

# Hartside Primary School

Hartside, Crook, County Durham DL15 9NN

## Inspection dates

13–14 July 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

- Senior leaders have high expectations of all staff and pupils. A relentless drive to secure rapid improvement is evident everywhere. As a result the legacy of underachievement is being successfully overcome.
- The quality of teaching has improved because of rigorous monitoring, timely support and effective training.
- Teachers plan interesting activities based on sound assessment of pupils' learning. Classrooms are now hives of purposeful activity where pupils work well together, readily sharing ideas and thoughts. Their attitudes to learning are good.
- Pupils behave well and with consideration for each other. They are warm, friendly and polite.
- All groups of pupils have made good progress this academic year, including those with special educational needs or disabilities, disadvantaged pupils and the most able pupils. Standards have risen rapidly, especially in Years 1 to 5.
- Pupils feel safe and have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They say bullying is rare but when it does take place, it is managed well by their teachers.
- Attendance is better than average and gaps are closing between the attendance rates of disadvantaged pupils and those of their peers.
- Children in the early years get off to a flying start. They make strong progress and achieve levels of development that are well above average. They play happily together and quickly develop skills in language, literacy and mathematics.
- Governors are deeply involved in the life of the school. They have made sure that they have the levels of skill and knowledge required to be effective. Consequently, governors challenge leaders and successfully hold them to account.
- The rich curriculum provides well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and prepares them well for life in modern Britain.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The standards reached by the current Year 6 in the recent national tests are below average. Although they made good progress recently, there was insufficient time for them to fully overcome the gaps in their learning resulting from poor teaching in the past.
- Pupils have too few opportunities to apply their mathematical knowledge. As a result, they lack confidence and their skills in reasoning and problem solving are underdeveloped.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build on pupils' sound base of mathematical knowledge so that, with greater confidence and independence, they are able to:
  - apply their skills accurately and fluently to a wide range of increasingly complex tasks
  - select appropriate mathematical techniques and strategies in helping them to solve a variety of problems.

# Inspection judgements

## Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher's determined efforts to drive the school forward have been successful. He has the full support of staff and governors and, since the last inspection, has continued to strengthen the leadership capacity of the school.
- Senior and middle leaders carefully monitor the quality of teaching. They undertake observations of learning, scrutinise pupils' work and examine the progress pupils make. This has enabled them to eradicate weak teaching and embark on a cycle of continuous improvement.
- A healthy culture is now in place where staff grow and develop. They are able to take on responsibilities and contribute to the development of the whole school. All staff focus on pupil progress and this is now bringing about a rapid and impressive rate of improvement, especially in the teaching of reading and writing. Staff intervene briskly when a pupil's progress falters.
- Leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are acutely aware of what needs to be done to improve further. Detailed plans for further improvements are carefully monitored to check they are having a good impact.
- Arrangements for the management of teachers' performance are rigorous. The targets set for teachers focus on whole-school priorities and personal development needs. Staff value the access to training which has helped them improve the quality of their work. One teacher reported, 'I have been 100% supported by management and been offered all the advice and support needed to fulfil my role'. Impact is clearly seen in the good progress made by pupils throughout the school.
- The physical education and sport premium for primary schools has been well used. Pupils are active and enjoy a wide range of sports. Competitive sports are actively encouraged and pupils are enjoying considerable success in local competitions.
- The curriculum is broad, balanced, imaginative and creative. It is enriched by regular trips and visits to museums and local historical sites and events. Key stage 2 pupils showcased their learning in drama and music as they proudly presented their production of the *Lion King* during the inspection. Pupils use opportunities to develop their writing in every subject and good extended writing was evident when Year 4 explained respiration using correct scientific terminology.
- Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Assemblies and lessons embed understanding of tolerance, democracy, the rule of law and the rights of the individual, together with the need to take responsibility. Pupils of all ages have a strong sense of right and wrong. There is no evidence of any discriminatory or prejudice-based behaviour of any kind.
- The special educational needs coordinator has a deep understanding of pupils' needs. She is tenacious in securing the resources and support needed to help them to make good progress. As a result, the vast majority reach their challenging targets. Parents of pupils with very specific needs are closely involved in planning for their learning, bringing valuable expertise on how best to support their children. The parent of one pupil told inspectors how delighted she was with the work of the school in preparing her child to make a smooth transition to secondary school.
- Pupil premium funding is spent carefully. Funds have helped to reduce the proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are persistently absent or late, and to improve behaviour. The impact of strategies to raise standards in reading is felt throughout the school. Phonics screening results have risen sharply and the progress that disadvantaged pupils are making in key stage 1 and 2 is enabling them to catch up with their peers.
- The local authority has provided the school with good support and appropriate, timely challenge.
- **The governance of the school**
  - Governors know the school well. They have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and, as a result, are able to provide a good balance of both challenge and support.
  - Governors have a good knowledge of how the performance of teachers is managed and thoroughly analyse evidence in order to ensure good teaching is rewarded and underperformance tackled effectively.
  - Governors fulfil their statutory duties well, including the management of the financial resources of the school. They ensure that the school can function effectively.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective and are a high priority for all staff in the school. Safeguarding records are very carefully maintained.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment **is good**

- The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection. Teachers are determined that pupils should have the very best opportunities to learn and be successful. They have high expectations and know precisely what pupils need to learn in each lesson. They ensure that other adults working with the class are well equipped to support pupils' learning.
- The literacy leader has ensured that good practice in the teaching of reading and writing has been widely shared. She regularly monitors pupils' work and observes lessons. This enables her to support staff as they implement new approaches to accelerate progress. A range of initiatives has been put in place to engage and create enthusiasm for reading in both boys and girls and, as a result, rapid progress is now being seen in all classes and for all groups of pupils. Older pupils value the changes they have seen in recent years and readily talked to inspectors about their enjoyment of reading and the range of interesting books they have read.
- Year 1 pupils loved every minute of their lesson in phonics. The confidence, speed, accuracy and pace with which all the children worked was breathtaking. Pupils thrived on the high level of challenge.
- In mathematics, pupils have developed a secure bank of knowledge and covered the national curriculum content. They have gained confidence in mathematical calculation. However, pupils do not have enough opportunities to apply their skills to increasingly complex tasks in a way that requires them to think deeply and select appropriate mathematical techniques independently. They are rarely required to tackle open-ended or unstructured problems. This is recognised by the school and next year a dedicated specialist will lead mathematics learning across the school.
- Teachers skilfully use their subject knowledge in the way they present and explain different subjects. They are careful to check that pupils understand activities and their questions often invite thoughtful responses from pupils, which deepens their learning. Year 6 pupils enjoyed probing questions that enabled them to think deeply about Darwin's theory of evolution and grapple with the concepts and ideas of adaptation of plants and animals.
- Teachers ensure that learning proceeds at a good pace. They plan interesting and meaningful activities and provide many opportunities for pupils to work together. Their knowledge of their pupils' abilities is a strength and it is used well to ensure that the most able pupils are challenged, those with special educational needs or disabilities are well supported and that every pupil makes at least good progress.
- Staff are quick to identify any pupil who is in danger of falling behind, either because the concept or task is not fully understood or where there are longer-term difficulties which need careful investigation. Teachers and teaching assistants work closely together to try to ensure individual pupils or groups overcome any barriers to learning.
- Pupils say they enjoy learning and they feel very well supported. They are keen to succeed and are able to learn from their mistakes. Teachers' feedback is helpful, accurate and supports learning. Most pupils take care and time to respond to teachers' guidance and improve their work.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare **is good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Relationships in all classes are caring, supportive and inclusive. Parents say they are delighted with their children's progress both academically and socially. Pupils say there is always someone there to listen if you are going through a hard time. In the playground, older pupils keep an eye on younger ones and if they are not playing, will go and help out.
- Pupils work hard in lessons and enjoy learning. They listen carefully to instructions and confidently ask questions if they need clarification. They readily volunteer ideas and work productively with their peers.
- Positive attitudes to learning contribute strongly to the good progress pupils make in their learning. Pupils take pride in their work, which is carefully and neatly presented. They readily improve their work when directed and understand well how to edit, draft and redraft pieces of writing.
- The school is responsive to the emotional well-being of its pupils and provides support where this is needed.

- Pupils feel safe and well cared for. One parent reported that through the 'buddy system' and 'bully busters' initiatives, minor issues are resolved quickly and no one ever feels left out – a sentiment echoed by pupils. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe when using mobile technology and have had visits from the police and the fire service to help them understand and avoid dangerous situations.
- Although pupils are aware of different types of bullying, including the use of derogatory language, some younger pupils tend to confuse minor disagreements with bullying behaviour. Pupils reported to different inspectors that bullying is very rare but when it occurs they all know what to do. They say teachers deal with it quickly so that they feel safe and secure.

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. There are rigorous, clearly understood systems to manage poor behaviour and encourage and reward good behaviour. As a result, the number of serious incidents resulting in exclusion has fallen to almost zero this year.
- Pupils behave well indoors. They are sensitive to the learning needs of others and take care not to interrupt the flow of learning when leaving or entering a classroom to work in small groups.
- In the outdoor areas, pupils behave responsibly, especially when using climbing equipment or playing ball games.
- Attendance is good and steadily improving. Leaders work well with families to improve attendance. Pupils enjoy rewards and certificates for regular attendance. Gaps between the attendance of different groups of pupils have narrowed considerably this year, especially between disadvantaged pupils and their peers.

### **Outcomes for pupils**

**are good**

- Leaders have worked extremely hard to overcome past underachievement as reflected in some of the published data for the school. All groups of pupils in the school are currently making good progress. The pupils in younger year groups show greater depth of understanding and skill than older pupils, as they have benefited for longer from the positive changes that have taken place within the school in recent years.
- All groups of pupils made good progress this year in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 1, as seen from teachers' assessments and confirmed from analysis of their work. The progress made in 2015 by pupils in key stage 1 was also good as a high proportion reached national standards from very low starting points at the end of the Reception Year.
- The proportion of pupils in Year 1 who have achieved the expected level in the phonics check is extremely high and well above the national average for 2015. The proportion who reached the standard having retaken the test in Year 2 is similarly very high. This represents good improvement from the previous year.
- The progress made by pupils in other year groups in both reading and writing is good or better. Inspectors were impressed by its quality and depth. They confirmed the school's own internal assessment, that a high proportion of pupils in Years 1 to 5 have securely met their expected age-related standards.
- In mathematics pupils made good progress. Again, a high proportion of pupils in Years 1 to 5 have met their expected age-related standards but with less security than in reading and writing.
- Gaps between in the standards reached by disadvantaged pupils and their peers have been closely monitored this year. There is convincing evidence to show that disadvantaged pupils are catching up and that attainment gaps are closing despite some minor variability within years and subjects. This is because the school closely monitors the progress of individual pupils and plans for specific, targeted work to help pupils catch up. The impact of this additional support is closely checked.
- Pupils with special educational needs or disabilities have made impressive progress this year, with the vast majority meeting challenging targets from their individual starting points. They have benefited from working in very small groups to complement their learning.
- The more able pupils in Years 1 to 5 have made rapid, strong progress and are working at greater depth within the study programmes, notably in reading and writing. Many have already moved on to next year's curriculum.

- All groups of pupils in the current Year 6 have made good progress this year in reading, writing and mathematics. This was seen clearly in pupils' work. However, the standards pupils reached in the key stage 2 tests in May were below the national average. Teachers and pupils have worked hard to eradicate the wide and significant gaps in knowledge that arose because of their past experience of weak teaching, but pupils simply did not have the time needed to catch up with their peers nationally. Therefore they are not as well prepared for secondary school as they might be.

## Early years provision

**is good**

- The early years leader is aiming for excellence. She has very high expectations for both staff and children. She has transformed the quality of teaching and children are thriving. Learning is carefully planned to capture their interests and match their developmental needs. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes are taught with others of their age for more formal teaching and then learn together throughout other parts of the day.
- Children enter Nursery with knowledge and skills that are often below those typical for their age. All groups of pupils make good progress which accelerates in their Reception Year. Gaps between disadvantaged pupils and their peers are closing. The proportion of children who leave Reception with good levels of development is well above average and children are well prepared for learning in Year 1.
- Children think they are 'just' playing, but each task is carefully planned to develop and build on earlier learning. They love to play 'funky fingers' (a game which requires them to pick up tiny objects), unaware they are developing fine motor skills as a precursor to writing.
- Early phonics is especially well taught, as is mathematics, and there are many opportunities to practise writing skills while at play.
- Staff listen carefully to the children and sensitively probe and question their thinking so that children are able to use increasingly mature language. They support and develop children's play and exploration, providing additional resources to stimulate further learning.
- The school has created a hugely challenging and imaginative outdoor learning environment. Staff ensure that all children including those with special educational needs or disabilities are able to access these rich opportunities to learn. Children behave sensibly on climbing equipment. They have a good understanding of how to take care and keep themselves and others safe.
- Safeguarding and welfare requirements are fully met and all children are well supported to access the curriculum.
- Children behave well. They enjoy each other's company and most are able to take turns and share toys. They respond well to instructions and listen carefully to directions from their teachers.
- Inspectors observed children from the Nursery taking turns to play the goats in the 'Three Billy Goats Gruff'. They delighted in stamping on the wooden suspension bridge, repeating the nursery rhyme and trying to frighten the troll (their teacher) underneath. While they were engrossed in play, rich learning was taking place. They were developing their social skills, imaginative thinking, literacy and climbing and ability to balance.
- Parents and carers have many opportunities to be involved in their children's learning. They are invited to 'stay and play' sessions each half term so that they see how the children are taught and know which skills they need to learn and practise at home. Internet links help to maintain close communication with children's key workers. One parent wrote 'The staff have done a brilliant job ensuring that our child has been accepted, integrated and educated in a professional and friendly way'.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	114057
<b>Local authority</b>	Durham
<b>Inspection number</b>	10012046

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	266
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ann Turnbull
<b>Headteacher</b>	Shawn Laws
<b>Telephone number</b>	01388 766 686
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.hartsideprimary.org.uk">www.hartsideprimary.org.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:hartside@durhamlearning.net">hartside@durhamlearning.net</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	24 April 2014

## Information about this school

- The school has increased substantially in size since the previous inspection with the addition of Nursery provision for three-year-olds in September 2014. It is now an average sized primary school.
- Almost all children are of White British heritage and most speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is broadly average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- More pupils are identified as having special educational needs or disabilities than average.
- The school runs a breakfast club before school and an after-school club at the end of each school day.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning across a wide range of lessons and were joined by the headteacher for two observations on the second day of the inspection.
- They observed pupils at play during break and lunchtimes and spoke with them both formally and informally. Inspectors carefully scrutinised pupils' work and listened to 10 pupils reading.
- Inspectors considered the 68 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, 'Parent View' and two letters received from parents, and spoke to parents and grandparents as they arrived at the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders. They also met with the chair and other members of the governing body.
- A meeting was held with the school's educational development partner from the local authority.
- A wide range of documentation was scrutinised including the school's own evaluation of its performance, plans for development, performance management documents, minutes of governing body meetings, records of the monitoring of teaching and progress information. Inspectors examined safeguarding and child protection documentation, attendance data and records relating to behaviour.

## Inspection team

Janice Gorlach, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Geoffrey Dorrity	Ofsted Inspector
Jennifer Cave	Ofsted Inspector



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