service among others. Consequently, pupils have a good understanding of how to manage risk and keep themselves safe in different situations. For example, talks about 'Stranger Danger' help them to keep safe when on their own or with their friends. Staff also regularly ensure that pupils know how to keep safe on the internet.
- Pupils know about different forms of bullying. They stated that bullying is rare. If it does occur, they know staff in the school will help them sort out the problem. They commented that there are pupils who help out in the playground to ensure pupils get on with each other and play fairly.
- Parents, staff and pupils are positive about behaviour and safety. All agree that pupils behave well in and around the school and pupils say they feel safe. Systems to ensure pupils are secure are rigorous. Pupils also attend a school 'first aid club' where they learn basic first aid. This supports pupils' health, safety and well-being.

## The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher's exceptional leadership qualities and rigorous management have successfully improved teaching and pupils' progress. She is very well supported by the deputy headteacher, and the assistant headteacher. Together, they have skilfully promoted the use of data so teachers use these effectively to advance pupils' progress, and have strengthened the quality of teaching and learning. A very committed staff and skilful middle leaders have supported this relentless drive for improvement.
- Leaders use performance management successfully to raise standards and improve teaching. Teachers receive good quality training and support to improve their skills. They are also rewarded for their efforts both in and out of the classroom through their salaries. As a result, teaching has improved over time and standards are rising.
- School leaders make thorough and regular checks on pupils' progress through looking at lessons and pupils' learning. They use this information effectively to ensure it is having a positive impact. Senior leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's performance and use this information productively to plan actions that will help it to improve further.
- The curriculum provides a range of rich and varied activities that promote pupils' skills in reading, writing and mathematics. Exciting visits and visitors make sure that pupils receive experiences that develop their curiosity. Links between subjects promote pupils' wider skills.
- Leaders have a strong focus on developing pupils' personal skills. This underpins the school's work and promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. Pupils know about their local heritage, as well as cultures further afield. Pupils benefit from participating in an extensive range of musical and artistic experiences and events such as 'equalities week'.
- There is a wide range of occasions for parents to engage with staff and in pupils' learning. Regular opportunities to participate in lessons are a strong feature of their work with parents, including during the inspection. Feedback from one parent said: 'Another fantastic opportunity to come into class and get an insight into your child's learning.'
- There is good range of partnerships that support the school's work. A sports partnership has seen leaders use the primary school sport funding effectively to improve pupils' participation, as well as the range of activities on offer including sampler judo sessions. The school also works closely with the adjacent Dales School to support pupils with their social and emotional behaviour.
- Procedures for safeguarding and protecting pupils meet requirements.
- The local authority has given good support to the school as it improves.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The Chair of the Governing Body provides strong, determined leadership. He is supported by a skilful group of governors who understand the school and its data well, meet regularly with teachers, look at work in books and know about the quality of teaching.
  - Governors make sure that finances are managed effectively and know how the pupil premium funding has been spent and its impact on the attainment and progress of pupils in the school who are known to be eligible for free school meals. They recognise the gap in performance between these pupils compared with others is closing and that the money is being used productively.
  - They are well informed about the school's data. They challenge as well as support the school in its relentless drive for improvement. They have a well-established system for checking on the school's effectiveness and performance management. This has been instrumental in ensuring the school has improved over time. They reward teachers appropriately for their work as teachers in the classroom as well as their leadership across the school.

## 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>	122254
<b>Local authority</b>	Northumberland
<b>Inspection number</b>	432051

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	400
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	David Hall
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jackie Chevaugeron
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 March 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01670 353503
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