

Farne Primary School

Marsden Lane, Newbiggin Hall, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Tyne and Wear, NE5 4AP

Inspection dates 3–4 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 good school where pupils' outstanding behaviour and attitudes play a substantial part in their successful learning.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils feel very safe at school and they promote safety very well for others.
- Good teaching, with some that is outstanding, results in all groups of pupils making good progress.
- Pupils leave at the end of Year 6 with standards of attainment that are consistently above those found nationally.
- The overall effectiveness of the early years provision is good. Children get off to a good start to their time in school.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. Pupils are courteous and respectful. They greatly enjoy their learning and are keen to improve their work when they are given the opportunity to do so.
- The new headteacher is a very effective leader. Although he is relatively new in post, he knows the school very well and has a firm grasp of what the school needs to do to improve further.
- Members of staff are overwhelmingly positive about all aspects of the school and parents are very appreciative of the school's work.
- Since the previous inspection, pupils' achievement has improved in many areas. The quality of teaching has also improved and there has been a steady rise in attendance rates, which are now above average.
- The governing body supports the school very well. Governors have close and regular contact with the school and offer a good degree of challenge.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well. Pupils appreciate the many opportunities they have to enrich their learning through visits and clubs. They say that they like their school just the way it is.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Too few pupils make outstanding progress across the school.
- Occasionally teachers do not make the best use of information about what pupils can and cannot do to plan work that stretches pupils sufficiently.
- The quality of teachers' marking does not always help pupils to improve their work.
- The role of subject leaders is relatively new to the school and requires further development.
- Systems for checking pupils' progress are not refined enough to identify as quickly as possible any individual pupils who may be in danger of underachieving. In consequence, the learning and progress of all pupils are not always fully maximised.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed lessons in all year groups across the school. One joint observation was undertaken with the headteacher. In addition, the inspectors made short visits to lessons.
- The inspectors examined information about current pupils' learning and progress, as well as information about the learning from the previous year. The inspectors also looked at current work in the pupils' books.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and other leaders, including some who are in charge of subjects.
- Meetings were held with six governors, including the Chair of Governors. A telephone conversation took place with a representative from the local authority.
- Several meetings took place with pupils. In addition, inspectors took many opportunities to talk to pupils in classes, at breaks and lunchtimes.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documents, including those relating to safeguarding and child protection, the school development plan, and reports of two audits carried out by the local authority. One of those related to the early years and the other to the provision for pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs.
- The inspectors scrutinised records of attendance and behaviour, as well as information about the quality of teaching and the performance of staff.
- The inspectors talked to many parents at the beginning of school and took account of the 15 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). They also took account of the 27 responses from members of staff to the staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Alison Thomson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Barbara Waugh

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Farne is an average-sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is well above average. (The pupil premium is additional funding for those 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 who are disabled or who have statements of special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which are the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school has early years provision in a Reception class and a part-time Nursery.
- There is a part-time facility, Pufflings, for children aged three. This is inspected separately by Ofsted.
- Since the previous inspection there have been significant changes in staffing. This includes the headteacher who took up his post in September 2014.
- With effect from September 2013, Farne Primary School became one of the eight schools forming the Newcastle North West Learning Trust, who have various local business partners.
- The governing body has undergone significant changes, including the appointment of a Chair of Governors and the addition of experienced members from other local schools, through the school's Trust membership.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure more teaching results in outstanding achievement for all groups of pupils by:
 - consistently using information about what pupils can and cannot do to plan activities that provide a good level of challenge for all pupils, particularly the most able pupils
 - improving the quality of guidance pupils receive on how to improve their work and ensuring that they have sufficient opportunities to respond to it.
- Improve aspects of leadership and management by:
 - developing the roles and skills of subject leaders to monitor and evaluate effectively the quality of teaching and pupils' progress in their areas of responsibility
 - further refining systems for checking pupils' progress so that any potential underachievement can be identified as early as possible.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders and managers, including governors have high expectations for their school. As a result, the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement are good. Leaders have created a culture in which pupils behave extremely well and greatly enjoy their learning. Safety and welfare are given a very high priority. Consequently, the school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- The new headteacher has a drive and determination to make the school the best that it can be. He knows what key areas need to be addressed in order to improve the school further and is tackling those well. Already, gaps in achievement between different groups of pupils narrowed considerably this year, reflecting the school's good equality of opportunity and tackling of discrimination.
- The narrowing of gaps is due to an increased emphasis on looking carefully at the quality of pupils' work, more rigorous monitoring of their progress and more carefully targeted use of pupil premium funding. The school recognises the continued need to identify any possible underachievement as early as possible in order to maximise the progress of every pupil.
- Since the previous inspection there have been many improvements, including attendance and a steady improvement in the standards of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- Teachers have been given personalised feedback on what they need to do to do in order to improve and they have acted upon this advice. As a result the quality of teaching has improved. The school uses some of the money from the primary physical education and sports funding to boost teaching skills further, through the use of expert physical education coaches.
- Almost all staff returned the staff questionnaire. The results showed that they are extremely positive about all aspects of the school.
- Parents are also extremely positive about the school, saying they welcome the improved communication from the school.
- The school has just appointed middle leaders to be in charge of subjects this term. Previously, apart from senior leaders, no one has had an overview of the way a subject is taught across the school. As many of those subject leaders are new in post, their skills require further development so they can hold the teachers to account for the progress the pupils make in their areas of responsibility.
- The range of experiences that the school gives its pupils ensures that they are well prepared for the next stage in their education. The values of modern Britain are addressed well through assemblies, religious education and visits, such as that to an Outdoor Centre. Here the pupils learn about teamwork and cooperation.
- Safeguarding meets requirements. The school is vigilant in looking after all its pupils, including those whose circumstances make them vulnerable.
- The local authority provides good support through its school improvement work. The school has acted well on recent reviews of the early years provision and provision for pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has been strengthened recently and is highly ambitious for the school. Governors are closely involved with the school and know its strengths and areas for development well. They undergo training, including training on the use of data about pupils' performance. They have a good knowledge of the quality of teaching, through first-hand experience and they ensure that teachers' pay is linked well to teachers' performance and results. Governors challenge the school effectively, for example, about attendance. They know how the school's finances are used and to what effect, for example in improving the achievement of disadvantaged pupils, through the use of the pupil premium.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding and school records indicate that it has been so for some time. It is impressive in many ways: from the pride they take in their school and their work, for the consideration they give to others and for their very positive attitudes to learning.
- The staff questionnaires showed that staff agreed strongly that pupils behave well. This view was echoed by parents who responded to the online questionnaire and also by the parents the inspectors talked to.
- The pupils themselves rated behaviour as either nine or 10 out of 10. They told the inspectors that they

liked the school so much because they had lots of friends and people were nice to each other.

- Pupils willingly take on responsibility through their roles as school councillors or as sports leaders seeking out the views of other pupils about what clubs they would like.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent. They work very well together in groups and eagerly try to improve their work when they are given the opportunity to do so.
- Pupils are conscious of the need to look after the planet. The school has green flag status, the top award from Eco-Schools England for raising awareness of environmental issues. During the inspection Year 2 were observed analysing their traffic survey of different types of vehicles on nearby roads.
- Pupils really enjoy coming to school. Attendance, an area for development from the previous inspection, has risen steadily and is now above average.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. As a result all groups of pupils feel extremely safe. One of the things they like best about school is the adults who look after them well.
- The school has very effective systems in place to ensure that pupils are kept very safe, such as rigorous assessments for visits out of school.
- Pupils have a very keen awareness of different forms of bullying, including the different types of prejudiced bullying, although they were quick to point out that nothing like that happens at their school.
- Pupils promote safety extremely well for others. Year 5 mentors take their duties of looking after the other pupils very seriously and there is much interest in applying for these coveted roles. They were seen during lunchtime advising younger children not to run too fast as the cold weather had made some of the paths a bit slippery.
- Parents agree strongly that the school keeps their children safe and looks after them very well.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching over time is good and results in pupils making good progress. Some teaching results in pupils making outstanding gains in their learning, but there is not enough of this at present.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and generally high expectations. They usually capitalise well on pupils' eagerness to learn both individually and in groups. Often they set tasks that are challenging and stretch pupils' well, such as making up rhymes in Reception or placing tricky decimals on a number line in Year 4.
- Pupils relish the opportunity to work out things for themselves and when they get some choice in the tasks they do often pick the more demanding option. This supports their good and sometimes outstanding progress. This was exemplified well in a Year 6 mathematics lesson.
- High expectations and work matched well to the needs of pupils are occasionally not evident in all teaching. From time to time, the work does not stretch all pupils well enough, particularly the most able pupils and they are not required to think deeply to complete their work.
- Teaching assistants work with groups of pupils, some of whom have additional needs. They are highly skilled at breaking down the work into smaller chunks so that their pupils can access it. This enables pupils with additional needs to make good progress in line with their peers.
- Literacy, numeracy and information communication technology (ICT) are incorporated well in to many tasks, such as Year 1 creating bar charts to display their results from their science lesson and the use of the interactive white board to visualise fractions in Year 5. Great attention is given to spelling, punctuation and grammar. This has resulted in pupils above average attainment in this area by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils' work is marked regularly and accurately, but the quality of marking is not of a consistently high quality in the way it informs pupils well enough how they can improve their work. In addition, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to respond to any advice that has been given.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well, for example in helping pupils to reflect on what it is like to live in countries not so well off as our own.
- Parents agreed that teaching is good and that their children make good progress.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter the Nursery with skills that are generally below those expected for their age and they leave in Year 6 with attainment that is consistently above average.

- Progress in each year group is at least good, particularly so in Key Stage 2 because the teaching over time has been stronger there. Attainment by the end of Key Stage 1 is slightly above that found nationally. This includes the attainment of boys which was previously lower than that of the girls. The school has had a close focus on providing work that matches the interests of boys well, such as Guy Fawkes and Halloween magic.
- The progress that disadvantaged pupils make is good and better than that of similar pupils nationally. Any gaps between their progress and that of their peers in school is minimal or improving strongly.
- Nationally published data for attainment in 2014 showed that disadvantaged pupils in school were about one term behind in mathematics, only half a term behind in writing and one term ahead in reading compared to non-disadvantaged pupils nationally. The school gap in 2014 was over a year in mathematics, two terms in writing, one term in reading and had widened. However, work scrutiny of pupils currently in school shows these gaps in attainment to be closing rapidly.
- Pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs make good progress. Pupils are supported well by teachers and by teaching assistants in class and also in small group sessions. For example In a Year 3 group the pupils made good progress in reading because of the teacher's expert questioning and advice on how to sound out difficult words.
- The progress of the most able pupils is generally good. It had been a concern in the past but is improving strongly. In many lessons most able pupils are challenged well with work that makes them think hard. Only occasionally is this not the case, and when this happens their progress slows.
- Specialist coaching paid through the primary sports funding has increased pupils' enjoyment and participation in sport, as well as increasing the level of performance. Last year, for example, Farne were the winners in a local cross-country competition.
- Pupils read widely and often. This is celebrated in the many displays around the school. It was confirmed in discussion with a range of pupils and by listening to some Year 2 pupils read.
- Pupils are prepared well for the next stage in their education. Their confidence and independence skills are built up through strategies, such as the Saturday morning Shine Club at a nearby secondary school.

The early years provision

is good

- Children get off to a good start in the early years because there are strong links with parents and pre-school provision. Children's needs are well known and they settle well.
- The environment in both the Nursery and Reception is bright and stimulating. Outside areas are used well, considering the physical constraints of access to and from the buildings.
- The school reports that the recently started Pufflings club for pre-school children is having a good impact on preparing children for Nursery, most of whom enter below age-related expectations, particularly in aspects of communication and personal and social education.
- The quality of provision in early years is good and children make good progress. Nearly half the children reached a good level of development by the end of Reception in 2014. This includes boys as well as girls.
- The interests of boys are especially well catered for. An example of this is a series of activities based on a book about aliens. The inspectors observed children in Reception dressed up as aliens, eagerly searching for the aliens' underpants that had been carefully hidden by others outside.
- Teaching is good and engages the children well. There is a good balance between the tasks that teachers lead and those that children choose for themselves. The mud kitchen is very popular and children in the Nursery use their imagination well when preparing their 'food'.
- Safety is paramount and rigorous risk assessments are undertaken, particularly for activities outside. Nursery children were observed walking safely in the frosty morning returning from finding sticks to make their stickmen.
- Children behave very sensibly at all times and show each other consideration when working on tasks together.
- Usually adults intervene and move learning on by careful questioning. However, sometimes the questions do not always allow the children to think deeply enough and this limits their progress.
- The early years is well led. The leader is ambitious for the children and is taking on board advice from a recent audit undertaken by the local authority. Increasingly, adults are using the information from their observations of the children to plan activities that match the needs of all of the children more closely.

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	108455
Local authority	Newcastle Upon Tyne
Inspection number	448371

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	238
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alan Pattison
Headteacher	Lee Gallon
Date of previous school inspection	17 March 2010
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