

Cestria Primary School

Church Chare, Chester le Street, County Durham, DH3 3PZ

Inspection dates

21–22 January 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	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.

- Cestria Primary is a happy place where pupils feel safe and secure. They behave exceptionally well, are proud of their school and enjoy trusting relationships with all of the adults in school. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very positive.
- The headteacher has a very clear plan for the further improvement of the school, which is being implemented effectively. Staff share her determination to improve further the quality of teaching, pupils' progress and standards by the end of Year 6.
- From broadly typical starting points, pupils make good progress and achieve well to reach above-average standards by the end of Year 6.
- Children in the early years get off to a good start at school. Teachers provide a range of exciting activities that help them to develop their reading and writing skills quickly and securely.
- Good teaching encourages and motivates pupils to want to learn and they enjoy their time at the school. Staff have a good understanding of the abilities and needs of all pupils.
- Attendance is consistently above average.
- The governing body has a good understanding of the school. Governors are committed to improving outcomes for pupils.
- Improvements to the school's outdoor facilities and organisation of the school day are welcomed and enjoyed by pupils. As a result, their behaviour has improved even further.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted very well by a rich curriculum. The school's ethos, based upon mutual trust, respect and tolerance prepares pupils very well for life in modern Britain.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe is outstanding. Parents overwhelmingly appreciate the care and support provided by the school for themselves and their children.
- A wide range of sporting and other activities beyond the classroom mean that pupils have many opportunities to broaden their skills and understanding. The school's inclusive approach to sport enables pupils of all abilities to participate.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The impact of teaching over time is not always consistently good or better in all year groups and subjects.
- The monitoring that school leaders undertake is not always rigorous enough to enable them to focus sharply on areas for improvement.
- Pupils' progress rates are variable in some year groups.
- Written feedback from teachers does not consistently inform pupils about the next steps they need to take to improve.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed parts of lessons led by teachers and also observed small groups supported by teaching assistants. They also visited an assembly. Some observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher.
- Inspectors considered assessment data on pupils' progress and standards of attainment, listened to pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 read and looked at samples of pupils' work, including learning journals.
- Discussions were held with pupils from Key Stages 1 and 2 and inspectors talked with pupils during their break and lunchtimes and in the dining hall.
- Inspectors considered 56 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) along with the views of parents spoken with during the inspection. Eight parents contacted inspectors by telephone to discuss their views about the school.
- Meetings were held with three governors, including the vice-chair of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. Further discussions took place with the headteacher and other leaders including those responsible for the early years, English, mathematics and the school's provision for pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs.
- Twelve staff completed questionnaires and their responses were analysed.
- A number of school documents were considered including the school improvement plan and the school's evaluation of its own performance. Records of attendance, behaviour and documents linked to safeguarding and child protection were also scrutinised.

Inspection team

Jonathan Chicken, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Christine Cottam

Additional Inspector

Geoffrey Seagrove

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Cestria Primary School is a larger than average-sized primary school. The number of pupils on roll is similar to that during the previous inspection.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- Since the previous inspection, a number of teachers and leaders, including the deputy headteacher, have taken up post.
- The headteacher and the Chair of the Governing Body were in post at the time of the previous inspection.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are supported by the pupil premium funding is below average. The pupil premium is funding provided for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Children in Reception attend full time. The school does not have a nursery.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the quality of teaching to be consistently good or better in its impact on pupils' achievement and hence continue to raise standards by:
 - ensuring that teachers have consistently high expectations of what all pupils can achieve
 - maximising the use of information about pupils' progress to make certain that tasks are always closely matched to pupils' ability and needs, particularly the most able
 - giving high quality written feedback to pupils that consistently provides pupils with well-defined steps to extend their learning and deepen their understanding.
- Further improve leadership and management by:
 - accurately using information about the quality of teaching over time to enable a clear focus on making improvements to teaching where they are most needed
 - ensuring the monitoring of all areas of the school's work is equally rigorous.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and the deputy headteacher have a clear and effective agenda for ongoing improvement. They are very positive role models for other staff, have high expectations and lead by example.
- Leaders have taken swift action to address a recent dip in standards at the end of Year 6. Outcomes for pupils in 2014 were much stronger and current pupils are on track to reach similarly high standards in 2015.
- Leadership of and support for teaching is effective overall and the team-based systems to check on the quality of teaching are undertaken frequently. Middle leaders contribute to this process both through lesson observations and the regular analysis of pupils' work. Leaders recognise that there is still more to do to eliminate inconsistencies in pupils' progress that have resulted from weaker teaching.
- Pupils' progress is tracked regularly, and teachers' assessments are checked by other staff in the school. These assessments form the basis of a wide range of interventions to support pupils at risk of falling behind. Individual pupil's progress is reported appropriately to parents and the next steps in their learning are clearly identified. The school is currently developing its preferred approach to assessment in response to national changes regarding National Curriculum levels.
- The pupil premium funding to support the learning of disadvantaged pupils has been used wisely, as shown by their good and improving achievement by the end of Year 6. Leaders have correctly focussed resources to tackle the emerging gaps pupils' attainment in Key Stage 1 compared to those of other pupils nationally. This is one example of leaders' effective commitment to provide equality of opportunity and overcome discrimination.
- Staff performance targets are challenging and reflect the school's very high expectations of everyone. They are supported by a good quality training programme and are linked closely to the school's priorities. However, not all checks made on the quality of teaching link sufficiently well to how effectively teaching impacts on pupils' progress.
- The school's view of its own performance is broadly accurate and identifies key priorities to further improve. The current development plan is comprehensive, although leaders recognise that clearly measurable targets would allow them to more precisely focus their actions.
- Pupils enjoy their learning partly because the curriculum provides carefully planned practical and enriching experiences which provide the stimulus for learning. Literacy is given good emphasis through a range of subjects. Pupils' well-developed skills in handwriting and presentation can be seen across all subjects. Recent changes to the mathematics curriculum have been well managed and, as a result, the new resources and teaching methods are popular with teachers and pupils.
- During the inspection, pupils' work in celebration of Chinese New Year was observed. This is an example of how the school is successful in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Younger pupils learned about Scottish traditions during assembly and as a result explored their own ideas of what being British means. Rich and frequent opportunities such as this ensure that pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain.
- The primary school sports funding has been used to provide expert teaching, focused staff training, sports clubs and inter-school sports competitions, such as cross-country running. Pupils have responded with great enthusiasm and many take part. The girls' football team has enjoyed particular success at both a local and regional level. Pupils and their parents say how much they enjoy the clubs and competitions, especially the opportunity to work in teams and develop confidence.
- The local authority has provided light-touch support for the school since its previous inspection.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding meet all statutory requirements and staff are tenacious and skilful in securing the cooperation of other agencies to help pupils with particular needs or those who are vulnerable.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is well led and has an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for development. Governors are regular visitors to school and are highly supportive. Governors are particularly effective in managing resources and improving facilities.
 - Through regular visits to classrooms, governors have a first-hand knowledge of the quality of teaching. They receive regular reports from the headteacher about how well groups of pupils are achieving. As a result, governors are increasingly confident to challenge school leaders about how well the school is performing.
 - The governing body has a full complement of members. Membership is sought-after and such choice

- gives the school an opportunity to balance the skills and experience of the governing body.
- Governors are rigorous in their management of teachers' progression along the pay scale and of the performance of the headteacher.
- Governors are very well informed on how funding is used, particularly that for specific purposes such as the pupil premium. They know how the money has been spent and receive a detailed evaluation on what was most successful and how activities have had an impact on outcomes for pupils.
- Governors make sure that the school meets all of its statutory duties to promote the safety and well-being of pupils and staff.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils encourage one another to conduct themselves well. They are extremely proud of their school and are considerate and supportive of each other in lessons. Consistently thoughtful behaviour is an important factor in effective learning. It creates a welcoming, friendly and professional atmosphere throughout the school. Incidents of poor or serious behaviour are almost unheard of in the school.
- Pupils have exemplary attitudes to learning and consistently show a thirst for knowledge. This is because the school offers so much that is exciting, stimulating and fun to do in and out of lessons. A well-resourced and managed outdoor area promotes excellent relationships and enables children to behave well. During the longer lunchtime break, older pupils lead a plethora of games, sports and activities providing even more opportunities for pupils to compete, play and interact well with one another.
- Pupils' enjoyment of school is reflected in their above average attendance. They are very keen to attend and arrive punctually and ready to learn.
- Parents overwhelmingly agree that behaviour is a strength of the school.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils are taught very effectively to identify and manage potential risks to their well-being. They can clearly explain how to keep safe in a variety of situations, including when using the internet and social media.
- Pupils have a very clear understanding of the different forms of bullying, including those based on prejudices. They have every confidence in school staff, including those who supervise them at lunchtime, to deal with an incident should it occur. The school includes special lessons about bullying in its curriculum.
- Despite being a large school there is a very close community of staff, parents and pupils that results in highly positive relationships. These relationships lead to outstanding pastoral care for pupils and their families through robust systems of support.
- Parents overwhelmingly agree that their children feel safe and are very happy at the school.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching in the school is good overall and enables pupils to make good progress. Some teaching in the school is thought-provoking, inspiring and enables pupils to make even better progress.
- Teachers have strong relationships with pupils, and know their individual strengths and weaknesses. Pupils understand what is expected of them and teachers manage behaviour effectively. Where the quality of teaching has the greatest impact on pupils' learning and achievement, planning builds carefully on what pupils already know, and tasks are appropriately adapted for different groups of pupils, including the most able. In mathematics, younger pupils learned to recall facts about the addition of numbers. The teacher successfully adapted a whole-class activity so that the most able pupils could apply their knowledge of halving to odd numbers. This level of challenge helped them to make very strong progress.
- When pupils' progress is fastest and achievement exceeds expected levels:
 - teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are consistently high
 - set tasks take account of pupils' different abilities
 - questioning constantly checks and probes knowledge and deepens understanding
 - problem-solving tasks inspire pupils to think critically, evaluate their learning and make decisions about their next steps.
- Where these aspects are less evident, pupils' progress is occasionally more variable and achievement

requires improvement.

- Teaching in the early years is good and children enjoy learning in an environment that is both welcoming and well organised. As a result, children settle quickly and develop their early skills well, particularly in reading, writing and number. Parents play an active role in their children's learning and development.
- Regular marking of pupils' books identifies what is correct and explains what is wrong. Pupils usually respond positively to advice and correct any misconceptions or mistakes. Advice is often given for improvement, although the frequency and impact of this is not yet consistent across the school or between different subjects.
- The school has very good procedures to identify and support pupils who need extra help. This includes disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. The work of teaching assistants is good. They work effectively with groups of pupils and have been developed well, providing the right amount of support and guidance.
- The strong focus on reading throughout the school ensures that pupils have very good opportunities to practise their skills. Reading is taught effectively and teaching is carefully structured and well-paced. Parents play an important role in reading with their children at home.
- The teaching of writing is effective and pupils make good progress, particularly across Key Stage 2. Pupils are developing a good understanding of spelling, punctuation and grammar. Teachers provide many opportunities to practise these skills across a wide range of other subjects.
- The teaching of mathematics is good and improving in regard to pupils understanding their basic number skills.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter the school with skills and abilities typical for their age. For a few children, their skills are less well developed, particularly in their communication, language and literacy as well as their personal, social and emotional development.
- In the 2014 Year 1 phonics check, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard was higher than the national average. This is because the teaching of letters, and the sounds that they make (phonics) is well managed, systematic, motivating and successful.
- The school's records and other inspection evidence indicate that pupils currently in Key Stage 1 are making good progress and a greater proportion are on track to attain the higher National Curriculum Level 3 than in previous years.
- The progress pupils made from the end of Year 2 to the end of Year 6 in 2014 was considerable. This rapid progress enabled pupils to reach standards of attainment that were well above the national average in 2014. This was an increase on the previous year and was due to the focussed improvements school leaders brought to the quality of teaching. This trend of improvement is continuing. Pupils in the current Year 6 are on track to reach well above average standards in mathematics, reading, writing and English grammar, punctuation and spelling in 2015.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make the same good progress as their classmates, because their needs are carefully managed, particularly towards the end of Key Stage 2.
- The school provides effective support for disadvantaged pupils and by the time they leave the school, they too have made good progress. This is helping to close gaps that exist within school and with other pupils nationally. The pupil premium funding is used to provide additional staff and also to ensure these pupils can enjoy the same opportunities to attend educational visits as their classmates.
- By the end of Key Stage 2, disadvantaged pupils make better progress than their classmates nationally. In 2014, disadvantaged pupils left the school less than one term behind others in the school and almost three terms ahead of other pupils nationally in reading. In writing, disadvantaged pupils left the school over two terms behind others in the school and almost two terms ahead of other pupils nationally. In mathematics, disadvantaged pupils left the school almost two terms behind others in the school and over two terms ahead of other pupils nationally.
- The proportion of most able pupils achieving higher levels in 2014 was above average. Across the school, the most able pupils largely achieve well because work set for them is suitably challenging and engages their interests. Occasionally, when this is not the case, their pace of learning slows.

The early years provision**is good**

- The early years is led by an experienced leader who is ably supported by an enthusiastic team. They know the children well and make sure that they settle into school quickly and make a good start to their education. All staff share the headteacher's vision and create a place where children are happy and able to thrive. The provision is highly regarded by parents.
- Children's behaviour is good and they respond quickly to instructions and are eager to please.
- Most children typically join the Reception class with skills and abilities similar to those expected for their age. They make good progress across individual areas of learning. By the end of the Reception Year children are well prepared for and ready to start Year 1. There is a small proportion of children who join with skills and abilities that are well below those necessary for learning and have special educational needs or disabilities. These children are well supported by skilled teachers and adults who know them well and, as a result, they make good progress.
- School information confirms that children currently in the Reception Year are making good progress. Teachers use their knowledge of children's needs well in order to plan learning that children enjoy and they usually make good progress from their individual starting points, particularly in physical areas of development.

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	114012
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	453253

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	429
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Carol Walklate
Headteacher	Lorraine Gowland
Date of previous school inspection	19 September 2006
Telephone number	0191 388 2483
Fax number	0191 389 0933
Email address	cestria@durhamlearning.net

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