

Forest of Teesdale Primary School

Forest-in-Teesdale, Barnard Castle, County Durham, DL12 0HA

Inspection dates 20–21 November 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils' achievement is good. Almost all pupils achieve the standards expected for their age. They make good progress.
- Teaching is good overall. Pupils currently in Year 2 are making accelerated progress as a result of some excellent teaching over time.
- Children in the early years provision have settled very quickly, enjoy their learning and are making rapid progress.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They all care for one another exceptionally well and talk of the school being like a family.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- The school builds on pupils' love of their isolated and beautiful environment while helping them to understand the multi-cultural make-up of modern British society and the wider world.
- The school is highly aware of its importance to the local community.
- The headteacher, deputy headteacher and the governing body have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and relative weaknesses. Their plans for the future are clearly focused on raising achievement and improving teaching.
- The school is well led and managed on those days when the headteacher is not in school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is good rather than outstanding. As a result, too few pupils currently in Key Stage 2 have standards that are above those typical for their age.
- Pupils are not always clear about how to improve their work, including their spelling, or given time to act upon any advice they do receive.
- Work is not always difficult enough for all groups of pupils, especially the most able pupils in Key Stage 2.
- Pupils have too few opportunities to write at length in English and other subjects or do enough challenging work in mathematics.
- Work in history, geography and science does not always become more challenging as pupils grow older.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector held meetings with staff, groups of pupils and the Chair of the Governing Body. The inspector also spoke to a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector looked at a range of evidence including the school's improvement plan; the school's data relating to pupils' progress; the work in pupils' books and the school's documentation relating to safeguarding. The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, assembly and during lunchtimes and break times. He listened to pupils in Year 2 read.
- The inspector observed teaching and learning in three lessons taught by two teachers. He observed these sessions jointly with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher. He observed the headteacher and deputy headteacher reporting back to the teachers on their findings regarding the quality of teaching, learning and pupils' achievement.
- In this very small school there are too few parents for the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) to be accessible to the school. However, the inspector analysed the school's own canvassing of parental opinion and received an e-mail message from a parent.
- Six staff completed questionnaires and the responses were analysed.

Inspection team

Gordon Potter, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is very much smaller than the average-sized primary school. It is situated in a remote rural location within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- Almost all pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, those eligible for support through the pupil premium, is well below average. There are too few disadvantaged pupils currently in school, or who have taken the national tests for seven and 11 year olds in recent years, to comment upon their achievement without identifying them. (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 proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is well above average. However, there are too few such pupils currently in school, or who have taken the national tests in recent years, to comment upon their achievement without identifying them.
- There are too few children currently in the early years provision, or who have been in the provision in recent years, to comment upon their achievement without identifying them.
- There are after-school clubs run by school staff.
- There are two classes: Reception and Year 2; Years 3, 4, 5 and 6. There are currently no pupils in Year 1.
- The headteacher has been in post since January 2011 on a half time basis. He is also headteacher of Rookhope Primary School on a similar basis. The two schools are separate and independent of one another. In his absence, the school is led and managed by the deputy headteacher who is in school on a six sessions out of 10 basis. She is also one of two teachers of the class for pupils in Reception and Key Stage 1.
- In the last school year the deputy headteacher was on maternity leave. In the current school year, the substantive teacher for the early years provision and Key Stage 1 is on maternity leave.
- The government's current floor standards do not apply to this school.
- The school has achieved a Healthy Schools award.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and the rates at which pupils make progress, especially for the most able pupils in Key Stage 2, by:
 - ensuring that work is hard enough for all groups of pupils and offers them more opportunities to write at length in English and other subjects and complete more challenging work in mathematics
 - ensuring that work in geography, history and science becomes harder as pupils grow older
 - ensuring pupils are given clear guidance about how to improve their work and spell accurately and time to act upon that advice.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher is clearly focused on improving the school's effectiveness. He very skilfully organises and motivates all staff to take on responsibilities which ensure that the school operates smoothly on the days he is not present. He is extremely ably supported in this by the deputy headteacher.
- As a result, teaching is consistently good and improving. There is more outstanding teaching which is ensuring that pupils make good progress across the school and rapid progress in the early years provision and Key Stage 1. The school lives up to its important role in the local community. It is a lively and extremely safe environment where pupils enjoy learning and where teachers are excited by the responsibility they have for their own classes and other aspects of school life.
- For example, the school's sport and physical education coordinator has ensured that the primary school sports funding has been used effectively. He has also managed the raising of funds through the national lottery grant to develop outdoor sports facilities. He ensures that pupils have opportunities to be involved in competitive team sports with pupils in other schools.
- The funding has also been used to employ coaches who have introduced new sports such as gymnastics and dance. Coaches are also helping to develop teachers' own expertise in teaching physical education. While it was not possible to observe any physical education learning during the inspection, pupils say that they very much enjoy their lessons in the community centre in the neighbouring village. This is contributing very well to pupils' physical development and well-being.
- While the school focuses on developing pupils' basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics, it also offers many exciting opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness and their understanding of British values. The school builds on pupils' love of their isolated and beautiful environment while helping them to understand the multi-cultural make-up of modern British society and the wider world. They enjoy a range of educational visits and visitors.
- However, learning in geography, history and science is not yet planned well enough so that pupils are clear about what it means to study these subjects or that work becomes harder as pupils grow older. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have recognised that some aspects of the curriculum can be better organised in this very small school through an integrated approach using all staff and plans are being developed to organise this innovative approach.
- The headteacher reviews the quality of teaching regularly and has a very clear view of what constitutes good teaching and learning. Teachers welcome his advice and know that it will be supported by effective continuing professional development. While the deputy headteacher has less experience of reviewing teaching and learning she showed during the inspection that she has a very clear insight.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher ensure that assessment of pupils' attainment is accurate. The school's plans for the future are succinct and clearly focussed on improving teaching and raising attainment.
- The management of teachers' performance has been well used to ensure that all staff have clear targets which have been successful in helping to improve their teaching. Teachers are clear that they will only be rewarded financially when pupils have done as well or better than required by their targets.
- Pupil premium funding has been spent on providing extra support where this is necessary.
- The school is extremely clearly focused on identifying any pupils who are at risk of falling behind and has ensured that all pupils make good progress by the end of Year 6. Inspection evidence shows that there is some excellent progress over time for pupils currently in school and in the recent past who have a range of complex learning needs. This clearly shows the school's commitment to promoting equal opportunities and tackling discrimination.
- The school welcomes the support and advice that it receives from the local authority and from its education development partner. It particularly welcomes the advice it receives on financial management.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors offer strong support and robust challenge to the school. Although the Chair of the Governing Body has only taken up post very recently, she is highly experienced and has great understanding of the school and its importance to the local community. She is very well supported by other governors whose professional expertise is used to check school effectiveness through scheduled school visits. As a result, governors are clear about the quality of teaching, pupils' achievement, the curriculum and the school's plans for the future. They ensure that the school's shared headship is effectively managed. They have ensured that unavoidable staff absences have been managed well.
 - Management of the school's finances is clearly focussed on maintaining the viability of this very small school and has enabled improvements to be made to the early years provision and the school's sports

equipment. Governors know how the pupil premium funding and the primary physical education and sports funding are spent. They ensure that they have a strong impact on the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and all pupils' health and well-being.

- Governors understand the arrangements to check on teachers' performance and any rewards for good teaching. They ensure that the school fulfils its statutory responsibilities for safeguarding. All staff have been cleared as suitable to work with children and are trained appropriately to keep pupils safe and free from harm.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils are adamant that there is no bullying. They are highly aware of the different forms that bullying can take, including cyber-bullying and homophobic name-calling. They say that all pupils get on exceptionally well together and behave extremely well. They say they are like a family. While there are occasionally small falling-outs, these are very quickly resolved. Older pupils help younger pupils and all pupils care extremely well for one another.
- Inspection evidence confirms that behaviour is outstanding in lessons, assemblies and at break and lunchtimes. Pupils dine extremely sensibly together. Incidents of poor behaviour are extremely rare and there have been no exclusions.
- Pupils look after visitors with great courtesy and are very keen to show off their school. They are particularly proud of their hotels for hedgehogs, ladybirds and bugs and the pond they built with crew members from *H.M.S. Bulwark*.
- Pupils are very keen to take on responsibilities as school councillor and members of the ECOteam. The school council has helped to plan the new sports area and raises funds for charities. Buddies look after other pupils on the very rare occasions when they need help.
- Almost all pupils attend well because they feel extremely safe in school and enjoy their learning and the trips the school provides for them.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- There are exceptionally clear and effective systems to ensure that pupils are safe in school and to address any issues that impact on their well-being. Indeed, the school goes the extra mile to ensure that the physical, social and emotional needs of all pupils are met, where necessary, through engagement with outside professionals.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching of reading, writing and mathematics is good overall. While some outstanding teaching over time is helping pupils to make rapid progress in Key Stage 1, it is not yet sustained enough to ensure pupils make outstanding progress overall.
- Pupils in Year 2 are helped to understand mathematical ideas, such as the relationship between fractions and the whole, understand the terms numerator and denominator and to add simple fractions. In Key Stage 2, pupils enjoy practical activities which help them to understand how to measure the perimeter and calculate the area of square and rectangular surfaces. They are occasionally challenged further by tackling open-ended problem-solving activities related to costs and money.
- However, teaching of mathematics is good rather than outstanding. Occasionally, work is not well enough planned to ensure that all groups of pupils, especially the most able, are engaged in challenging activities all the time. Pupils have too few opportunities to tackle difficult problems or do sustained work in their books.
- Pupils across school are encouraged to write about their experiences, for example imagining how a hedgehog might react to the school's hedgehog hotel or about their trip to the theatre to see *Joseph and His Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*. They are helped to reflect on their experience and advised on how to structure their writing.
- The teaching of writing is good rather than outstanding overall, because pupils are not given plenty of opportunities to write at length in English and other subjects. They are given too few chances to develop

their ideas in extended pieces of writing.

- The school's marking policy is used consistently to help pupils understand how successful they have been in their work. However, it is applied less successfully in telling pupils how to improve their work or in giving them time to act upon any advice given. There is no clear focus on helping pupils to correct and learn spellings.
- While pupils enjoy their learning in science, geography and history, work is not planned well enough to ensure that pupils develop higher level skills and understanding in these subjects as they grow older.

The achievement of pupils is good

- While standards vary in this very small school, they are typically average at the end of Year 2 and pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1. Evidence seen during the inspection shows that pupils currently in Year 2 are on track to achieve standards which are above those expected for their age. They are making rapid progress as a result of some highly effective teaching.
- Unvalidated data indicate that standards at the end of Year 6 in 2014 were average. In 2012 and 2013, they were above average. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 2.
- Evidence in pupils' books and the school's data about pupils' progress show that most pupils currently in Year 6 are on track to attain standards that are in line those expected for their age and are making good progress from their starting points.
- The most able pupils typically achieve standards that are above the expectations for their age. While unvalidated data indicate that too few pupils achieved above average standards in 2014, the school has identified this and work is increasingly challenging. However, tasks set could be harder still for the most able pupils in Key Stage 2.
- Inspection evidence shows that progress in reading is good. There is a very clear and consistent focus on reading across the school. Pupils of all ages speak keenly about the books and authors they enjoy when reading at home and in school.
- Phonics teaching (the sounds that letters make) is good overall. As a result, almost all pupils have a clear understanding of letters and the sounds they make and know how this helps them to read words which are new to them.

The early years provision is good

- Children have settled extremely well into the Reception class because their learning is exciting and they are making rapid progress to be well prepared to enter Year 1.
- Children obviously enjoy their learning, both indoors and outdoors, and their behaviour is excellent. They benefit from playing alongside older pupils and learning with them when appropriate. They are all involved together in whole-school trips, assemblies and physical education lessons. They thrive in the lively varied learning environment and because of the very skilful teaching of their teachers and teaching assistant.
- Children are cared for extremely well. Their parents were involved before they started and are kept aware of the work they are doing and the progress they are making through highly informative learning journals. Adults ensure that requirements regarding children's safety are rigorously met.
- The learning of phonics is very well managed. There are many opportunities for children to develop their early writing skills and they are engaged by their developing relationship with Shob the alien, writing him letters and helping him rebuild his spaceship. However, some opportunities are missed to label objects so that children can see words all around them.
- There is a very successful focus on encouraging children to talk about their learning and this is developing their speaking and listening skills well. They are asked questions which allow them the chance to think carefully, work out their answers and develop their own ideas.
- There is a strong emphasis on learning numbers and counting, and children learn rapidly when working with their teachers and teaching assistants, counting the bricks for the spaceship or measuring its length.
- The leadership and management of the early years provision are good. The deputy headteacher has an extremely clear view of the quality of teaching and learning and the progress that the children make. All adults plan very well together sharing their varied experience and expertise to provide exciting and imaginative learning opportunities for the children.
- These all have had a significant impact on children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness and understanding of how to stay fit and healthy.

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	114100
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	448773

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	17
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Judith Tarn
Headteacher	Ian Carroll
Date of previous school inspection	2 December 2009
Telephone number	01833 622220
Fax number	01833 622220
Email address	forest@durhamlearning.net

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2014

