

Harrogate, Bilton Grange Community Primary School

Bilton Lane, Harrogate, North Yorkshire, HG1 3BA

Inspection dates 11–12 March 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide strong aspirational leadership. They are determined to provide the best for pupils at Bilton Grange.
- The school has continued to improve since its previous inspection. Staff conduct a range of research projects to find ways of helping pupils learn more effectively.
- School corridors teem with vibrant artwork of a very high quality.
- There is a tangible sense of community. Behaviour is good, pupils say they feel very safe and well looked after at school. Parents also appreciate the excellent care provided and typically comment: 'All staff have been so supportive of my child's needs. It makes me feel like my child is the only child in the school.'
- Staff help to develop pupils' personal, social and emotional development well.
- Pupils achieve well across Key Stages 1 and 2. They do particularly well at Key Stage 2.
- Many disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs make excellent progress, relative to their starting points.
- Staff are very committed and hard working. Most teaching is good and some is outstanding, due to the strong leadership of teaching and learning.
- Governors know the school well and offer a good level of challenge and support to leaders.
- The school is developing its curriculum to help bring learning alive for its pupils.
- The school is very popular with parents. The number on roll is rising and the school is over subscribed. All of the parents, who responded to Parent View, said they would recommend the school to others.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Provision in the early years requires improvement. Pupils make steady rather than good progress during their first year at school.
- The quality of teaching is still a little variable, particularly in the early years and Key Stage 1.
- Marking does not always help pupils improve their work.
- Some of the most able pupils, in particular, do not reach their full potential. Their work is sometimes too easy and it does not always interest and inspire them to try their very best.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 22 part-lessons, eight of which were conducted jointly with a senior leader. They made several other short visits to lessons.
- Meetings were held with governors, senior leaders, staff, pupils, a representative from the local authority and a representative from the alliance of teaching schools.
- Inspectors listened to some pupils read, observed break times and spoke with pupils from every class.
- A range of documents were examined. These included leaders' views of the school's performance, records of the checks made on teaching and learning, the school improvement plan, information about pupils' progress and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- Inspectors took account of the views of parents through informal discussions with parents, a telephone conversation with a parent and analysis of the school's own questionnaire to parents. The 72 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) were also scrutinised.
- The inspectors analysed the 34 responses from staff to the inspection questionnaire.

Inspection team

Fiona Gowers, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Helen Rowland

Additional Inspector

Janet Keefe

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Pupils join the school on a full time basis in the early years.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium is additional funding that the school receives to support 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 from minority ethnic groups is well below average. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is broadly average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school works collaboratively in a teaching alliance with a number of schools in the locality.
- The deputy headteacher and lower Key Stage 2 leader are Specialist Leaders in Education (SLE) and support other schools in the teaching alliance.
- The school has received a wide range of awards since the previous inspection. These include the Inclusion Quality Mark, Arts Mark Gold, the Basic Skills Quality Mark and the Eco Schools Bronze Award.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching, particularly in the early years and in Key Stage 1, so that pupils, the most able in particular, make even better progress, by ensuring:
 - the quality of all marking and feedback matches the very best practice in school in order that pupils are very clear about how to improve their work
 - learning activities challenge and inspire pupils to try their very best, to concentrate fully, and secure an in-depth understanding of their work
 - the most-able pupils are quickly moved onto more challenging work as soon as they are ready.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- This is a school that welcomes all of its pupils. Good relations are fostered throughout school. Discrimination is not tolerated and the school endeavours to ensure that all pupils have equal opportunity to benefit from everything on offer at school.
- Senior leaders focus relentlessly on improving teaching and learning. Staff are very enthusiastic, hardworking and committed. Staff responses to the inspection questionnaire about the school were all entirely positive.
- The school makes regular checks on pupils' progress. Any pupil at risk of falling behind in their learning is quickly picked up and help is provided, where appropriate. As a result, many disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make rapid progress, relative to their starting points.
- Pupil premium funding is used very well because there has been a specific focus on meeting pupils' individual needs. The impact of the funding is very carefully and regularly checked to help ensure pupils benefit as much as possible. Indeed, disadvantaged pupils typically also make rapid progress.
- Senior leaders are well aware that, historically, some pupils have not done as well in the early years and Key Stage 1 as they do at Key Stage 2. This is partly due to a period of staffing changes. However, plans for improvement are sharply focused on ensuring that the quality of teaching is consistently good or better throughout school and that expectations are high for all pupils at every key stage.
- Middle leaders too are increasingly playing an important part in driving forward improvements in their subject areas. They check learning and progress in their subject areas in regular subject weeks.
- The leadership of special educational needs and of the pastoral support for more vulnerable pupils is a notable strength.
- Strong leadership of teaching and learning is leading to increased consistency in classroom practice. Staff are reflective and keen to improve their work. They receive regular feedback from senior leaders on how well their teaching is helping pupils learn. Teachers also have the opportunity to film themselves in the classroom and then reflect on their work.
- Arrangements to check the performance of teachers are used increasingly well to promote good quality teaching and to foster emerging leadership skills.
- The school is developing an exciting and innovative curriculum. There is a strong emphasis on the creative arts and on supporting the social and emotional well-being of pupils. Pupils in Key Stage 2 recently took part in activities to help them gain a better understanding of life during World War Two. They made a meal using typically rationed ingredients, had a go at making their own propaganda videos and held their own street party.
- Pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain. Assemblies, classroom activities and school displays emphasise the importance of democratic processes, such as the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, as well as helping to foster tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. The school's wall of fame celebrates the lives of famous people, such as Winston Churchill, Florence Nightingale and Nelson Mandela, for example.
- The primary school physical education and sport funding has been used extremely well. It has significantly raised the profile of sports and reinforced the need for determination, teamwork and healthy lifestyles. Sport is a fundamental part of school life. Staff have become more skilled and confident in the teaching of many different aspects of physical education. Pupils have many opportunities to join sports clubs and regularly take part in sporting competitions, both within their own school and with other schools in the locality. Many are relishing the opportunity to have a go at new sports, such as tag rugby and 'tchoukball' – a cross between netball and handball, played with a trampoline.
- The school has gained significantly from its growing collaborative practice with the alliance of teaching schools in the locality. Benefits can be seen from the sharing of expertise and research projects in many key areas. It also plays a leading role in helping other schools improve. For example, it has helped other schools develop their assessment procedures, use pupil premium funding effectively and improve their arts curriculum.
- Leaders and governors take care to ensure that effective arrangements for safeguarding are in place. Staff follow all the safeguarding policies.
- The local authority has full confidence in the school maintaining its pace of school improvement and considers it necessary only to provide light-touch support. The school in turn appreciates the local authority's external validation of its work.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a clear view of teaching and of data on the school's performance. They are aware that

pupils have historically often made the fastest progress at Key Stage 2. Governors make sure they secure an external view of the school's effectiveness by working closely with the local authority and other leaders from the alliance of teaching schools.

- Governors interview subject leaders to evaluate the impact of their work. Governors regularly ask searching questions to check that pupils benefit from new developments. For example, governors recently checked that pupils were making better progress in phonics (letters and the sounds they make) following curriculum changes and that teaching assistants were deployed effectively in school.
- Governors have a good understanding of performance management procedures. They know what is done to reward good teaching and to tackle underperformance in the classroom.
- Governors ensure that safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements and that they are regularly reviewed.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are polite and friendly and generally conduct themselves extremely well.
- Pupils feel they have a key part to play in the running of their school. They maturely carry out a range of roles of responsibility. For example, members of the school council conduct safety walks with the headteacher to check all parts of school are safe and to help keep playtimes happy and problem free. Sports leaders run clubs for younger pupils and pupils write their own newspaper in Key Stage 2.
- Pupils are thoughtful and caring. They take the initiative to raise funds for charity and collect food for a local food bank.
- The school has worked hard to help foster positive attitudes to learning. Each half term promotes a different 'learning behaviour', for example, this half term pupils are being encouraged to be reflective in their learning.
- Most pupils try very hard with their work and they are keen to do their best. However, occasionally a few pupils become a little distracted if they find their work too easy or not particularly interesting.
- A scrutiny of work throughout school shows most pupils take a pride in their work. The school supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. All pupils who spoke to an inspector said they feel safe in school and that they would have someone to turn to if they had any worries or concerns.
- The school is very highly regarded by parents. All those parents who responded to Parent View agree their children are happy and safe at school. This overwhelmingly positive response was also mirrored in the school's own questionnaire to parents.
- Pastoral support for pupils is a real strength. Pupils are very much helped to discuss any issues or concerns calmly and to come to a resolution if they encounter any difficulties. Pupils recognise they have a voice in determining what happens and clearly feel included in the decision-making process. This helps them develop many important life skills.
- Pupils who spoke to an inspector think bullying is very rare. They are confident that any issues or concerns are sorted out very quickly. The school curriculum helps pupils develop a very good understanding of the different types of bullying and what they should do if they think they are being bullied.
- Pupils have a very good awareness of cyber bullying and how to avoid potential risks when using the internet and mobile phones.
- Safeguarding procedures are thorough and are regularly reviewed.
- Attendance remains consistently broadly average. The school works tirelessly to maintain a positive trend and very rigorously follows up any unexplained absences.

The quality of teaching is good

- A scrutiny of pupils' work and the school's own records confirm most teaching is typically good. It is sometimes outstanding, particularly at Key Stage 2.
- Expectations are high in many classes, particularly so at Key Stage 2. As a group of pupils enthused, 'We

learn many new things. We can do things now that we didn't think were possible.' Highly skilled questioning enables many pupils to develop an in-depth understanding of their work. However, pupils are occasionally given work that is too easy for them and so they fail to do as well as they could.

- Many teachers skilfully check what pupils already know and understand at the start of a piece of work and then get pupils to think about what they would like to find out. This motivates them to work hard. For example, at the start of a piece of work on World War Two, pupils looked carefully at a range of photographs. They wrote down what they knew already and then came up with a set of questions that they wanted to find out about. This provided a meaningful structure to pupils' work and helped foster a keen desire to learn.
- Most of the time, pupils are interested and engaged in the work provided. For example, in lower Key Stage 2, pupils had great fun as they learnt how to join sentences with a range of connectives. They thoroughly enjoyed coming up with some 'tall stories' and some 'disgusting excuses', while using a range of connectives. In one class, they tried their best to become class 'connectives king or queen!' However, not all lessons interest and engage pupils to the same extent so they sometimes do not try their best.
- This is a school that 'goes the extra mile' to ensure pupils who may find learning more difficult are helped to do their very best. Pupils' work and the approach used are tailored very sharply at each individual.
- Although teaching in the early years still requires some improvement, staff have been tireless in developing the provision. Adult-led sessions in particular are well focused and are helping children make faster progress.
- The teaching of reading throughout school is improving. More consistent teaching of phonics is helping pupils tackle unfamiliar words with increasing levels of confidence. Many pupils are relishing the challenge of reading more high quality and challenging texts.
- In upper Key Stage 2 pupils explored the descriptive and evocative language used in a Wilfred Owen poem. This helped them produce their own highly emotive poetry, using phrases such as: 'guns spit out messages of death, which will soon reach grieving loved ones' and 'they stand like statues of stone amongst tall lifeless tress, blackened and limbless, sleeping eternally'.
- Pupils now complete all their writing in a single 'topic book' and this has helped ensure that pupils' writing in different subjects across the curriculum is now generally of the same quality as in discrete English lessons.
- In mathematics, a greater emphasis on problem solving and reasoning investigations is helping pupils grasp key concepts well. Many teachers and teaching assistants regularly check what pupils already know, understand and can do throughout a lesson and then swiftly move pupils onto more difficult work as soon as they are ready. For example, pupils at Key Stage 1 gained a good grasp of the process of multiplication. Pupils at Key Stage 2 gained a thorough understanding of how to order and add up a range of different fractions.
- Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to improvement to pupils' learning, both in the classroom and when providing additional support outside. They meet regularly with class teachers to discuss pupils' learning.
- Marking is improving. There are some very good examples of marking which lead to rapid improvement over each term. However, some marking is not as effective. Pupils are not always so clear about what aspects of their work are good or about precisely what they need to do to improve their work further.
- Parents and pupils alike speak very positively about the 'learning challenge' homework activities provided. Pupils have a set of challenges to complete over the term which are directly linked to work they are doing at school. For example, children in the early years are very proud of the bird feeders they made with their parents at home, and likewise pupils in Key Stage 1 enjoyed making models of lighthouses.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children get off to a steady start to their learning in the early years and do particularly well in their personal, social and emotional development.
- Pupils go on to achieve well across Key Stages 1 and 2 and their rate of progress generally accelerates as they progress through the school.
- In 2014, the proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check was above that found nationally in 2013 and 2014.
- Key Stage 1 standards in reading, writing and mathematics dropped a little from 2013 to 2014 to just below the national average. Even though the proportion reaching the levels expected for their age was close to that found nationally, few pupils exceeded this level. Senior leaders took swift action to raise the attainment of pupils in Key Stage 1. A scrutiny of pupils' work and the school's own records show that

pupils in Key Stage 1 are now doing much better, although expectations are not always high enough for the most able pupils.

- Standards at Key Stage 2 have continued to rise over the past three years and are typically above average. Indeed, almost all pupils have consistently attained at least the level expected for their age in every subject. In 2013, the proportion of pupils exceeding expected rates of progress was above the national level in mathematics and reading and in 2014 this was the case in all subjects.
- In 2014 two fifths of pupils reached above-average attainment in mathematics and writing and three-fifths did so in reading. This was above that found nationally. In mathematics and spelling and grammar one tenth of the pupils attained Level 6, which is a level much higher than that expected for their age.
- The work in pupils' books, the school's own data and observations of learning in lessons show that the most able pupils do not reach their full potential in every class. This is partly because rates of progress have historically been slower in the early years and at Key Stage 1 and some pupils have had some catching up to do at Key Stage 2. Expectations of what the most able pupils can achieve are not always high enough, particularly among the younger pupils at school and pupils are not always helped to gain an in-depth understanding of their work.
- The school has been very successful in helping pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding reach their full potential. Many disadvantaged pupils make rapid progress. In 2013 and 2014 disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 attained standards significantly higher than similar pupils nationally and their attainment matched that of other pupils in school. It was in line with the attainment of non-disadvantaged pupils nationally in mathematics and writing, and above in reading.
- Pupils with lower starting points and those with special educational needs are very quickly helped to make up lost ground by the end of Key Stage 2. All such pupils made at least expected rates of progress in 2014 and most did much better.
- In Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils achieve well across the whole curriculum. For example, pupils' artwork is of a very high quality, they participate in a range of sporting activities to a high level and they sing with pride and enthusiasm.

The early years provision

requires improvement

- Most children start school with skills and knowledge that are typical for their age in most areas of learning. However, there is often a wide spread of ability in each class. Children in some classes have weaker literacy and personal and social skills on entry.
- Children's achievement has improved more recently and several strengths in the setting are evident. The proportion of children set to reach the expected level at the end of the Reception year is now close to the national picture. However, the quality of teaching and leadership in the setting still require improvement because over the last few years too few children have typically reached a good level of development.
- Most children make steady, rather than good, progress from their starting points. They typically make the best progress in communication and language, physical development and in their personal, social and emotional development. However, children have typically not made quite as much progress in literacy and mathematics.
- Staff are caring and the setting is well organised. Year 6 pupils readily look after the children in the early years and take them to lunch, when they start school. Children behave well, are kind and respectful to each other and are happy and settled. They understand the classroom routines and are keen to show what they have done. This helps prepare them for the changeover into Key Stage 1.
- The teaching of phonics has improved. Children are starting to use their phonic knowledge to try to write independently.
- During the inspection children enjoyed the range of activities on offer. For example, they used animals in the small world area to write number sentences, selected materials to make a shaker and carefully looked for 'mini beasts' in a collection of twigs.
- Staff have worked hard to enhance the provision in the early years. To this end, the outdoor learning environment has been significantly enhanced. The school are looking to provide more challenging and stimulating activities for some of their most able children to help them extend their literacy and numeracy skills further.

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	121394
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	449651

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	320
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Moore
Headteacher	Judith Ratcliffe
Date of previous school inspection	16 November 2009
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