

Ayresome Primary School

Worcester Street, Middlesbrough, North Yorkshire, TS1 4NT

Inspection dates

23–24 September 2015

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment are strengthening, but require further improvement.
- Teachers do not always identify pupils' misconceptions during lessons and correct these quickly enough, so pupils continue to have gaps in their knowledge.
- Pupils do not get enough opportunities to develop their reading, writing and mathematical skills in different subjects.
- Teachers do not always plan work that will challenge the most-able pupils to do the very best they can.
- Not all teachers give pupils opportunities to explain what they understand and know. As a result, not enough pupils are developing the skills they need to express themselves clearly.
- Teachers do not always give good advice to pupils about how to improve their work or give the pupils time to correct their work. As a result, in some classes pupils' progress is slower than in others.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons is good but at lunchtimes they do not always get the guidance they need, so their behaviour is not as good as it could be.

The school has the following strengths

- The new headteacher has been responsible for the dramatic transformation of this school, leading to improvements in all aspects of its work since the previous inspection.
- Inspired by the headteacher, all leaders regularly check the quality of teaching and make effective plans so that the school continues to improve.
- The gap is closing between the achievements of different groups of pupils, including disadvantaged and lower-attaining pupils.
- Governors are effective because they skilfully check the information leaders give to them about pupils' progress by visiting the school regularly.
- Pupils are proud of their school. They are developing well in becoming thoughtful and respectful citizens. They feel safe and learn how to manage risks beyond the school.
- Good teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage promotes good outcomes and behaviour.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, in order to raise achievement in English and mathematics for all pupils by:
 - ensuring teachers quickly identify pupils' misconceptions and plan additional support to ensure gaps in knowledge, skills and understanding close quickly
 - providing regular, planned opportunities for pupils to practise and apply their reading, writing and mathematical skills in different subjects
 - making sure the most-able pupils are challenged further in all lessons
 - ensuring pupils are given more time to put into words what they know and understand, so they learn to sequence their thoughts clearly and precisely
 - embedding the school's marking policy and making sure pupils have time to follow the advice they are given.
- Ensure all staff understand and use the school's positive behaviour management policy, so pupils develop outstanding behaviour.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher's absolute belief that all pupils can achieve the highest standards has energised leaders, at all levels, to support and challenge staff. She instils confidence in her leadership team and has coached them so their work is having a greater impact on improving outcomes for pupils. Her commitment, skill and dogged determination to raise achievement were abundantly clear to inspectors.
- The headteacher has been instrumental in developing staff skills and monitoring-systems for securing accurate assessments of children's starting points on entry to the school and measuring pupils' progress across key stages.
- Senior leaders and teachers have an accurate view of what the school does well and what it needs to improve. They recognise that they must continue to drive rapid improvements so that pupils make exceptional progress to catch up to other pupils nationally. The plans to make sure this happens are robust and firmly established.
- Curriculum managers have ensured that they capture the interest of all the pupils by introducing and developing a wide range of opportunities for pupils to learn in different ways. The Lego Academy, Music Hub and outdoor learning support pupils' reading, writing and mathematical skills as well as instilling self-belief and inspiring pupils to learn. Curriculum managers have introduced training and policies to overcome any barriers arising from pupils' disabilities or special educational needs.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination well. Leaders check all of the school's work thoroughly and, as a result, all different groups of pupils benefit from all that the school has to offer. The exciting and varied curriculum and activities before and after school enrich the pupils' lives and inspire them to learn.
- Staff and parents are very positive about the difference the leaders are making to the lives of pupils. Pupils are proud of the school and quickly develop a shared desire to be part of an 'awesome' Ayresome. Pupils learn to reflect on their actions, respect other people and participate in democratic processes presented by the school parliament.
- Support for teachers and other staff is matched to what they each need to do to improve the outcomes for all pupils. Leaders check that support is making a difference and then quickly move on to introduce further developments. This means targets set for teachers are effective in supporting the school's rapid improvement.
- Leaders have used a wide range of consultants and professional organisations wisely to support the improvements in school. They liaise effectively with other agencies to make sure pupils are safe and this sense of security is contributing to pupils' progress.
- The local authority has placed unnecessary hurdles for governors to overcome in discharging their statutory duties. The local authority recognises that in the past, their challenge and support to the school has not been strong. However, the relationship between the local authority and school leaders has improved over the past 12 months. The support in securing accurate assessments of pupils' work has been particularly significant and helped the school in the drive to raise achievement. The local authority has assured Her Majesty's Inspector of their continued support to the school on its journey to becoming good.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Since the previous inspection, governors have worked successfully to make a better contribution to the work of the school. New governors, bringing new skills and knowledge, complement the experience and commitment of long-standing members and this is helping leaders to bring about changes that are driving improvement.
 - When confronted by challenges and difficulties, the governors keep the pupils' standards, rights and safety at the heart of their decisions.
 - Governors have received training so that they understand the information provided by the school. This allows them to challenge senior leaders effectively in order to hold them to account for the work they do. Governors regularly visit the school to check first-hand that what they are being told is happening.
 - Governors work productively with leaders to ensure that additional funding, including the pupil premium and money to support pupils with special educational needs, leads to better progress for identified pupils. Physical education and sports funding is used well to increase the number of pupils joining in sports activities and choosing to lead healthy lifestyles.

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff are trained and diligent in all aspects of child protection and safeguarding. They do not shy away from sensitive issues such as female genital mutilation or radicalisation. Pupils are taught through different subjects and assemblies how to keep themselves safe and to have a sensible approach to taking normal risks.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- Inspection evidence confirms that previous assessments of what pupils know, understand and can do had not been accurate. The new headteacher has introduced systems to make sure teachers regularly and accurately assess what pupils know and use this information to plan future lessons. However, some teachers do not identify and respond to pupils' misconceptions during lessons. This means they do not give the right support to ensure pupils properly understand the concepts they are being taught, which inhibits pupils' progress.
- The most-able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged by some teachers. For example, by accepting only one written sentence from a group of pupils who could produce much more, teachers do not help the most able to develop their writing skills.
- Leaders have recognised that more work needs to be done to improve teaching and learning further by ensuring pupils practise and apply their literacy and numeracy skills in all subjects. The strongest teaching is in English and mathematics.
- Some teachers do not always follow the school's policy about giving pupils time to respond to advice about how to improve their work. As a result, pupils' rate of progress slows. Teachers who do give good advice to pupils about how to improve their work and give them time to respond are making sure pupils make faster progress.
- The quality of teaching has strengthened since the last inspection. This is because, since September 2014, leaders have had zero tolerance towards inadequate teaching, complemented by productive support and rigorous performance management. The impact of stronger teaching is seen in the rising trends in attainment for all groups of pupils.
- Where pupils are making good progress, teachers have secure subject knowledge; they skilfully question pupils to make sure that pupils understand and are given a chance to talk about what they know. Sometimes, pupils are not given enough time to think and so they struggle to put into words what they understand.
- Most teachers have high expectations of themselves and pupils. Good relationships between teachers and pupils mean pupils develop positive attitudes to learning, so they are ready and willing to learn. The overwhelming majority of pupils are currently making good progress as a result.
- When teachers consistently use the school's common approach to planning, they organise lessons well. They explain clearly to pupils what they are going to learn and plan different activities for different groups of pupils, so none are left behind and all make progress.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment for children in the early years is good. The action taken since September 2014 has meant rapid improvement in the standards of teaching, so children make good progress from their point of admission to the school and do not fall behind.
- Pupils read confidently and benefit from recent investment in new books and a library. Younger pupils are learning how to use phonics (letters and the sound they make) well to develop their reading skills. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are well supported through a specialist programme to develop both their language and reading skills.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are well supported in most lessons. Teachers use a nurturing approach to help younger pupils with significant barriers to their learning. These pupils make accelerated progress so many can return to mainstream classes. The teachers are careful to make sure these pupils enjoy all the opportunities afforded to other pupils. The school is developing a similar provision for Key Stage 2 pupils.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

are good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Leaders have made sure that staff are trained and the right procedures are in place so that all pupils can benefit from all activities which the school offers.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school. They say some teasing happens but staff deal with this well. They know who to talk with if they have any worries or concerns. Parents who talked with inspectors are confident the school is a safe and happy place. One pupil summed up the school's ethos when asked about how a new pupil, perhaps a wheelchair user, would be treated in the school. She said: 'Kindly! We are all different in different ways.'
- Teachers make sure that they teach pupils about important values. An assembly for Year 5 pupils engaged them in a discussion about respect, including how a lack of respect can be linked to extremism and what that meant.
- School staff work with a range of other agencies to make sure that all aspects of the pupils' personal development and welfare receive attention. This includes working to support children looked after by the local authority, and children and families in need of 'early help' to prevent more serious concerns developing.
- Leaders have made sure that the site is safe and secure and that the curriculum gives the pupils opportunities to learn how to manage risks safely. This starts early. One of the youngest children was observed learning how to climb across stepping stone logs and, under the watchful eye of a teacher, picked himself up when he fell and tried again and again until he was successful. Older pupils talk knowledgeably about the injustice of bullying, and how to keep themselves safe when using the internet.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are developing into motivated learners due to the impact of improving teaching. This means there is minimal disruption to any lesson. The consistent use of routines and positive support to help the pupils manage their own behaviour mean the school is an orderly and safe place, focused on learning.
- Pupils are polite and respectful to each other, adults and visitors. They are proud of their school, want to do well in lessons and are very aware of the school's values and high expectations. These positive attributes are one of the reasons why pupils are making much better progress than at the time of the previous inspection. They greet the headteacher and other staff with an enthusiastic use of the school's strapline: 'awesome'.
- At lunchtimes some staff do not follow the school's behaviour policy. They tell pupils what not to do instead of telling them what they should do. As a result, some of the pupils do not behave, at this time, as well as they do in lessons. This means that some pupils do not get the consistent support they need to develop outstanding behaviour.
- The attendance of all groups of pupils is below average but is improving rapidly and persistent absence is reducing. The work of the school attendance officer and leaders is very robust and is changing parents' and pupils' attitudes about the importance of regular attendance and arriving on time. Their work is also very responsive and supportive to the different needs of parents, especially those who are new to the country, English language and formal education.

Outcomes for pupils

requires improvement

- Inspectors agree with the school's view that since the beginning of the last academic year the overwhelming majority of pupils have made faster progress than in previous years, and are continuing to do so. However, in subjects other than English and mathematics, pupils' progress remains more variable. There is room for improvement in pupils' achievement across the full range of subjects so that gaps in their knowledge and understanding are closed.

- The gap between the achievements of different groups of pupils, for example between disadvantaged and lower-attaining pupils and their peers, both within the school and compared with other pupils nationally, is closing in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils for whom English is an additional language get well-directed support. As a result, nearly all such pupils in Year 1 made solid progress in reading last year. Pupils from a range of different backgrounds are well supported and, in nearly every class, make the same progress as each other.
- The outcomes for the youngest children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are good. Last year, most children made good progress from their various starting points. Children in the second year of Nursery are catching up more quickly due to the significant improvement in the quality of provision. Currently, children are starting Year 1 with a level of development closer to what is typically expected. They are settling quickly and beginning to make noticeable progress.
- Pupils and children in different phases of the school are well prepared to move on to the next stage of their schooling. Home visits for all children before they start school make sure staff have the information they need to settle children quickly. The move from Reception classes to Year 1 is smooth because of the continued use of similar teaching activities, particularly the use of outdoor learning in Year 1.

Early years provision

is good

- Leaders in the Nursery and Reception classes responded rapidly, with determination and skill, to the new headteacher's drive to raise the standards of all aspects of the school's work. The rapid improvements in all aspects of the early years provision have led to a good quality of teaching and good outcomes for children.
- When children start Nursery, a key worker makes sure that each child forms a trusting relationship so they can feel safe and secure. Accurate assessments mean that teachers plan activities that are responsive to children's learning and development, helping them to make good progress.
- Children benefit from a broad range of interesting and demanding experiences, which helps them to make good progress from their starting points, which are usually below those typical for their ages. Skilful questioning and modelling of language by staff provide ample opportunities for children to develop reading, writing and mathematical skills, so they are increasingly prepared for the challenges of Year 1.
- The children's confidence when playing and learning in either indoor or outdoor activities indicates that they feel safe. Children are given time to sort out disagreements, while being properly supervised, which means that they learn to share and manage relationships with other children well. All necessary welfare requirements are met.
- Support from a range of staff makes sure that disadvantaged and other groups of children make the progress that they need to, so if they are behind in their learning they start catching up with all other children.
- The new provision for two-year-old children, Park House, had been open for seven days at the start of the inspection. Children are settling well due to the thoughtful response to their individual needs. Staff are learning quickly what will work well and not so well and are amending their plans in response to the children's reactions. Although early days, these very young children are showing signs of growing confidence and are keen to share their interests, for example by pointing, smiling and shouting 'Look!' as a lorry pulled into the car park.

School details

Unique reference number	133659
Local authority	Middlesbrough Borough Council
Inspection number	10002094

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	672
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev. G. Holland
Headteacher	Ms Lisa F. Biggin
Telephone number	01642 244961
Website	www.ayresomeprimary.co.uk
Email address	office@ayresome.net
Date of previous inspection	6–7 November 2013

Information about this school

- Ayresome Primary School is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- About two thirds of the pupils are eligible for support from the pupil premium – additional government funding for the education of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, or who are looked after by the local authority.
- Pupils are from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds, the two largest groups being of White British and Pakistani heritage. There are a significantly high number of pupils who join the school during the school year. This includes refugees, asylum seekers and children from European migrant workers' families. Pupils speak 29 different home languages as well as English.
- The school opened provision for two-year-old children in September 2015. The provision is in a separate building on the school site, known as Park House.
- The school provides a breakfast club and a wide range of after-school activities for pupils from Year 2 to Year 6. The school-led Enterprise Centre offers a range of adult education activities to support parents. The Ayresome Music Hub offers a range of music services to other schools as well as to Ayresome pupils.
- The school has achieved the Early Years Quality Mark and is developing a Lego Academy regional hub.
- The school receives support from a wide range of organisations including Middlesbrough Schools' Teaching Alliance and Teesside University.
- Since the last inspection, there has been a significant change in staff, including a new headteacher in September 2014.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which are minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited all classes at least once, staying for different amounts of time. A significant number of visits were with senior leaders. During the classroom visits, inspectors talked with pupils and looked at their work. Inspectors also looked at pupils' work completed in the last academic year. They checked the accuracy of assessments, particularly in the early years provision.
- Inspectors met with pupils, informally at breaktime and lunchtime, and in formal meetings. Meetings were held with staff responsible for all aspects of the school's work. School documents and records were reviewed.
- Inspectors spoke directly with over 20 parents. Not enough responses were recorded on Parent View for inspectors to consider. Forty-one responses to the staff inspection questionnaire were taken into account.
- Inspectors met with the Chair of the Governing Body and three other governors. A meeting was held with a representative of the local authority.

Inspection team

Susan Hayter, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Christopher Keeler	Her Majesty's Inspector
Alison Aitchison	Ofsted Inspector
Nicola Nelson-Taylor	Ofsted Inspector

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Store Street
Manchester
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