

East Stanley School

Chester Road, East Stanley, County Durham, DH9 0TN

Inspection dates

1–2 March 2016

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is not consistently good and some groups of pupils are not reaching the levels expected of them.
- Teaching is improving but some teachers do not frequently challenge pupils or allow them to apply the skills they are learning without adult help. This means that some pupils, but in particular the most able, do not make the rapid progress they are capable of.
- Expectations of what pupils can achieve in reading, writing and mathematics are not always high enough. Adults do not consistently challenge pupils, through purposeful questioning, to think hard about their learning.
- Some teachers do not identify and correct pupils' misconceptions in lessons and consequently pupils' progress is not as secure as it should be.
- Teachers do not always give pupils precise guidance about what they can do to improve their work and pupils are not regularly acting on their teacher's advice.
- Senior leaders have not been urgent in implementing changes that impact on the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. Consequently, the pace of improvement has been slow.
- The role of middle leaders is not fully developed and they have not had sufficient impact in improving the subjects they lead.
- Governors are regular visitors to the school and understand its effectiveness. However, they do not rigorously hold leaders to account.
- The work of staff to involve parents in their child's education is not as effective as it should be to help them make the most of their education.
- Pupils' understanding of families or cultures different from their own is underdeveloped.
- Provision in the early years is helping children to explore and learn in a safe and stimulating environment. However, the quality of outdoor learning in the early years is not of the same standard.

The school has the following strengths

- Behaviour in lessons and around school is good. Pupils enjoy school and this is reflected in their good attendance and positive attitudes to learning and improving progress.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good.
- This is a caring school. The safety and well-being of pupils are important to all staff.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so it is consistently good or better and attainment rises by:
 - ensuring that teachers plan lessons that build on and extend pupils' prior learning effectively, maximise time spent learning and provide the right level of challenge and support for pupils
 - improving teachers' questioning so pupils are challenged to think about and reflect on their learning
 - ensuring that adults systematically check pupils' understanding to then offer further challenge during lessons
 - ensuring that teachers' feedback to pupils has an impact on pupils' learning
 - making sure that teachers plan for and direct the work of teaching assistants more effectively, ensuring that pupils are taking responsibility for their learning
 - further developing teachers' subject knowledge so that the basic skills of communication and language, reading, writing and mathematics are taught well.

- Ensure that leaders at all levels are highly effective in improving teaching and learning and, as a consequence, rapidly raising standards and accelerating progress by:
 - consistently promoting high expectations of what pupils will achieve
 - more precisely supporting staff to improve their teaching and determining teaching approaches that meet the needs of pupils
 - providing planned opportunities to help better prepare pupils for life in modern Britain
 - improving communication with parents and providing more opportunities for parents to understand and support their child's learning.

- Further develop the skills of governors to more effectively challenge school leaders and hold them to account.

- Further develop provision for outdoor learning in the early years.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- The headteacher has been successful in bringing about some improvement in the quality of teaching, but the pace of change has been slow, leading to continued concern over the attainment of pupils at all key stages.
- Senior leaders have not been accurate in their evaluation of the work of the school and have not been supported well enough by the local authority in this evaluation, hindering the rate of school improvement.
- Middle leaders are keen to make an impact but some are new to leadership and as a result their ability to lead and influence teaching has been limited thus far.
- Checks on the performance of teachers link the work in pupils' books to pupils' progress. Targets for teachers are not entirely focused on ensuring better outcomes for pupils. However, weaknesses in teaching are being tackled, underperformance is challenged and teachers are receiving support.
- Leaders' work to engage with parents and to explain the wider responsibility of the school to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain is underdeveloped. A few parents expressed disappointment at the level of information they receive about events or about their child's progress. Some parents do not understand the role of the school in promoting pupils' understanding of different faiths and cultures.
- There have been some changes to staffing over recent months. Despite this, the headteacher and deputy headteacher have fostered a sense of belonging to the team and teachers feel supported by leaders.
- Leaders are working in partnership with the Tanfield group of schools. This is enabling teachers to compare the work of pupils at the end of key stages but has been limited in helping leaders to improve teaching at East Stanley.
- Leaders are successfully promoting a 'challenge curriculum' encouraging pupils to explore science, history and geography through questions. The curriculum offers pupils opportunities to learn about a range of interesting topics, such as 'Why is Durham a cool place to live?'
- Leaders are successfully ensuring that there are equal opportunities for all pupils within the school and that any discrimination is eliminated.
- The school uses primary sports funding effectively to purchase equipment and to increase pupils' participation in a wider range of sports, including taster sessions in boxing and skipping.
- Extra-curricular and after-school clubs in football, dancing, knitting, gardening and choir are enjoyed by pupils and are helping them to develop their sporting and social skills.
- Pupil premium funding is used to employ additional staff to support pupils' learning particularly in Key Stage 2. Disadvantaged pupils are making expected progress through participation in small-group teaching.
- Through assemblies and lessons, pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is promoted well by leaders. Assemblies also support pupils' understanding of British values. Opportunities to learn about diverse faiths and cultures are provided, but pupils' understanding of different families and cultures is not well developed.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors meet regularly to review the performance of the school. They have looked at reports from the local authority. Governors have an overview of how well the school is performing but are too accepting of reasons given for the underperformance of some pupils, including the most able.
 - Governors have an understanding of how sports funding or the pupil premium is spent, but have not yet fully developed their skills of holding school leaders to account for the progress of disadvantaged pupils.
- Arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Safeguarding is underpinned by risk assessments, policy and procedure. All staff have been trained and fully understand their safeguarding duties. Leaders work closely with local police and have recently completed training to identify pupils at risk from radicalisation.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- Teaching is improving, but there remains a lack of consistency in the quality of teaching, with some teachers failing to use time sufficiently well to allow pupils to apply what they are learning. While some

teachers have high expectations of what pupils will learn, this is not evident throughout the school.

- In some cases, the teachers' lack of subject knowledge is having an impact on their ability to use a range of questions to develop and deepen pupils' learning. Consequently, these teachers are not changing tack quickly enough when pupils do not understand.
- Lessons sometimes lack the necessary challenge, especially for the most able, because teachers are not planning frequent times for pupils to work through problems by themselves. Occasionally, a number of pupils find the work too easy; they finish quickly and wait for others to catch up.
- Pupils do not always have the chance to fully develop their skills in writing and mathematics, in particular, by using what they know in other lessons.
- Regular reading lessons are supporting most pupils to develop the skills they need to decipher words and understand the meaning of texts. A few least-able readers in Key Stage 1 are not confident in using phonics (the sounds that letters make) to work out unknown words, indicating that some pupils are not well prepared to cope with the demands of the Key Stage 2 curriculum.
- Teachers' expectation of pupils' writing is too low and often restricted by worksheets. As a consequence, pupils are not writing longer pieces that allow them to showcase the skills they have learned. This is sometimes leading to slower progress, particularly by the most able.
- The quality of feedback to pupils is improving but remains variable. Teachers are not always providing feedback to pupils that will help them to improve their work. If pupils do receive guidance, they do not consistently follow this advice, hindering their ability to make more rapid progress.
- Improvements in the teaching of mathematics are helping pupils gain a better understanding of calculations and pupils regularly apply what they know to solve written number problems. Inspectors observed effective practice in Key Stage 2 where pupils had been encouraged to write about how they had tackled a number problem. However, pupils' lack of basic skills, for example knowledge of times tables, is hindering their ability to make more rapid progress.
- Teachers have worked hard to implement some changes suggested by senior leaders and, as a result, improvements can be seen in the way pupils present their work.
- The teaching and support for pupils who have special educational needs or disability are improving because they are more carefully planned to meet the specific needs of individual pupils.
- Although some parents do not feel pupils receive the right amount of homework, the view of inspectors and pupils themselves is that further practice in reading and mathematics is helpful in reinforcing learning taking place in school.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils display good attitudes to learning. They listen well and show respect for others in class.
- The school effectively promotes pupils' physical safety through events such as the 'Safety carousel' where pupils learn about the dangers of drug abuse and how to keep themselves safe out in the community. Pupils learn how to use the internet safely both in school and at home.
- Staff place a high priority on pupils' well-being. The parent support adviser supports pupils and parents to ensure that pupils are happy in school and attending regularly.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- As a result of the consistent application of the behaviour policy, the school is calm and orderly. Pupils concentrate on their work and low-level disruption is rare.
- Pupils understand the rewards and sanctions system and like the 'praise and consequence ladders' which serve as a reminder to them to check their behaviour.
- Despite concerns raised by a small number of parents, pupils themselves report that there is very little bullying and no racism or homophobia among pupils. School records show that two incidences of internet bullying have been dealt with and stopped.
- Pupils' attendance at school is good. Pupils are punctual and very few pupils are persistently absent from school.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- Some pupils have not achieved as well as they should by the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 in the past two years. The attainment of pupils in Key Stage 1 shows that pupils are around one term behind others nationally in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In 2015, Key Stage 2 pupils were performing broadly in line with their peers nationally in mathematics and above in grammar, punctuation and spelling. Pupils were around one term behind in reading and writing. Disadvantaged pupils did not do well compared with other pupils nationally.
- The progress of current pupils in Key Stage 2 is showing a better picture this year. However, gaps between pupils' attainment compared with age-related expectations in reading, writing and mathematics are wide in some classes. Disadvantaged pupils are making expected progress but attaining lower levels than other pupils.
- Progress in Key Stage 1 is showing some improvement. The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check is now in line with national averages. More pupils in Key Stage 1 are performing at levels expected for their age this year.
- Teachers are providing bespoke lessons for pupils who have special educational needs or disability to help them to make progress. As a consequence, this group of pupils is making progress at the same rate as other pupils in Key Stage 2.
- The most-able pupils in the school are making at least expected progress but evidence in books so far suggests that they are not making more than expected progress.
- Results in national tests show that 75% of pupils have left school well prepared for high school. Pupils are performing in line with national averages in mathematics and just below in reading and writing. Girls are performing slightly above boys in reading and writing. Boys are slightly above girls in their performance in mathematics.

Early years provision

requires improvement

- Children come to the Reception class at East Stanley from a variety of early years settings. They join Reception with skills and abilities below those typically seen for their age, some with difficulties in speech and language. Despite steady improvements over a three-year period, only just over half the number of children leaving Reception have reached a good level of development; more girls are at a good level of development than boys but altogether too few children are well prepared to start Year 1.
- Most children are learning to understand letters and the sounds they make. However, some activities are not sufficiently well planned to ensure that children apply these skills in their reading and writing in other areas of the classroom.
- Although indoor provision is bright and inviting, teachers do not use outdoor spaces well to enhance children's development and outdoor provision is underdeveloped. The leader for early years has accurately identified this weakness in provision.
- Safeguarding in Reception is effective. School procedures are followed and risk assessments are undertaken on a daily basis to ensure that equipment is safe for children to use.
- Leaders provide a welcoming learning environment where children are safe and happy. Inspectors observed children immersed in role play, dressed as knights and princesses, visiting the two 'castles' set up to help them explore fairy tales.
- Staff develop children's social skills well, supporting children to see another child's point of view. This adds to the lively, chatty interactions frequently observed as children play well together. Children behave well and readily get involved in learning activities.
- Staff keep detailed journals showing the steps in learning achieved by children. These journals form an accurate record and show that children make at least typical progress during their time in Reception. Parents have been invited to contribute to the journals, ensuring that staff have an insight into the ability and interests of children before they come to school.

School details

Unique reference number	114026
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	10002150

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	233
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Janice Rutherford
Headteacher	Joanne Williams
Telephone number	01207 233611
Website	www.eaststanleyschool.durham.sch.uk
Email address	admin106@durhamlearning.net
Date of previous inspection	6–7 November 2013

Information about this school

- East Stanley School is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for support through the pupil premium is broadly average. The pupil premium is additional funding provided for children who are looked after by the local authority and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is below average.
- All pupils are from white British backgrounds.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment in English and mathematics.
- Children in the Reception class attend full time.

Information about this inspection

- Together with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, inspectors looked at pupils' progress data, information about the performance of teachers, documents relating to behaviour and safety, and documents relating to safeguarding.
- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in 14 parts of lessons, some alongside senior leaders.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and observed pupils' learning in small groups. They spoke with pupils in lessons, at lunchtime and at playtimes, and met with groups of pupils from all classes.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, class teachers, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke to parents at the start and end of the school day. They considered the opinion of 17 parents through Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.
- Inspectors took account of the 17 online responses returned by members of staff and the nine online responses from pupils of East Stanley.

Inspection team

Lesley Butcher, Lead inspector

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Her Majesty's Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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