

Bearpark Primary School

Colliery Road, Bearpark, Durham, DH7 7AU

Inspection dates 15–16 April 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	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.

- The exceptional drive of the inspirational headteacher has led to highly successful action tackling past underachievement. A strong staff team shares her high ambitions for the school. As a result, teaching has improved considerably.
- Good and sometimes inspiring teaching ensures that pupils of all starting points, including those with special needs and those with English as an additional language, achieve well.
- The highly positive school ethos underpins pupils' exemplary behaviour in classrooms and at social times. This plays a crucial part in pupils' much faster progress and higher achievement.
- The school's excellent promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development makes an impressive contribution to pupils' tolerant, courteous and thoughtful, hardworking and respectful attitudes.
- Pupils are responsible and safety conscious. They feel safe and secure, because the school takes exceptional care of them.
- The rich, varied and interesting curriculum provides a wide range of stimulating experiences to stretch pupils' thinking and deepen their understanding.
- Children make a flying start in the early years, because they settle rapidly in the warm and happy atmosphere. Their good and sometimes rapid progress prepares them well for Year 1.
- The highly successful engagement of parents adds to the drive and energy of school improvement.
- The committed governing body is well informed and highly supportive. Governors are challenging and very ambitious for the school. This is reflected in their accurate view of school performance.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching does not always produce a consistent and sustained pattern of high achievement and above average attainment.
- Opportunities are sometimes missed to share imaginative practice to extend pupils' mathematical skills and reasoning still more.
- Occasionally, pupils' work constructing 2D and 3D shapes and graphs is not accurate enough and opportunities are missed to provide extra helpful advice to extend their knowledge and understanding even more.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in all classes and five paired observations were carried out with the headteacher. Work scrutiny was also undertaken with the headteacher and assistant headteacher. In addition, the inspector made a number of short visits to lessons and undertook learning walks around the school in order to check the quality of what is provided for pupils.
- The inspector spoke with pupils and had discussions with the headteacher, middle leaders, staff, governors, parents and the local authority educational development adviser.
- He also examined a range of documents including those related to safeguarding, the school's view of how well it is doing, the monitoring of staff performance, the school's improvement plan and records relating to pupils' progress and behaviour.
- The inspector took account of the 10 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), of five letters from parents and of the 15 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Clive Petts, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a much smaller than average-sized primary school.
- A very large majority of the pupils are of White British backgrounds with very few who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- Currently, there is a much higher-than-average proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for support through pupil premium funding. The pupil premium is additional funding to support those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- In January 2014, a governor-managed pre-school for rising threes was established, with the first children admitted in September 2014. This provision in the early years is full-time for a few children and part-time, mornings or afternoons, for others.
- The school provides a breakfast club each day for pupils.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which is the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school has experienced a significant turnover in staff since the previous inspection. This included an assistant headteacher in January 2015.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teaching, especially in mathematics, is stimulating and thought-provoking throughout the school to make certain pupils' progress is rapid and achievement high by:
 - making sure that the imaginative practice that exists in the school is used more extensively to stretch pupils' mathematical thinking and reasoning
 - helping pupils to become more confident and skilled at solving problems and puzzles and justifying their decisions and solutions
 - ensuring that pupils set out 2D constructions, graphs and 3D shapes accurately and neatly.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- In the strong and resolute drive to improve since the previous inspection, the headteacher has led the school with passion and with a crystal-clear view of just what can be achieved by pupils of all starting points. Recent appointments have added to school leadership expertise and helped to galvanise staff into an effective, talented and skilled team. As a result, the school is constantly adding to its many strengths, particularly in the quality of teaching and learning and is improving rapidly.
- All leaders, managers and governors are highly ambitious for the pupils. Staff provide excellent role models. Middle leaders are ever more confident using their skills to raise achievement, address any inconsistencies and close any gaps in pupils' attainment.
- Thorough checks and tests of school performance make certain that judgements of the quality of teaching and learning are accurate. Staff skills and talents are nurtured highly effectively, including those of newly qualified teachers. Training is well-matched to school priorities and individual staff needs. However, opportunities are sometimes missed to share the imaginative practice that exists even more widely to improve pupils' mathematical skills and reasoning.
- Staff performance is managed effectively and ensures that there is no automatic pay progression.
- A well planned, motivating and broad curriculum helps to provide an interesting range of first-hand experiences. It enables pupils to make good progress, reach higher standards and fosters very positive attitudes to learning extremely well. A well-thought-out literacy policy is developing pupils' skills at a rapid rate. An improved numeracy policy is making certain that pupil standards are rising steadily across the school. An interesting range of visits and visitors underpins the school's excellent promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development reinforcing British values, such as respect, tolerance and fair play. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 were observed in discussions recognising the discipline of a Jewish family observing Shabbat, the day of rest.
- Excellent links are maintained with parents and families and they are having an increasingly positive influence in helping families to support their children's improving achievement. Parents are particularly appreciative that their views are valued and that their children are given an equal chance to succeed. Discrimination in any form is not tolerated and the school fosters good relations with all.
- Primary school sport funding is used well to promote healthy lifestyles and develop sporting skills. As a result, participation rates are high, including in a variety of after-school clubs. Better trained staff foster higher levels of skill and offer wider sporting opportunities. A particular school goal is to ensure that all pupils are taught to swim twenty five metres by the end of Year 6. Effective partnership working provides opportunities to develop advanced skills, such as in gymnastics and judo.
- The extra funding to support disadvantaged pupils is used successfully. Much care is taken to check the impact on pupils' progress and attainment to ensure any gaps are being addressed effectively.
- The local authority has an accurate grasp of school performance, because the checks that it makes are robust. Effective support and training, including for governors, have added to the drive and pace of improvement.
- Safeguarding and child protection meet requirements. Procedures are securely established and much highly effective practice is adopted in the day-to-day management, care and protection of pupils.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The enthusiastic governing body has an accurate view of school performance, including the quality of teaching. This is because they frequently check the school's pupil performance information and have a good understanding of this data. They are clear about the priorities for continued improvement. This is because they check the quality of teaching and challenge the staff in positive ways but hold them fully to account for their classroom performance and for the achievement of their pupils. Governors ensure that performance management is used effectively and that pupil premium funding has the intended impact on raising standards and closing any attainment gaps between disadvantaged pupils and others.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils are keen, interested and highly motivated. Relationships with each other and with staff are excellent. This is evident in the happy and friendly school atmosphere, both in classrooms and social areas, including in the breakfast club. Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in

their low absence rate.

- High expectations, highly positive staff role models, clear boundaries for their conduct, frequent use of appropriate and measured praise and meaningful rewards all contribute to pupils' outstanding behaviour. Pupils' good-natured, friendly attitudes contribute much to the extremely harmonious and positive climate throughout the school day.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- Pupils are extremely well informed about a wide range of risk and danger, such as the dangers playing near water or electrical power installations. In both their responses to the online questionnaire and in conversations and letters, all parents felt that their children were safe and happy in school. Pupils thrive on responsibility, such as looking out for younger pupils at playtime.
- In conversations, pupils demonstrate that they are knowledgeable about bullying in its various forms. They report that mean or unkind behaviour is infrequent. Pupils observe that they are well aware of the consequences of any inappropriate behaviour. They add that staff are always close by to resolve any issues which may arise.
- The school has worked tirelessly with both families and specialist support agencies to improve attendance. Consequently, attendance has improved considerably since the previous inspection and is now above average.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching and classroom support are good with examples of imaginative and inspiring practice. Since her appointment just before the previous inspection, the headteacher has worked relentlessly to improve the quality of teaching. The result is a considerable improvement in the quality of learning leading to a clear trend of accelerating progress and higher achievement for all groups of pupils.
- The high expectations that are set for pupils of all abilities and starting points are evident in all aspects of the school's work. Increasingly interesting opportunities to learn trigger pupils' thinking and stir their imagination. This includes motivating pupils to read widely and often. Energy and interest are added by using themes which link subjects together in thought-provoking ways, for example using the pupils' interest in appealing characters, such as the young man in the cartoon who lived in an upside down position. This helped to advance their understanding of forces and gravity as well as adding an extra spark to their descriptive writing.
- Increasingly, pupils are encouraged to apply their skills to solve problems and puzzles. However, now and then, opportunities are missed in mathematics to expect even more and encourage their reasoning in inspiring and innovative ways.
- When pupils' progress is fast and even and achievement rising quickly:
 - the demands made of pupils of all abilities are high and well-matched to their preferred learning styles
 - activities are carefully tailored to meet individual abilities using available pupils' progress information
 - questioning constantly checks, probes and tests pupils' knowledge and understanding and addresses any misunderstandings
 - excellent relationships reinforce the constant encouragement that pupils receive to improve.
- When progress is not quite so even or so fast:
 - activities sometimes lack that essential spark to trigger and stretch pupils' thinking and reasoning even further
 - occasionally opportunities are missed to expand the guidance for improvement to deepen understanding further
 - not enough is expected of the quality and accuracy of the pupils' setting out of their graphical work in mathematics.
- When achievement is highest, pupils' interest is triggered effectively and learning brought to life in motivating ways, for example visiting Eden Camp to learn first-hand about the emotions and feelings of soldiers and their families during the Second World War.
- Teachers mark work frequently in positive and helpful ways. Pupils are left in no doubt how well they have done. Requests for corrections are promptly responded to by pupils. Marking is a strength in writing with very good use of pupil self-assessment to ensure understanding is complete. Teaching assistants work effectively with teachers, following the thinking of individual pupils carefully to ensure any misconceptions

are teased out and corrected.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Decisive action to raise achievement and attainment is paying dividends as pupils' progress is accelerating quickly and achievement and attainment rising. This includes for those pupils who have complex needs, have English as an additional language and are most able and talented.
- In Key Stage 1, imaginative and thought-provoking tasks constantly challenge pupils thinking. As a result, progress is quickening and skills improving. For example, pupils' writing and mathematical reasoning are inspired effectively when they are in the yellow submarine and the octopus's garden. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are rising as pupils strengthen their broadly average skills evident in 2014 tests.
- In Key Stage 2, progress rates are increasing quickly in reading, writing, mathematics, spelling, punctuation and grammar. This is because past underachievement is being systematically eradicated. In 2014 national tests, standards in reading were broadly average, below average in writing, spelling punctuation and grammar and low in mathematics. Resolute action to raise standards, especially in mathematics, is resulting in substantial improvement. Current school information confirmed by work in pupils' books shows that pupils in the present Year 6 are on course to reach at least average standards in all subjects.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has significantly increased the demands made of the most able and talented pupils in all subjects. Activities that are tailored to encourage pupils to think analytically, make deductions, give reasons for their decisions capture and hold their interest extremely well. Consequently, increased proportions of pupils are on track to reach higher levels.
- The abilities and needs of pupils with special educational needs are quickly and accurately identified. This includes individual pupils with high levels of anxiety. Well planned support and help are increasingly effective in pinpointing and addressing any gaps in their learning. In individual cases progress is rapid, especially in the development of social and emotional skills.
- In the 2014 tests at the end of Year 6, disadvantaged pupils were between three and six terms behind non-disadvantaged pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. Compared with their classmates, gaps were narrower in reading and writing, but were wide in mathematics. In the current Year 6, gaps in comparison to non-disadvantaged pupils nationally are on track to reduce markedly in all subjects, with no gaps exceeding more than half a term. This consistently good progress, confirmed by inspection evidence, reflects the impact of the impressive approaches adopted by leaders to improve the quality of teaching.
- Good progress is being made nurturing pupils' love and enjoyment of reading, including among younger pupils. Parents are increasingly proactive encouraging their children to read regularly. Older pupils speak enthusiastically about their reading and their choice of authors and themes.

Early years provision is good

- Children enter the Nursery with skills that are below those typical for their age. Speech, language, social and emotional skills are often weaknesses. Children settle happily and quickly in the busy and friendly atmosphere. They rapidly acquire essential social and emotional skills, acquiring often excellent self-control, confidence and independence.
- Children start to catch-up swiftly as they make good and occasionally rapid progress in acquiring skills and experience in all learning areas. Even though skills sometimes remain below those typical by the end of the Reception, children are increasingly well prepared for Year 1.
- The extremely caring atmosphere reinforced by the high-quality relationships with staff helps to foster very positive attitudes to learning and play. Staff speedily and accurately assess children's starting points and preferred styles of learning. This ensures that activities, whether indoors or outdoors, can be carefully shaped to match their individual needs.
- Teaching is good and increasingly stimulating and engaging. Good opportunities are provided for children to build systematically upon their speaking, listening and early reading, writing and number skills. A strong focus on building confidence, encouraging independence and perseverance is proving extremely successful as children are adding to their skills at an ever faster rate.
- Frequent and accurate checks on children's development, well-being and progress inform activity planning well. High-quality observations are being systematically embedded in daily routines to ensure that any gaps in children's learning are quickly spotted and addressed. Increasingly, parents and carers are

involved in their children's learning and development in purposeful ways.

- Leadership and management are good. The recently appointed teacher has made a highly impressive start, establishing high expectations and constantly enhancing the quality of learning provided. She ensures that all children, including the newly admitted rising 3's are happy, safe and secure. Performance is accurately judged and areas for improvement, such as developing mathematical skills and reasoning, are successfully tackled. As a result, achievement is rising quickly and any gaps in children's skills are promptly addressed.

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	114129
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	462276

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	77
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jeff Teasdale
Headteacher	Jill Hodgson
Date of previous school inspection	25 April 2013
Telephone number	0191 384 8958
Fax number	0191 383 1904
Email address	bearpark@durhamlearning.net

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