

St Oswald's CofE Aided Primary School

St Oswald's Road, Hebburn, Tyne and Wear, NE31 1HT

Inspection dates 3–4 June 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		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The highly effective headteacher and senior leaders share the same drive to make the school as good as it can be. As a result, there have been improvements in the quality of teaching, pupils' achievement and behaviour and safety.
- Pupils behave very well whether in or out of class. They welcome visitors and are proud to be members of their school community.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe is outstanding. Pupils say that they feel extremely safe because of the hard work of all the staff to keep them as safe as they can be.
- Teaching is good and there are examples of outstanding practice. Teachers plan lessons which capture pupils' interest and so concentration and attitudes to learning are good.
- Early years provision is good. The leader has created a close-knit team who all share the same determination to ensure children thrive.
- Pupils' achievement is good. From below typical starting points, they make increasingly rapid progress and reach standards that are rising year-on-year.
- The governing body is well informed and governors use their many skills to hold leaders to account for standards in the school. They have an accurate view of the strengths of the school and where leaders should focus their efforts to bring about further improvements.
- Pupils' moral, social, cultural and especially their spiritual understanding are very well developed. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Progress in writing, especially that of boys, is not as good as it is in reading and mathematics.
- Teachers do not encourage writing about first-hand experiences often enough so that pupils understand the purpose of their writing.
- The best practice in teaching and learning evident in the school is not consistently shared among all staff.
- Middle leaders do not have the experience needed to monitor improvements in their subjects or areas of responsibility.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning throughout the school. They also observed pupils at work during visits to classrooms. One observation was jointly carried out with the headteacher and one with the acting deputy headteacher. Inspectors also listened to pupils read in Years 2 and 6.
- Inspectors considered 38 responses to the Ofsted on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and 23 questionnaires completed by the staff.
- Inspectors held meetings with pupils in Year 6 and the school council. They also talked informally with pupils at break times and lunchtimes. They talked with the Chair of the Governing Body and four other governors, and had a discussion with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors also held meetings with leaders within the school, including the leader of the early years provision, the special educational needs coordinator and leaders at middle level.
- Inspectors observed the school at work and looked at a range of documentation, including information relating to pupils' progress, their books, school improvement planning and the school's procedures for gaining an accurate view of its own performance. They also considered reports written by the local authority and documents relating to the management of teachers' performance, safeguarding and child protection.

Inspection team

Peter Eves, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Karen Holmes

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs is average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, those supported by the pupil premium, is higher than average. The pupil premium is additional government funding to support those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The majority of pupils are White British and currently no pupils speak English as an additional language.
- There have been changes in staffing since the last inspection, particularly within the senior leadership team.
- Children attend the Reception class on a full-time basis.
- 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 Year 6.
- The school has worked in partnership with a national leader in education (NLE).

What does the school need to do to improve further?

Develop the role of middle leaders by strengthening their skills in monitoring improvements in their subjects or areas of responsibility.

- Improve teaching so that it is outstanding and so raise achievement, especially for boys in writing, by:
 - sharing the best practice consistently within the school
 - providing pupils with first-hand experiences to write about
 - making sure that pupils have more genuine reasons for writing.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and senior leaders provide strong and effective leadership in driving the school forward to achieve even better outcomes for pupils.
- Leaders have created well-planned strategies to develop teaching and learning. A relentless focus on developing teachers' skills has resulted in clear improvements in the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good, with some that is better. There are effective systems in place to check on the quality of teaching and there are clear links between teachers' performance, pupils' achievement and staff pay awards.
- The school has thorough systems for checking on the progress of individual pupils. As a result, any pupils at risk of falling behind are identified quickly and appropriate steps taken to help them catch up. Pupils' progress is quickening and standards are rising year-on-year, especially in reading and in mathematics.
- Some middle leaders are newly in post. Although their skills are developing, they are not fully managing their areas or monitoring planned improvements to ensure that all pupils are able to achieve even better.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. It is designed to match the interest of pupils and spark their imagination. While there is a clear focus on English and mathematics, it is not to the detriment of other subjects including sport, art and music. Through much that pupils do in school, they develop a good understanding of life in modern Britain and traditional British values.
- The school works successfully to foster good relationships, tackle discrimination and to remove any barriers to learning so that all pupils have the same opportunities to realise their potential. Equality of opportunity is central to all that the school does.
- Child protection and safeguarding has a very high priority and leaders, including governors, ensure that all requirements are met. The school is a very safe environment and pupils appreciate the steps adults take to keep them safe at all times. All staff are alert for any signs of extreme opinions or behaviours.
- Pupil premium funding is used in a wide range of appropriate ways to support those pupils who are eligible for this funding. For example, eligible pupils in Year 6 benefited from extra support to prepare them for their national tests.
- The primary school physical education and sport funding is used to give pupils opportunities to enjoy many different sports and activities. Pupils commented on how much they enjoyed Gaelic football and Dancing with Chairs. Pupils are now able to take part in a greater number of sporting competitions and festivals. Teachers benefit from working alongside specialist sports coaches and, as a result, the quality of physical education teaching has improved.
- The local authority has provided much appreciated support, especially in developing the early years provision and in managing the staffing changes that have been necessary.
- The school has benefited from a partnership with a national leader in education, particularly in supporting the improvements in teaching and learning.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are well informed about all aspects of the school, but particularly in regard to the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. They understand how to use data to compare their school to others. They bring a wide range of skills which they use to ask the challenging questions which hold leaders to account. They are rigorous in making sure that all pupils have the same opportunities to succeed. They check on spending, and make sure that pay progression is closely linked to teachers' performance and pupils' achievement.
 - Governors check on the use of the pupil premium funding to make sure that it has a good impact on the progress of eligible pupils. They also ensure that additional sports funding makes a difference to pupils' physical well-being.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. In lessons, pupils pay attention and respond to instructions quickly. They show good attitudes to learning and this contributes to the good progress they make. In some lessons, pupils rely too much on their teachers for help and so occasionally the pace of learning slows for these pupils.
- Records concerning behaviour and exclusions show that the school sets very high expectations which are shared by adults and pupils alike. These records show that behaviour has improved significantly and

pupils' conduct is often of a very high standard. They are unfailingly polite and courteous and welcome visitors warmly. They typically describe their school community as like a big family where everyone is welcome.

- There is a well-understood system for managing pupils' behaviour and pupils try hard to be awarded the school's 'Ozzy' Stars. There is a time-out room which can be used as a last resort but records show that this is increasingly rarely used.
- Pupils of different ages have posts of responsibility, ranging from door monitors to prefects. They take these very seriously and carry out their duties with enthusiasm and dedication. There is an active school council. The members can show improvements they have made. For example, they were instrumental in introducing themed lunch days and are eagerly anticipating the imminent Italian Day.
- The school works hard to make sure that everyone understands the importance of regular attendance. As a result, attendance is improving and is now in line with the national average.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. The school has very thorough child protection arrangements and works very successfully with families and outside agencies to ensure that pupils are safe and able to enjoy their education.
- Bullying is rare and pupils have a very good understanding of its different forms, including cyber bullying, and what to look out for. They are sure that, if any bullying occurred, it would be swiftly dealt with. Pupils are very tolerant and inclusive. As pupils put it, 'We are all the same on the inside so why should the outside matter?'
- Pupils develop a very good understanding of the different risks they might face, including when using the internet. They know how to keep themselves safe both in and out of school, including when near busy roads.
- All risks are meticulously assessed, such as pupils' visits out of school and those who come to visit. Similarly, any risks that might occur from the school environment or school equipment are carefully checked.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is typically good and there is some that is outstanding. It has improved as a result of the leaders' relentless focus on developing teachers' skills.
- While there is some outstanding practice evident in the school, it is not consistently shared among all staff and so sometimes teachers miss opportunities to learn from the best.
- Teachers use their knowledge of pupils' progress to plan interesting tasks and activities which make pupils want to learn. They have worked hard to create stimulating classrooms. Pupils make good use of the prompts and aids that are displayed on notice boards. Pupils say how much they appreciate the efforts teachers make to help them to learn and to make it enjoyable.
- Teaching assistants play an important role in helping pupils to make good progress. They use their knowledge of the needs of individuals to provide exactly the support that is needed.
- Pupils have regular opportunities to read in class and are encouraged to read at home. Older pupils talk enthusiastically about their favourite authors and pupils are involved in selecting books to be purchased to enhance the school's stock of reading materials.
- The teaching of mathematics is very effective. Pupils are presented with challenging tasks and activities in mathematics lessons. They regularly have opportunities to use their skills and knowledge in other subjects. During the inspection, a Year 4 class became completely absorbed in using a software programme to explore symmetry and mirror images; they made rapid progress as a result.
- Pupils are given writing tasks that allow them to write, often at length, in literacy and other lessons. They are encouraged to develop good handwriting styles and examples of neat writing grace many classroom walls. However, they do not have enough opportunities to write about first-hand experiences. Instead, they are asked to write about topics that they only know at second-hand. In addition, pupils do not have enough genuine reasons to use their developing writing skills and some, especially boys, see writing as a chore rather than as a skill they can use.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and all teachers use the agreed whole-school green pen system to give informative feedback. Pupils routinely respond to these prompts and are able to improve their work as a result.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' achievement is good and has improved. Pupils in all year groups make good progress and the standards they reach at the end of Years 2 and 6 are rising year-on-year. They are above average in reading and mathematics. Progress in writing is slower and the standards reached are not as high. Published results in 2014 give a misleading picture of the overall rising trend in attainment. Evidence gathered shows that this group of pupils was not typical because their overall starting points were much lower than normally found in the school. However, from these starting points pupils made good progress through the school. There is a clear trend of rising achievement.
- Pupils' overall achievement in the Year 1 test of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) is improving. In 2014, results were in line with the national standard and evidence indicates that they are very likely to be above this standard in 2015.
- Standards in reading are above average in Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils are given time to develop their reading skills in school and are encouraged to read regularly at home. The school is working diligently to encourage good reading habits; the effects of these efforts are beginning to be seen in the quickening progress pupils are making.
- Pupils in all year groups make good progress in mathematics. They develop the basic skills they need at an early age and build on these as they move through the school. They have sufficient opportunities to use their mathematical knowledge and skills in other subjects for a genuine range of different purposes and so see mathematics as a set of life skills rather than a subject.
- Progress in writing is slower, especially for some boys. Although standards are rising and in 2014 were broadly in line with the national average, they are lower than in reading and mathematics. Some boys in particular find it harder than girls to write about subjects of which they have no direct experience. In addition, they do not always appreciate the purpose of their writing and, unlike in mathematics, they see writing as a chore rather than a tool they can use whenever they need it.
- The most-able pupils make good progress and an increasing number are entered for the very demanding Level 6 national tests in mathematics and reading. They are identified and challenged during lessons and given extra support to prepare them for their tests.
- In 2014, pupils who received support from the pupil premium funding made better progress from their starting points than other pupils in the school and similar progress to non-disadvantaged pupils nationally. Over time, the gaps in attainment between eligible pupils and other pupils nationally are narrowing. In 2014, eligible pupils' attainment was approximately half a term behind other pupils nationally in mathematics, one term behind in writing and one and a half terms behind in writing. Compared with other pupils in the school, they were in line in mathematics, two terms ahead in reading and half a term behind in writing.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make the same good progress as others from their different starting points. They receive very effective support from staff who know their individual needs very well and are skilled at providing the right support both in and out of class.

The early years provision is good

- Children join the Reception class with skills and knowledge that are below those typical for their age, especially in communication and language skills and in their understanding of the world. There is a prompt assessment of each child's starting points and staff then plan learning which allows children to make increasingly rapid progress. Standards are rising each year and an increasing proportion are ready for learning in Year 1.
- The leader is relatively new but has already had a significant impact in the early years. She quickly identified priorities and set about creating systems and procedures designed to allow children to flourish and thrive in a stimulating and caring environment. She has imaginative plans to enhance the provision further, especially the outside area, and is determined to make the early years as good as it can possibly be. She has created a very effective team who share the same steely determination that each child must do as well as they can.
- Teaching is typically good and often better. Adults plan together, using the detailed understanding they have of each child's strengths and needs. They create imaginative and exciting activities that make the children want to take part. During the inspection, one group were entranced by a letter alerting them to some shapes that had gone missing and asking for their help. Another group had to use their description skills to identify a shape they could feel in a bag and their enjoyment of this activity was obvious.
- Safety in the early years is very important, as it is throughout the school. Staff have introduced very

effective systems for keeping children safe, whether learning inside or outside the classroom. There are very well-understood systems for the beginning and end of the school day, which make sure that children are safe without keeping parents at an unnecessary distance. Parents appreciate the opportunities they have to discuss their child's progress and to be a part of their learning journey.

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	108711
Local authority	South Tyneside
Inspection number	461691

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	217
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Catherine Hymers
Headteacher	Helen Smith
Date of previous school inspection	4 July 2012
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