

Newsham Primary School

Warwick Street, Blyth, Northumberland NE24 4NX

Inspection dates	21–22 January 2016
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The resolute, determined and inspirational leadership of the headteacher, ably supported by the senior leadership team, has transformed learning in Newsham. The school has rapidly improved because leaders and governors have successfully tackled previous weaknesses.
- Leaders have ensured that the quality of teaching is now good or better, accelerating the rates of progress that current pupils make in their learning.
- Outcomes for pupils are now good and have improved since the last inspection. Pupils clearly enjoy their work, tackling learning with determination and a strong desire to succeed.
- Pupils make good progress in their learning from their individual starting points, and achieve well. This includes disadvantaged pupils and the most-able pupils.
- Children in the early years make a fast start in their reading, writing and understanding of number. They play and learn happily together, making excellent progress. Teachers and teaching assistants know their children very well and know exactly how to help them learn.
- Pupils learn quickly and show enjoyment in well-planned lessons. Teachers assess their work carefully and accurately, and give timely support and guidance. This is appreciated by pupils, who respond thoughtfully.
- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are very polite, friendly, courteous and have good manners.
- Pupils' consideration of others and positive attitudes to learning ensure that their personal development and welfare is outstanding.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is inconsistency in the rate of improvement in pupils' learning as not enough teaching is outstanding.
- Occasionally, the pace of learning in some lessons slows, and pupils lose concentration.
- Pupils' handwriting lacks the quality and fluency to enable them to write quickly enough and complete a sufficient quantity of work.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the quality of teaching so that all pupils make rapid and sustained progress and reach the highest standards of which they are capable by:
 - ensuring that the pace of learning in lessons always allows pupils to be consistently engaged and maintain their concentration
 - continuing to provide opportunities for pupils to use and apply their basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics across the curriculum
 - improving the quality of pupils' handwriting so that they can write fluently and legibly, producing written work more quickly.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher has been unwavering in her determination to secure an excellent standard of education for pupils in the school. The senior team and governing body have worked tirelessly to eliminate underperformance, improve the quality of teaching and accelerate the pace of progress pupils make in their learning. They have been successful.
- Leaders and governors have created a culture where high expectations are the norm, and barriers some pupils face in their learning are not allowed to impact negatively on their future. A member of staff captured this when commenting that 'relentless challenge is a key feature of this school'.
- Leaders, including governors, have a very accurate picture of what the school does well. Procedures to monitor and evaluate the quality of the school's performance are incisive and detailed. A sense of drive and urgency to improve is evident in all that the school does.
- Procedures to check the quality of teaching are very effective, and involve middle leaders as well as the senior leadership team. All leaders are skilful in ensuring that their analysis and interpretation of information about pupils' progress leads to actions that address any areas of concern.
- Training for all staff is carefully planned to meet both individuals' professional needs and whole-school priorities. Individual performance management objectives for staff are challenging, reflecting the high expectations of the school.
- The school's curriculum is broad and balanced. Pupils' strong personal development is in part due to a curriculum that strongly contributes to their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and prepares them well for life in modern Britain.
- Teachers work closely together to review the curriculum regularly, checking that it meets the specific needs of pupils in Newsham and reflects their interests. It is enriched by a wide range of trips and visitors to the school. During the inspection Year 1 visited the Iskcon Temple in Newcastle. Pupils have the chance to participate in a number of extra-curricular clubs which support their learning. There is a healthy turnover of clubs available, such as the choir, or the Ground Force Team.
- The sports funding for primary schools is used well. There has been a significant increase in the number of pupils taking part in sports after school, many of which are oversubscribed, and a rise in competitive sports. Teachers are more confident and skilled in the teaching of physical education.
- Leaders and governors have carefully and effectively managed pupil premium funding, a large part of which has been used for additional staffing to reduce class sizes and provide targeted support for pupils, as well as online educational support programmes. The impact of these actions is clearly seen through the progress made by disadvantaged pupils across the school.
- Links with parents are very positive. Parents appreciate that the school gives all children an equal opportunity to succeed and does not tolerate discrimination of any kind. Nearly all the parents who completed the online questionnaire agreed that they would recommend the school to another parent, and that their child was happy in Newsham.
- The school has benefited from excellent external support, both from neighbouring schools in the Blyth Partnership of Schools and from consultancy support now sourced through the local authority.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governance has been transformed since the last inspection, including the appointment of some new governors. Governors are highly professional and clear about their role. They are dedicated to school improvement. They now have a very clear and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, gained not only from accurate reports and attendance at meetings, but also from their own first-hand experience in monitoring school performance alongside members of the senior leadership team.
 - Governors provide both challenge and support to school. They are rigorous in their examination of school's performance data, and regularly ask questions regarding the progress of different groups of pupils in different classes. Governors are adept at helping to set priorities for the school, and hold senior leaders to account for the quality of teaching and learning.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective, and the school is very proactive in this area. The headteacher and her senior team are very experienced and highly effective in dealing with all external agencies. Pupils benefit from the culture of safety and security that has been established in Newsham, and are confident that the school will continue to keep them safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Teaching is now consistently good, some is outstanding, and the quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. Lessons are carefully planned and carefully based on previous learning. Teachers are skilled in identifying when pupils begin to fall behind or have not grasped a concept, using this assessment to plan additional support, or change or modify next steps in learning.
- Lessons are interesting and lively, and learning usually proceeds at a good pace. Most teachers use good subject knowledge to question and probe pupils' understanding, and allow pupils time to think before answering. Teachers pitch work correctly, and provide the right amount of challenge for pupils to allow them to make good progress in their learning.
- The feedback provided to pupils by teachers is consistently of a high standard across the school. Pupils are allowed time to read and respond to the marking, supporting their next steps in learning.
- Teachers have consistently high expectations of what pupils can achieve, and usually ensure that the pace of learning enables pupils to concentrate and be fully involved for the duration of every lesson. Occasionally, the pace of learning slows and pupils lose concentration. This can slow their progress.
- In mathematics, basic skills are taught well and regularly consolidated through problems set by teachers. In a Year 6 class, pupils were able to use their knowledge of times tables to find common factors of pairs of numbers, and in Year 2 pupils used a number line to find the missing numbers in a subtraction problem. Pupils are beginning to develop in their ability to use reasoning and solve problems in mathematics, such as in Year 1, where pupils had to prove in writing that their answer was correct in finding the code for Mr Twit's safe. The teacher's use of the class novel in a mathematics lesson captured the pupils' interest and fired their imagination.
- Pupils write enthusiastically and with great imagination, often because their writing is linked to the topic they are studying or the class novel they are reading. Pupils in Year 5 wrote an emotional diary entry about their first day in a Victorian workhouse based around the book *Street child* by Berlie Doherty, while pupils in Year 3 successfully created their own playscript based upon an extract from *Fantastic Mr Fox* by Roald Dahl. The fluency and speed at which the majority of pupils write is limited by their poor handwriting skills.
- Reading and the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) are carefully developed through Key Stage 1. Skills are deepened and extended as pupils move through school, and the school is now making sure that pupils have a good understanding of what they read. Pupils are encouraged to explore different texts, often linked to the topic they are studying, and this helps them to develop a love of reading.
- Teaching assistants and teachers work closely together to ensure that timely and constructive advice and support is given to pupils, including those who have special educational needs or who are disabled. The quality of support is high, whether adults are working with a group or an individual pupil, resulting in good academic progress, as well as strong emotional and social development. The role and impact of teaching assistants in Newsham is a strength of the school.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupil's personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils show respect for each other's opinions, and work happily and cooperatively in lessons. Attitudes to learning are usually excellent, pupils working hard and with self-motivation. Pupils have great confidence in their teachers, knowing they will value their efforts. They know they must work hard to achieve success.
- Pupils thrive in the caring, positive environment in the school, as exemplified during the end of week assembly by the celebration of pupils' achievements at home or in school.
- Pupils report that they feel extremely safe at all times. They are aware of the different types of bullying that they may encounter, including cyber bullying. They have full confidence in all adults in school to deal with any misbehaviour that may occur.
- Emotional well-being is a priority for the school. Pupils know how to use the 'worry boxes' and 'whisper buttons' should they feel upset or worried by any matter.
- In their responses to the online questionnaire, all parents reported that their children were safe at school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Staff set high standards to which pupils respond well. Pupils' behaviour in the playground, in the dining hall, in breakfast club and as they move around school is very good.
- Pupils are polite, courteous and friendly, displaying excellent manners at all times.
- Pupils respond well to the exciting learning environments. The school is well-ordered and tidy, with many displays of key information, pupils' work and topics studied.
- The school has worked hard to raise the levels of attendance, which have increased slightly year on year. The rates of persistent absence have slowly declined, as the school analyses the underlying causes of absence, and puts into place strategies to ensure that attendance improves.
- Occasionally, a few pupils can become disengaged from learning, lose concentration and distract others, but this is rare.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Progress and attainment have improved since the last inspection. Assessment information, the school's own tracking information skilfully overseen by the deputy headteacher, and the quality of work in books clearly indicate that current pupils in every year group are now making consistently good progress in English and mathematics, as well as other subjects across the curriculum.
- Pupils start Year 1 with skills that are broadly average. Achievement has improved since the last inspection. The dynamic and skilful leadership of the Key Stage 1 leader has ensured that current pupils are making progress that is at least good in Years 1 and 2. Pupils have again achieved highly in the national phonics check in Year 1, the proportion meeting the expected standard being well above average.
- Progress is accelerating across Key Stage 2. Current pupils are now making at least good progress in their learning from individual starting points. By the end of Year 6, pupils are very well prepared for secondary school, both in terms of academic achievement and in their knowledge of how to be a successful learner.
- The school is quick to identify any pupils who are at risk of falling behind, including in the early years. Staff make effective provision for these pupils either within class, in small groups or individually. This includes pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs. These pupils make good progress from their starting points because teachers give them activities that are well matched to their ability and needs.
- As a result of effective use of the pupil premium funding, disadvantaged pupils make good progress and achieve well across the school in both English and mathematics. The gap between disadvantaged pupils and their classmates is narrowing, and the proportions making and exceeding expected progress is now in line with all pupils.
- The most-able pupils in school make good progress, as do their classmates from their different starting points. Their work is carefully planned to stretch their thinking in order for them to excel and grapple with more complex problems and challenges.

Early years provision

is good

- Children are eager to learn and explore. They thoroughly enjoy the opportunities given to investigate and learn happily together. Reception and Nursery children's play is lively, creative and imaginative.
- Children start early years with skills and knowledge which are generally below those expected for their age. As a result of good teaching, excellent provision, careful observation and perceptive questioning, the proportion of children who leave the Reception class with a good level of development continues to improve and is now broadly average.
- Children quickly learn essential social and emotional skills, and are able to take turns, share and apply themselves to tasks. They are thoughtful towards each other, such as when one boy kindly tidied up after another who had forgotten to put away some equipment. All adults have high expectations, and there is a tangible sense of urgency and excitement in the early years setting.
- All adults sensitively and skilfully intervene in order to develop and enrich children's use of language. Stories are shared during snack time, and adults play and work alongside children to explore and practise

new skills. Adults observe children carefully, build upon their interests and question perceptively to stimulate their imagination and creativity.

- Rigorous, accurate assessment of children's learning is used well to design and plan lessons that capture pupils' interest and build rapidly upon existing foundations. All staff have an acute awareness of the unique learning needs of each child, and use this knowledge to capitalise on every opportunity to both check and further each child's development.
- Basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics are promoted very effectively. Every opportunity is taken to provide children with activities to write, mark-make and count, such as counting on and back from the date when completing the register. Nursery children were able to retell the story of the Three Little Pigs with confidence.
- All groups of children make typical progress and many make progress that is better than this in early years, including the most able, those with special educational needs, disabled pupils and disadvantaged pupils. However, not all pupils are yet making consistently high rates of progress.
- Leaders are vigilant in all aspects of safety and safeguarding children's welfare. Judging by the confidence with which children play and learn, they clearly feel safe and secure. Children's behaviour is excellent.
- The well respected and skilful early years leader has successfully established a talented and dedicated team of staff. All adults are constantly refining their practice in order to maintain the highest standards of provision. There are well thought-through plans to make further improvements. Leadership of early years is excellent.

School details

Unique reference number	122262
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	10002061

This inspection 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	457
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Lynsey Crossman
Headteacher	Mrs Anne-Marie Armstrong
Telephone number	01670 353124
Website	www.newshamprimary.northumberland.sch.uk
Email address	admin@newshamprimary.northumberland.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	15–16 October 2013

Information about this school

- Newsham Primary School is a much larger than average-sized primary school.
- The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and for whom English is an additional language are well below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for support from the pupil premium funding is well above average. (This is additional government funding to support those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.)
- Early years provision is part time in Nursery and full time in the Reception class.
- The school provides a breakfast club each day for its pupils.
- The school meets the government's floor standards which set out the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school is part of the Blyth Partnership of Schools.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning in lessons, including three jointly observed with members of the senior leadership team. In addition, inspectors listened to some pupils read and reviewed a sample of their work alongside the headteacher and deputy headteacher. The inspectors also made a number of short visits to lessons.
- Inspectors held meetings with different groups of people involved with the school. These groups included pupils, a number of governors, the headteacher, other members of the teaching staff and a telephone call with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors viewed a range of documents, including information on pupils' achievements, the school's data on current and recent progress and attainment, and the school's view on how well it is doing. Inspectors also viewed the school's improvement plan, documents relating to safeguarding and records of behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors took account of the 69 responses to the online questionnaire for parents (Parent View) and 44 responses to the inspection questionnaire for staff. The school's website was also scrutinised.

Inspection team

Philip Scott, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Zoe Westley	Ofsted Inspector
Dawn Foster	Ofsted Inspector

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