

Spring Gardens Primary School

Brightman Road, North Shields, Tyne and Wear, NE29 0HP

Inspection dates 2–3 December 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.

- This is a happy school and pupils' behaviour is outstanding. Relationships are excellent and pupils feel exceedingly safe and secure.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and this impacts very positively upon their behaviour.
- Children get off to a good start in the early years. Pupils continue to make good progress through the school.
- By the end of Year 6, pupils achieve standards in reading, writing and mathematics which are above average.
- Careful checks are made on the progress of pupils so that good-quality support can be provided for any who may need to catch up.
- Teaching is good. Pupils have excellent relationships with their teachers and are given a strong work ethic.
- The school plans a good range of experiences for pupils that not only provides them with effective basic skills in English and mathematics, but also helps them to reflect, consider and give their point of view.
- Leaders and managers, including governors, have a positive effect upon teaching and achievement. Together they have a good understanding of the strengths of the school and areas to develop. Their skills and determination show that the school has a good capacity to improve further.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In some classes, there are not enough opportunities for pupils, especially the most able, to use their mathematical skills to investigate and solve problems.
- Presentation of pupils' work at Key Stage 1 in the younger classes is not always as good as it could be because some pupils do not form letters and numbers correctly.
- At Key Stage 1 and in lower Key Stage 2, the rate of pupils' progress slows when teachers do not take sufficient notice of pupils' past achievements to start them off at the correct level of learning and to match tasks to pupils' needs.
- Leaders and managers do not always make the best possible use of achievement information for different groups to compare progress and standards over time.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 20 lessons and learning sessions, which included a number of short visits to the teaching of small groups and individuals, and listened to pupils reading. The headteacher and deputy headteacher each took part in a joint observation with an inspector.
- Separate discussions were held with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, staff, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority. The opinions of 38 members of staff were also considered from their questionnaire responses.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work, looked at children’s learning journals, staff planning journals, data on children’s progress, planning and monitoring documentation and information relating to the welfare of children and safeguarding.
- Inspectors took account of the 23 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the results of the school’s most recent questionnaire to parents.
- Inspectors observed pupils during morning playtime and lunchtime, and attended collective worship on two occasions.

Inspection team

Kate Pringle, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Lesley Richardson	Additional Inspector
Jane Beckett	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, those supported through the pupil premium funding, is above average. This additional funding is to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and pupils looked after by the local authority.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British background and few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has full-time nursery and reception provision.
- The school runs a breakfast club each morning.
- A private provider offers after-school care on the school site. The work of this provision was not considered by this inspection because it is inspected and reported upon separately.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and accelerate progress at Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2, particularly in mathematics and for the most able, by:
 - giving pupils more opportunities to use their basic skills in mathematics to investigate and solve problems
 - improving presentation of work, including the formation of letters and numbers
 - developing teaching strategies to make sure pupils are set work which is based upon what they already know and can do, and so ensure a better match of tasks to pupils' learning needs.
- Ensure leaders and managers always make the best possible use of achievement information for different groups to compare progress and standards over time.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and the deputy headteacher successfully work together closely to recognise and address the needs of the school. Other senior and middle leaders help to guide improvement effectively through their individual roles and responsibilities.
- Staff are highly supportive of the school and their training, which helps them to increase their individual expertise. They are motivated, committed and genuinely willing to be part of improving standards.
- The school's strengths and areas for improvement are fully recognised. The school development plan clearly identifies timely actions to check success rates. This is helping the school to continue to raise the level of teaching and further improve standards.
- There are regular observations of teaching in which the needs of individuals are recognised and used to identify specific training requirements in order to ensure best practice.
- The links between teaching, pupils' outcomes and progression in teachers' pay are securely established. All staff have clear targets to work towards and regular reviews throughout the year identify how well staff are progressing towards these.
- The school tracks the performance of pupils regularly. This tracking is used to quickly identify individual pupils who do not progress as well as they should and where to place additional learning support. At present, although checks are made on the progress of different groups of pupils in the school, leaders do not always make best possible use of the information gained.
- The pupil premium funding is used effectively to support disadvantaged pupils. Money is well directed, and leaders and managers are aware of the impact it is having upon these pupils to accelerate their progress.
- The primary school sport funding is used highly effectively to support additional lunchtime and after-school activities. There are strong links with the local secondary school: a coach develops staff expertise in the teaching of physical education and he organises inter-school competition. There is a wider range of sport on offer, greater participation of pupils, success at sports in the locality and improvement to the quality of teaching.
- The school makes every effort to promote equality of opportunity by including all pupils, whatever their need or disability. It ensures that all pupils are happy in school and that they care for each other without discrimination. This contributes to the positive relationships, behaviour and safety within the school. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding because teachers help pupils to reflect, work together in harmony and celebrate their similarities and differences.
- The curriculum that the school has recently introduced is broad and balanced but is still evolving. Themed weeks provide opportunities for in-depth study across subjects. Pupils experience the wider world and extend their skills through a broad range of visits and visitors to the school which prepares them well for life in modern Britain. Pupils access a range of additional activities during lunchtime and after school and take part in a number of community projects.
- The school benefits from links with other local primary schools and the local authority to develop best practice, for example, in the moderation of pupils' work and new national developments. Work to determine assessment without levels within the new curriculum is at an early stage of development using these links. A number of staff members are engaged in helping the local authority to spread best practice, which is contributing to the widening of teachers' professional development at higher levels.
- Safeguarding requirements are all established and well monitored.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body both supports and challenges the school. Governors are involved in the development of the school's evaluation of its performance and in the resultant improvement plan. They understand the school's performance data and the strengths of the school and identify where development is needed. Individual governors' expertise is recognised and used to good advantage, supported by a timetable of training to address individual needs.
 - Governors understand the allocation of the pupil premium funding, for example, to pay for additional staffing and extra resources, and how well it benefits pupils for whom it is intended. Similarly, they understand the allocation of the primary school sport funding, the increase in pupils' involvement in sport and the improvement to teaching. Overall governors manage the school's finances very well, making sure that funding is spent on the correct priorities from the school development plan.
 - An effective performance management system is in place which clearly holds school leaders to account. Senior leaders feedback information about the quality of teaching to governors as part of their regular monitoring and evaluation through lesson observations and their analysis of pupils' work. Any underperformance is tackled and good teaching rewarded.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils are polite, respectful and show awareness and consideration for others in lessons and as they move about the school. They are confident as they talk to each other and to adults, taking turns to speak and listen. Parents and pupils believe that pupils are well behaved.
- Pupils feel valued and know that they are listened to by adults. They are keen to take on responsibilities about the school, for instance as a school councillor, as playground helpers or as monitors. There is an understanding by older pupils that they are increasingly responsible for their own actions and the potential consequences these may have.
- All pupils, including the youngest in the school, understand the 'Golden Rules' very well and the sanctions that come into play should anyone misbehave.
- Pupils understand the different forms that bullying can take. They are adamant that bullying is rare and, should it occur, staff are very quick to sort out problems.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. It extends outside the school. Staff quickly pick up on concerns which could affect pupils' learning and provide support and help to them and their families. All pupils who were talked to by inspectors could name someone whom they would turn to for help should they need it.
- Pupils say that they feel very safe in school. They understand that rules are in place, in school and in the community, to help keep them safe from harm.
- The school provides a range of extremely effective programmes for pupils to learn how to keep themselves safe. They fully understand, for instance, the risks of using the internet and how to identify unsafe situations in school, at home and when out at play or in the wider community.
- As they mature, pupils show increasing responsibility for their own safety and for those younger than themselves through their various roles in school.
- Attendance is rising and is average. The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent has fallen.

The quality of teaching is good

- Pupils enjoy very good relationships with their teachers and teaching assistants. They settle quickly to work, showing perseverance to achieve what is asked of them, and many demonstrate considerable resilience as they tackle new aspects of learning. Pupils listen carefully and are strongly motivated to learn.
- Teachers make good use of numerous interesting ideas to get pupils involved in their learning. They share targets and pupils understand how 'success criteria' are applied so that they can measure their own progress. This means that by Year 6, pupils are fully engaged in what, and how, they learn.
- Teaching in the upper part of the school accelerates learning and pupils make rapid progress. For example, in a lesson on Macbeth, pupils demonstrated their knowledge of grammar to extend and develop ideas. Using high levels of reading skills, pupils developed extended sentences; they then added extra information to further improve their sentences by including an embedded clause.
- In some classes, however, teachers do not match the tasks for pupils well enough to their needs. In these cases, too little attention is paid to where pupils are in their learning and they are, therefore, set work which does not enable them to make the same consistently good progress as others in the school.
- Written work is mostly well presented. However, some teaching in Key Stage 1 does not provide pupils with clear guidelines on how to form letters and numbers correctly. In these classes, the expectation that presentation will always be good is not expressed clearly enough.
- In other subjects, such as in geography and music, teachers are raising their expectations of pupils' work to be presented to the same quality as that in English and mathematics.
- A range of good support for pupils who achieve at lower levels in reading, writing and mathematics is in place. Led by teachers and well-trained teaching assistants, these strategies help to accelerate learning for these pupils.
- Progress in writing continues to improve as a result of the focused introduction of professional development on teaching pupils spelling, grammar and punctuation.

- Books clearly show that teaching provides a range of good strategies for teaching mathematics, and pupils progress well. At present, however, there are too few opportunities for pupils to use these developing skills to investigate and solve problems.
- There have been good advances in the pupils' reading because of changes to the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) in the early years and through Key Stage 1. Pupils use their skills increasingly well to tackle new words. There is rising attainment through these year groups.
- Teachers consistently apply the agreed marking scheme, and marking is particularly effective in writing. Teachers highlight successful learning and where improvements are needed. There are increasing opportunities for pupils to review their work, and correct or amend it. Because of this, pupils have a better understanding of where they have gone wrong and learn from their mistakes.

The achievement of pupils is good

- On entry to Year 1, attainment has been below levels expected nationally in reading, writing and number. Through Key Stages 1 and 2, progress is good overall and pupils leave Year 6 with standards which are above average.
- By the end of Year 2, pupils attain average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Most pupils make the progress expected of them but do not always make the rapid progress they could.
- At the end of Key Stage 2, outstanding teaching boosts pupils' achievement so that they make rapid progress and attain above average standards by the end of Year 6.
- Test results in 2014 show an improvement in standards in all subjects, with more pupils achieving at Levels 4 and 5. There is little difference between the performance of boys and girls.
- Disadvantaged pupils at the end of Year 6 in 2014 made good progress. The gap between their attainment and that of other pupils in the school was two terms behind in reading, writing and mathematics. However, compared to other pupils nationally, the attainment of disadvantaged pupils was less than a term behind in reading, writing and mathematics. School data indicate that disadvantaged pupils make similar progress to other pupils in the school and somewhat better progress than the average for most other pupils nationally.
- The present Year 6 data indicate that disadvantaged pupils started their final year with attainment which was about a term behind that of other pupils in the year group, in reading, writing and mathematics. Effective support is in place and tracking of these pupils over the past term indicates accelerated learning and a reduced gap in attainment compared with non-disadvantaged pupils in the school.
- Although pupils make mainly good progress overall, progress over Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2 is not as secure in mathematics. This is because too often pupils begin tasks which are, at times, set at the same level of difficulty. This means that some pupils find the work too difficult and others find it too easy.
- The most able pupils make good progress by the time they leave Year 6. However, because they are not identified early enough in Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2, some are not reaching their full potential.
- Pupils who are disabled or with special educational needs make good progress similar to that of other pupils because they are given support which meets their individual needs.
- Information from the phonics screening check carried out at the end of Year 1 indicates that pupils reach lower levels than the national average. Present indications are that changes to the teaching of phonics are rapidly improving progress in this aspect of learning.
- Progress in reading is also improving. Year 1 pupils say that they enjoy reading and are able to talk about the different stories they have read. Lower-ability Year 1 pupils attempt to sound out new words using their understanding of phonics, although their achievement is still below expectations for their age.
- By Year 6, pupils of various abilities read a range of different reading materials with confidence and enjoyment. They use their phonic skills well to decode new vocabulary. Many read independently at home for pleasure.

The early years provision is good

- In previous years, many children entered the early years with starting points below those that are typical for their age. By the end of the Reception Year, skills in reading, writing and mathematics have been below those nationally. Present 2014 data indicate that attainment by the end of the reception is rising to much closer to the national picture. Current progress is good because of improvements to teaching, the levels of support children receive and a better-shared understanding by early years staff of how well

children are learning. This means children are now well prepared for entering Year 1.

- Staff identify speaking and listening as a particular need and work successfully to develop children's language, vocabulary and understanding.
- Children who have specific needs are quickly identified. Appropriate support is in place for those who are disabled, or who have special educational needs, to make sure they progress at the same rate as other children.
- Children quickly become confident as they settle into the Nursery class and then into the Reception Year. Their behaviour is good because staff teach them the 'Golden Rules' and consistently apply these. Children feel safe and happily access all areas of learning independently. They understand the daily routines and respond well to teachers' requests.
- Using the different equipment indoors and outdoors, children develop their skills in sharing and taking turns as they play and learn together. They show very good attitudes to learning because of the teachers' high expectations of them to listen carefully.
- There are good opportunities for children to make choices; where learning is led by adults, clear outcomes are determined for children to work to, using past achievements as a starting point. Teaching is good and this is reflected in the good progress children now make in all aspects of learning.
- Links with parents are established and learning journals, showing what children have achieved, help parents understand what their children can do. Staff are working to further extend parents' involvement in their children's learning.
- The early years leader manages the provision very well. She correctly identified strengths, and she implements actions to address those areas which need to be developed. Information about children's achievements is recorded well and used effectively to enhance children's learning.
- All safeguarding and welfare requirements are securely in place.

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	108574
Local authority	North Tyneside
Inspection number	449145

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	444
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Michael Young
Headteacher	Sarah Campbell
Date of previous school inspection	16 September 2010
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