

Prudhoe West First School

West Road, Prudhoe, Northumberland, NE42 6HR

Inspection dates 18–19 March 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
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 make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics because of effective teaching. By the time they leave school, they reach standards above those typically seen at the end of Year 4.
- Children achieve well in the Nursery and Reception classes because good teaching supports them to develop their skills in reading, writing and number. As a result, they are well prepared to access the curriculum in Year 1.
- Senior leaders have taken successful steps to raise pupils' achievement and address specific weaknesses in teaching. After a dip in performance in 2013, the rate at which pupils make progress is now improving well.
- Pupils are well-behaved and courteous. They enjoy school, attend well and take pride in their work.
- Pupils say they feel extremely safe in school. Bullying is rare and pupils are confident that staff will address any problems that arise.
- Pupils make excellent progress in physical education because of the school's well-planned curriculum. They participate successfully in a wide range of competitive sport.
- Senior leaders encourage pupils to express their views about school and take these into account when they plan the curriculum. This has improved pupils' enthusiasm for their learning.
- Governors keep a careful check on the work of the school and ask challenging questions of senior leaders. They have a clear picture of what needs to be done to improve the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not always high enough. Work set can sometimes be too easy for pupils.
- Leaders do not always set sufficiently precise or ambitious targets for teachers to ensure that all pupils make rapid progress in all subjects.
- Not all middle leaders play a strong enough role in improving the quality of teaching in their areas of responsibility.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed teaching across all classes, including two joint observations with the acting headteacher and acting deputy headteacher. They observed the quality of teaching and learning, looked at the current standard of pupils' work and talked to pupils about their learning, progress and experiences of school.
- Inspectors held discussions with senior leaders, middle leaders, a group of teachers, four members of the governing body and two groups of pupils. The lead inspector also held a telephone discussion with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspection team evaluated a wide range of school documents, including the school development plan, the school's self-evaluation, information on pupils' progress, records of the checks made on the quality of teaching, minutes of governing body meetings and governors' monitoring reports, information on safeguarding (protecting children and making sure they are safe) and a range of policies.
- Inspectors considered the views expressed in the 29 questionnaire returns from staff.
- Inspectors talked to parents and considered the 46 responses made by parents to the online questionnaire (Parent View), and questionnaires completed by parents as part of the school's own consultation.

Inspection team

Claire Brown, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

David Brown

Her Majesty's Inspector

Lesley Richardson

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school caters for pupils aged 3-9 years and is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils for whom the pupil premium provides support is lower than the national average. The pupil premium is additional government funding provided for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is below the national average.
- Children in the early years attend either Reception class full time or Nursery on a part-time basis in morning or afternoon sessions.
- A new headteacher was appointed to the school in April 2014. At the time of inspection, due to the headteacher's maternity leave, the deputy headteacher was in post as acting headteacher.
- An on-site community leisure facility operates in partnership with the school and provides a range of sporting opportunities for children and families.
- The school is a partner in the Tyne Valley Teaching Schools' Alliance. This alliance provides professional development for trainee and qualified teachers.
- There is an on-site childcare facility, Our Kids Club, which is managed by a private provider. It has been subject to its own inspection and the inspection report can be found at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk>.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all pupils make rapid and sustained progress in all subjects by:
 - increasing the level of challenge in the work set by teachers so that pupils are required to think deeply about their learning
 - setting more ambitious targets for what pupils can achieve
 - developing the skills of middle leaders so they can take a more significant role in planning, implementing and evaluating improvements to the quality of teaching in their areas of responsibility.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Senior leaders, including governors, are determined to provide for the needs of every pupil. They know their school well and have taken specific actions which have addressed weaknesses in teaching and improved pupils' achievement.
- The school has effective systems in place in order to check on how well pupils achieve in reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders regularly discuss pupils' progress with class teachers. Until this year, the achievement targets agreed between teachers and leaders were not high enough. Leaders have tackled this and progress is improving well for all pupils.
- Middle leaders' evaluation of the quality of teaching is not always balanced with what they know about the achievement of pupils over time. This has limited their ability to identify accurately the most important priorities for improvement and to plan to address them.
- Additional sport funding is used extremely successfully to improve the quality of physical education. Specialist coaches and the school's effective sports' partnership ensure that pupils have access to high quality equipment and teaching. Pupils have a healthy appetite for competitive sport and leaders' carefully planned actions have led to outstanding achievement in this area of the curriculum.
- Pupils receive a broad and balanced curriculum which is enhanced by a range of visits and visitors to school and pupils enjoy a wide range of after-school clubs. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is effective, promoting respect and tolerance, with pupils showing a good understanding of other faiths and cultures in Britain and beyond. Pupils' computing skills are developed less well than their skills in other subjects because the limited equipment in school makes it challenging for teachers to deliver the well-planned scheme of work.
- The school's systems to keep pupils safe are of high quality. Safeguarding arrangements comply with statutory requirements and the work staff do to help children understand and manage risks to their own safety is exemplary. As a result, parents and pupils are extremely confident about pupils' safety.
- Senior leaders have spent pupil premium funding appropriately and this has resulted in improvements in the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. For example, in Year 2 in 2014, they achieved above the national average for all pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders have also improved the attendance of disadvantaged pupils so that it is in line with the national average for all pupils.
- Leaders promote equality of opportunity and tackle discrimination well and ensure that all pupils are able to participate in all the school has to offer. For example, they have provided extra opportunities at lunchtime for those pupils who may not have access to internet facilities at home.
- A minority of parents expressed concerns through Parent View about the effectiveness of leadership and management and had reservations about whether their concerns were addressed effectively. Senior leaders, including governors, recognise and acknowledge that this relates to a period of instability in leadership and staffing and are working hard to regain the confidence of this group of parents.
- Senior leaders, including governors, have had limited support and challenge from the local authority. They welcome the recent changes to the school improvement services in Northumberland and are keen to access external advice.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors know the school well. They are passionate about improving the quality of teaching so that pupils achieve as well as they can. They have a good picture of the standards reached by pupils and the quality of the curriculum because they work closely with senior and middle leaders in focused monitoring weeks. They have not been afraid to tackle weaker teaching through systems to manage teachers' performance and this has helped the school to improve. Governors with specific responsibility for monitoring pupils' achievement have challenged the school well and this has resulted in improvements to the effectiveness of progress meetings between leaders and class teachers. Governors use their expertise well, for example, in checking on how additional funding is broadening opportunities for increased participation in sport.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are polite and courteous and show respect and care for adults and one another. Pupils are keen to learn and present their work neatly. Occasionally, a very few pupils go off task and talk when they should

be working. This tends to occur if work is not challenging enough to keep pupils' attention. Teachers manage this behaviour quickly to minimise the impact on learning.

- Pupils' behaviour is particularly good at playtimes and is exemplary in the corridors. They take great care of their school and the equipment they use, because leaders have encouraged them to have a strong sense of belonging to the school community. For example, they played a significant role in designing an outdoor multi-gym installed in the school grounds and are very proud of this achievement.
- Pupils have a keen sense of responsibility through opportunities to take on leadership roles in school. At lunchtime, 'buddies' play a key role in helping the youngest children to manage in the dining hall and access the playground and this contributes to a well-ordered, calm atmosphere.
- Pupils have a good understanding about modern British values of democracy and freedom of speech. They have an active school council which influences the curriculum, including the very popular programme of enrichment activities that take place each Friday afternoon. Some pupils have visited London to meet with their local Member of Parliament and have had the opportunity to challenge their local councillor about the key issues that interest them.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- Pupils feel safe in school and parents are confident that their children are kept safe. The school is rigorous in following up absences. Leaders are creative in working with families to overcome barriers to learning which might affect pupils' ability to attend school. As a result, attendance has improved steadily and is above the national average for all pupils. The number of children achieving 100% attendance is increasing.
- Pupils report that bullying is extremely rare. Pupils have a very clear understanding of different types of bullying, including cyber-bullying and racist bullying, and know why it is wrong to call each other hurtful names. Some pupils have trained as anti-bullying ambassadors and other pupils know they can go to them for support if they are worried.
- The school's programme of work to support pupils to calculate and manage risk to their own safety is highly effective. During the inspection, children in Nursery and Reception classes worked with the fire and rescue service and demonstrated that they were acutely aware of the danger of fire and how fires might start. Pupils across the school show a mature understanding of the risks associated with using the internet and have received regular training to help keep them safe on line.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Evidence in pupils' books and the school's assessment data indicate that teaching is enabling pupils to make good progress. Teachers have good subject knowledge and there is a strong focus on teaching skills in reading, writing and mathematics. There are regular opportunities for pupils to apply and consolidate these skills in other subjects, for example, through writing at length in geography and history.
- The teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they represent) in Reception and Key Stage 1 classes is targeted precisely at the needs of different groups of pupils. Pupils have appropriate strategies to help them tackle new words and they say they enjoy reading. Consequently, the proportion of pupils who meet the expected level in the phonics check in Year 1 has steadily increased over the past three years and is above the national average.
- In the most effective lessons, teachers plan work which they know will interest pupils. For example, in Year 2, pupils were enthusiastic to tackle word problems involving simple fractions in mathematics because they were linked to Paddington Bear. As a result, they made significant gains in their learning.
- While teachers are aware of pupils' starting points and consider what pupils already know when they plan learning activities, they do not always have high enough expectations of what their pupils can do. Work is sometimes too easy and this prevents some pupils from making progress as fast as they can.
- Teachers mark pupils' books regularly and pupils have targets to improve their work. Pupils feel this helps them to produce better work.
- Teachers set a range of challenging homework for pupils, including projects which extend over several weeks and online learning in mathematics. Pupils particularly enjoy their speaking and listening homework, which is shared with families in the school newsletter. This approach is improving the quality of pupils' oral responses successfully.
- Teaching assistants are deployed appropriately to support individual and specific groups of pupils. They are effective in enabling pupils to access the curriculum and in providing specific intervention to help pupils to make more rapid progress. Occasionally, a lack of subject knowledge reduces the impact they

have on improving the rate at which pupils achieve.

The achievement of pupils is good

- From their individual starting points, pupils make good progress and achieve standards which are above those typically seen by the end of Year 4 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Children make good progress across all areas of learning in the early years, achieving particularly well in reading and writing.
- By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils attain standards which are well above the national average. While the performance of pupils dipped in 2013, this was rapidly addressed in 2014 so that attainment returned to the high levels seen previously.
- Inspection evidence indicates that in the past, across Key Stage 2, progress has not been consistently good for some groups of pupils, partly due to instability in staffing. However, pupils are now making more rapid progress in these year groups.
- Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills, particularly their written communication skills, are developed well through other subjects, such as geography and history.
- Pupils' current learning and progress indicates that while they achieve well in most subjects across the curriculum, their progress is not quite as strong in computing because of limited resources. Achievement in physical education (PE) and sport is outstanding because of the well-planned curriculum provided through the PE and sport premium (additional funding provided by the government).
- The progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs has not always been as good as that of other pupils because targets set for their achievement were not consistently ambitious. However, leaders have tackled this and teachers' expectations of what they can achieve have increased. This means they are now making progress at a rate similar to that of other pupils.
- Disadvantaged pupils in 2014 left the school working two terms ahead of the expected standards for pupils of a similar age in reading, one term ahead in writing and at the same level in mathematics. They were around two terms behind other pupils in school in all subjects. In previous years, some disadvantaged pupils have not made progress quickly enough to catch up with other pupils in school and other pupils nationally. However, their progress is now improving rapidly. For example, disadvantaged pupils attained above the national average for all pupils in the Year 1 phonics check and at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2014.
- More able pupils make good progress from their starting points, attaining standards which are well above national averages by the time they leave the school.

The early years provision is good

- Children start school with skills that are typical for their age. Good quality provision is enabling children to make a good start to their learning in the early years. They make good progress across Nursery and Reception classes, developing their personal, social and emotional skills particularly well so that they become confident learners. By the end of Reception, a higher than average proportion reach the expected good level of development that ensures they are well prepared for Year 1.
- Children are happy, cooperate well and enjoy playing together. They understand the routines that adults have established well and this results in a calm environment where children can learn successfully.
- Staff plan carefully for all areas of learning and take account of children's interests and ideas. For example, during the inspection, pupils were extremely excited by the visit from local fire fighters who brought their fire appliance to the school. Teachers capitalised on this by planning numeracy activities which linked to the number of fire fighters and provided opportunities for role play using hosepipes and helmets which stimulated high quality discussion from children.
- Children learn letters and sounds in small groups through daily sessions. The high expectations of staff, their enthusiastic attitude and the careful match of activities to children's abilities means that children make very good progress in this aspect of their learning.
- Staff provide short, discrete sessions to improve children's mathematical skills. For example, children were using number lines, counters and other equipment to help them to complete simple addition and subtraction and the majority of children were making good progress in their learning. However, the tasks set for some children were too easy and this prevented them from making more rapid progress.
- Adults provide a stimulating range of activities and equipment, both inside and outside, to motivate

children to choose the direction of their own learning. Generally, adults intervene with well-chosen questions which prompt pupils to think and develop their learning. Very occasionally, opportunities for this are missed and this prevents pupils from making progress as quickly as they could.

- Adults plan carefully to help pupils understand the need to stay safe. Staff ensure that children take additional care when moving equipment or navigating steps and risk assess activities on a daily basis.
- The early years leader has established good systems for keeping a check on children's progress and to identify those at risk of underachieving. She has an extremely clear understanding of what needs to be done to improve children's achievement.

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	122220
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	453349

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	3–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	319
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Whinney
Headteacher	Carrie Davison
Date of previous school inspection	9 July 2009
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