

Spennithorne Church of England Primary School

Spennithorne, Leyburn, North Yorkshire, DL8 5PR

Inspection dates 22–23 April 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	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.

- Under the very effective leadership of the headteacher, the school has improved significantly from the time of the last inspection.
- The experienced governing body has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and what could be still better. This is because robust procedures to monitor the school's work have been developed and implemented.
- The curriculum has been designed to capture pupils' interests and foster a love of learning. Pupils say that mathematics has 'improved beyond recognition'.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and they say they enjoy their time in school. This explains why attendance is improving and is above average this year.
- Pupils' positive attitudes to their work are a significant reason why they are making good progress in their lessons.
- Most pupils now reach average standards and a good proportion does better than this.
- Swift action has been taken to eradicate inadequate teaching and pupils now benefit from teaching which is at least securely good.
- Lessons are planned well to meet the wide range of pupils' abilities. Support staff are used effectively either to support pupils in class or to lead small-group activities.
- The outdoor provision in the early years has been transformed and now provides a vibrant learning environment for children to enjoy.
- Parents are very appreciative of the significant improvements that have been made. All agreed with the parent who said: 'Thanks to the dedication of the headteacher and commitment of the staff our school has seen a dramatic improvement.'
- Pupils enjoy the many additional opportunities to be involved in a wide variety of activities from yoga to archery. They also have a good awareness of how to stay safe when, for example when using the internet.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Occasionally, some pupils continue doing work which they understand and find easy. They are not provided with more challenging work quickly enough and so the progress of a small number of pupils slows.
- Opportunities are sometimes missed for pupils to use their mathematical skills to investigate and solve practical problems. As a result, their mathematical skills are not fully extended.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector conducted a number of inspection activities jointly with the headteacher, including observing learning in classes.
- The inspector spoke with pupils about their views on behaviour and how the school keeps them safe. The inspector also spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at work in their books. The inspector also listened to pupils from Year 1 and Year 2 read.
- Meetings were held with leaders, school staff, governors and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector observed behaviour at lunchtime, break times and around school as pupils moved between classrooms.
- The inspector considered the 18 responses to Ofsted’s online survey (Parent View) and also took account of the school’s own recent survey of parents’ views. The inspector spoke with a number of parents during the two days of the inspection and received a number of letters to consider.
- The inspector observed the school’s work and looked at a number of documents, including the school’s own information on pupils’ current progress, planning and monitoring, records of behaviour and attendance and documents relating to safeguarding and child protection.
- The inspector also took account of the 10 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Jim Alexander, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a much smaller than average-sized primary school. The school has two classes; children in the early years and pupils in Key Stage 1 are taught in the Rabbits Class. Key Stage 2 pupils are taught in the Foxes and Badgers Class. Children in the early years attend school on a full-time basis.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are eligible for support through the pupil premium is much lower than average. The pupil premium is additional government funding provided to the school to support children who are looked after by the local authority and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- A significant proportion of pupils joins the school at different times during the year.
- At the time of the last inspection, a new headteacher had only recently been appointed and a new Chair of Governors elected.
- The school is an active member of a local cluster of schools and has been supported by the National College for Teaching and Leadership to provide training for teachers about how to improve their lessons.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' achievement further by ensuring that a higher proportion of the teaching is of an outstanding quality by:
 - teachers stepping in more quickly to provide pupils with the next challenge when they have clearly understood a task and are ready to move on
 - providing problem-solving and investigational activities for pupils to use their skills in order to extend their mathematical skills fully.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has tenaciously brought about improvements to the quality of teaching. When necessary, she has followed agreed procedures to address underperformance effectively. As a result of well-planned training and support, teaching now enables pupils to make good progress and achieve well.
- The headteacher has developed the role of middle leaders and ensured that the responsibility for leading curriculum subjects is shared amongst staff. During the current period of staff family leave, cover staff have also willingly supported leadership of these areas under the careful management of the headteacher. Nevertheless, leaders and managers have not ensured that work in lessons is always challenging enough and that opportunities for pupils to extend their skills in mathematics are regularly provided.
- Leaders have developed an enjoyable curriculum which meets the needs and interest of pupils effectively. The headteacher and staff use data well to track the progress pupils make and to measure their attainment. Leaders are currently developing a new system to measure pupils' achievement in line with the new national curriculum.
- Leaders have a crystal clear awareness of what is working well and what needs to improve further. As a result, school improvement plans are focused on the correct priorities.
- School staff speak highly of the good support they have received from the local authority. Following the last inspection, local authority advisers provided a high degree of support, but now only need to offer light-touch support for this good and improving school.
- Leaders have firmly established at the heart of this school the values of 'hope, trust, endurance and friendship'. Staff are committed to fostering good relations and to ensuring that each pupil should receive the best possible start in life. They actively tackle discrimination and ensure equality of opportunity for all. This is helping pupils develop a good understanding of life in a modern British, democratic society.
- The primary school physical education and sport funding is used to provide sports coaching and to develop the quality of physical education lessons within school time. It also enables pupils to take part in a wide range of competitions with other local schools and to experience residential trips that, for example, provide opportunities for canoeing and archery.
- The pupil premium funds are used well to help disadvantaged pupils to make good progress in their reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, gaps in their knowledge and understanding are closing quickly.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements and are effectively implemented. Risk assessments for the many exciting trips are robust and other records rigorously maintained.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance of the school is good. Governors have undertaken a review of their work. They have recruited new members with particular skills and expertise, and lead the school by example. They are well informed because they are regular visitors to school who come with a clear agenda for their visit. They are skilled at using information to enable them to hold leaders robustly to account for the progress pupils make.
 - Governors have an accurate view of the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. They have supported the headteacher through a number of difficult decisions since the time of the last inspection effectively. They have a good understanding of performance management and have used this information to support senior leaders to reward good teaching and tackle previous weaknesses.
 - Governors make sure that the school offers good value for money and that all statutory requirements are met.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. From the start of their school life in the early years, children have a clear understanding of what is expected of them. They play and learn together happily.
- Pupils quickly develop positive attitudes to learning and encourage one another to try their best in lessons. They listen carefully to instructions and are eager to do well. This allows lessons to move along without interruption.
- Pupils appreciate the improvements to the way their work is marked because, 'Now we know what it is we should be doing to get better.' Indeed, work in their books show that they are quick to respond to this

guidance.

- Behaviour before and after school is good, and pupils enjoy the lovely grounds at play time and lunchtime.
- A small minority of pupils need extra help to manage their own behaviour or emotions. They generally respond quickly to the support they are given.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils are helped to develop a good understanding of how to stay safe, for example walking on country lanes in the winter months or when using the internet at home.
- Incidents of bullying are very few and far between, and pupils are taught how to share quickly any concerns they have. Pupils say, 'There is always someone to talk to here and our headteacher always understands.' This helps them to feel safe and valued.
- Leaders make sure that robust risk assessments are undertaken to enable pupils to enjoy a wide range of activities in school and when visiting other places of local or national interest.
- Staff and governors are well trained and procedures are rigorous. Leaders work very effectively with other agencies to ensure that pupils who may need more support get the care and opportunities to which they are entitled.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Good quality teaching now enables pupils to achieve well in their reading, writing and mathematics and make good progress. Pupils explained that lessons are planned to be 'hard work but fun and exciting too'. Good quality planning is a significant feature and is particularly effective in providing for the wide range of ages and needs in each of the two classes.
- The headteacher has reorganised the timing of the school day and moved lunchtime to maximise the amount of time pupils spend in lessons each morning when they are at their most alert. Well-trained support staff are helping pupils to catch up quickly with work that was previously missed. As a result, the progress that pupils make is now much faster than the past.
- Some teaching is outstanding and so pupils are making quick gains in their learning. For example, during the inspection, pupils in a Key Stage 2 lesson were using technology very effectively to help develop their grammar, punctuation and spelling skills. The teacher's expectations were high and pupils' attitudes exemplary. Not a moment of time was wasted and pupils achieved well. Pupils explained, 'It is always like this in these lessons.'
- The teaching of writing is good and pupils are provided with the skills they need to write at length across a range of subjects. The quality of written work on display around the school is good and pupils are taking increasingly greater care with their handwriting in their books.
- The teaching of reading is good and younger children use what they are learning about the sounds that letters make to read tricky words. Pupils in Key Stage 1 also enjoy reading and are very keen to read to adults. The books they are provided with are at the right level to help them develop their skills, while enjoying the stories they are reading. Older pupils read widely and often to broaden their understanding, for example of the African slave trade.
- The teaching of mathematics has improved considerably since the time of the last inspection. Pupils have now developed a good range of basic skills and are quick at their mental mathematics too. Due to previous weakness in the quality of teaching, pupils had gaps in their knowledge and understanding but good quality teaching has helped them to catch up quickly. However, opportunities for pupils to engage in investigative work and problem-solving tasks are limited and so their skills in mathematics are not extended sufficiently.
- Work in books shows that the vast majority of pupils are now making good progress. However, there still remain some examples where pupils are provided with work that they easily understand and does not challenge them enough. This still limits the progress made by a small minority of pupils.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- In a small school such as this, standards by the end of each key stage can vary considerably from year to year, depending on the starting points and ability of each pupil. The achievement of pupils is now good, because the vast majority of pupils are now making the progress expected of them. The proportion of pupils making more progress than expected is close to or above the national average figure.

- By the end of Year 1, pupils typically achieve above average in the national check on phonics (letters and the sounds they represent). Those few pupils who did not read as well as expected have all been helped to catch up quickly after just two terms.
- In 2014, standards by the end of Key Stage 1 were average in reading, writing and mathematics, which represented good progress from pupils' individual starting points.
- In 2014, standards by the end of Key Stage 2 were below average. A number of factors contributed to this; not least the fact that 13 different teachers had taught this class during their time at school and there was some legacy of previous underachievement. It is, however, clear that in the last three terms of their time at Spennithorne CE Primary School, pupils were helped to make good progress and caught up very quickly with work that had been previously missed. Consequently they were soundly prepared for the next stage of their education.
- The school has a large proportion of pupils who have been identified as having special educational needs. Support for these pupils is good and work is set at just the right level; targets are challenging yet achievable. As a result, these pupils are helped to make good progress.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and eligible for support through the pupil premium is very small and therefore it is not possible to make any meaningful comparison with the national figures on progress and attainment. However, there is very clear evidence in pupils' books, school data, and work seen in class and in small-group activities that pupils are helped to make the same good progress as others in the school.
- The small proportion of most-able pupils do not always do as well as they could. This is because work is sometimes too easy for them and they are not moved on to more challenging work soon enough. Nevertheless, this is changing and work in books and the school's data show that these pupils are now doing better than they have in the past.

The early years provision

is good

- Class sizes are small and there is a wide variance in children's skills and experiences on entry to the Reception class from year to year. Over time, children have started with skills that are below those typical for their age. However, regardless of their different starting points, children are helped to settle quickly, behave well and make good progress.
- Good quality leadership has established a purposeful and safe learning environment. Children are confident to work independently or with their friends to develop well in all areas of their learning.
- The quality of teaching is good. Adults regularly assess how well children are learning and identify where they might need more help or further challenge. Activities are skilfully designed to capture children's imagination and spark their interest. There is a good balance between activities led by adults and those chosen by children. Adults use questions well to help children to consolidate their understanding and extend their thinking further.
- Leaders have made huge improvements to the outside provision, which was a recommendation at the time of the last inspection. Areas have been established to help the development of literacy and number skills, as well as enabling children to appreciate the world around them. Children were just as interested in looking for visitors at the bug hotel as they were working in their car wash. Care is taken by staff that children are kept safe. Children are able to explain what they are allowed to do and what is not permitted.
- Children develop positive attitudes to school life and to their work in class. Their behaviour is good, they cooperate with one another and are keen to learn. They benefit from the good role modelling provided by pupils in Year 1 and Year 2. At the end of the day in the early years there are tired, but very happy, smiling faces.

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	121517
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	462219

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	41
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Shona Eyre
Headteacher	Lindsay Evans
Date of previous school inspection	23 April 2013
Telephone number	01969 623474
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