

St Aidan's CofE Memorial Primary School

Loyalty Road, Hartlepool TS25 5BA

Inspection dates

19–20 October 2016

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
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 headteacher has been the driving force behind the school's rapid improvements. Her clear-sighted ambition for the school is fully supported by other leaders and by the staff team.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They have excellent attitudes to learning and want to do their best. Harmonious playtimes are enhanced by a range of games and equipment which occupy pupils well.
- Thorough systems for checking the quality of teaching has resulted in well-targeted improvements. Teaching is now good and improving.
- Spiritual, moral social and cultural development is excellent. Pupils are provided with rich experiences which enable them to think more deeply.
- Pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics and in other subjects such as French and PE.
- Effective safeguarding combined with very strong relationships with staff mean that pupils feel extremely safe in school. The support provided by the inclusion manager is highly valued.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress. School leaders now ensure that they identify and address anything which may prevent these pupils from learning well.
- The curriculum successfully engages pupils in learning through a range of enriching visits supplemented by visitors to school. Extremely thoughtful opportunities are provided to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain and to promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Teachers engage pupils well with interesting, carefully planned lessons which build pupils' knowledge and understanding progressively.
- Parents have confidence in the school. They recognise the improvements that have been made and enjoy the opportunities to participate in their children's learning.
- Teaching assistants provide effective guidance to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress.
- The early years is good. Dedicated staff help children to settle quickly. Their meticulous records of children's learning ensure that they know what to do next to help children progress well.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve teaching to ensure that pupils' progress is outstanding by:
 - providing more consistent challenge to all pupils, particularly those who are most able, in all subjects and in all year groups
 - ensuring that there are more opportunities to consolidate pupils' understanding of spelling, grammar and punctuation
 - ensuring that expectations of handwriting and presentation are high in all subjects.
- Further develop leadership and management by:
 - implementing plans to enable middle leaders to check the difference their work has made and so contribute fully to driving school improvements
 - increasing the checks the governing body make to ensure that they have a clear understanding of how well the school meets its safeguarding and equalities duties.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher has driven rapid improvement in the school since her appointment. There is a clear direction and ambition for excellence and an understanding that nothing but the best will do in all aspects of the school's work. Staff are enabled to have a 'can do' approach and they are fully appreciative of the opportunity they are given to fulfil their potential.
- Incisive and regular checks on the quality of teaching by senior leaders has resulted in well-targeted support to individual members of staff and prompt tackling of areas of weakness across the school. Consequently, teaching and pupils' outcomes have improved.
- Close attention to the performance of staff means that that they receive appropriate support depending on the stage of their career. Teachers new to the profession receive tailored help and guidance. Those who are more experienced are invited to take more leadership responsibility by shadowing leaders who are already in post. Procedures are in place to reward those whose performance is effective.
- Pupils' progress is checked regularly and those who are in danger of falling behind are given the right support to help them catch up. Governors have ensured that funding to support those eligible for the pupil premium is now well targeted to ensure that these pupils make good progress.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent and is woven into all aspects of school life. Spiritual development is enhanced through the study of subjects such as the life of Anne Frank, where pupils are asked to reflect on her feelings and experiences. It is also supported through regular collective worship and the opportunity to think of others.
- The curriculum has been designed to broaden pupils' experiences and stimulate their interest in learning through a series of topics based on questions. Relevant visits and visitors to school ensure that pupils maintain engagement. Tailored programmes are in place for pupils whose progress is slowing in reading, writing or mathematics to help them catch up. The curriculum supports pupils' understanding of how to stay safe highly effectively, for example through regular lessons in the dangers of being online. Studying the lives of Emmeline Pankhurst and Rosa Parks provides them with a highly effective understanding of the need for tolerance. It is one example of their excellent preparation for life in modern Britain.
- The use of the sports premium is effective and successfully engages pupils in participating in a wider range of sports and games. The school has also become increasingly successful in different sporting competitions. These opportunities promote healthier lifestyles to pupils, allied with active playtimes.
- Parents recognise the improvements that have taken place in the school. They receive regular information about their child's progress and are invited into school to take part in different activities.
- Middle leaders are not yet involved in driving school improvement as senior leaders are. They have now begun to take responsibility for aspects of this work. They have

implemented new initiatives in response to weaknesses which have been identified. Although there are plans to support middle leaders to check the difference their actions have made, they have not yet done so.

- The school has received effective support from the local authority to support leadership and from the diocese of the Church of England to strengthen governance, in particular.

Governance of the school

- The governing body has strengthened its effectiveness since the last inspection and is led effectively.
- Recruitment of new governors is carefully managed to ensure that there is a good range of skills and expertise to hold school leaders to account appropriately. Governors make sure that they attend the right training, sometimes alongside school staff, so their knowledge is up to date.
- Their good knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses, including the quality of teaching, is gathered from regular visits to school and comprehensive reports provided by senior leaders. As a result, they are able to allocate funding well and ensure that they achieve value for money.
- Despite their good knowledge of the school, governors' checks on the implementation of safeguarding and equalities duties are not regular enough to ensure that they have a clear and thorough understanding of how effective the school is in meeting these requirements.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff ensure that safeguarding of pupils is a priority. They understand the procedures they need to follow when there is a concern about a pupil's welfare. Comprehensive records are maintained where there are any concerns.
- The inclusion manager works closely with families and with other agencies to ensure that families and pupils receive appropriate support when they need it.
- Through effective training, staff are enabled to feel confident to tackle homophobic or racist bullying if it arises.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Since the last inspection, teaching has improved as a result of effective professional development. Careful checking of performance ensures that individual weaknesses are addressed. Teaching is now good and improving and is resulting in improving outcomes for pupils.
- Excellent relationships between pupils and teachers means that pupils attend well and listen carefully. Interesting activities motivate pupils to try their best and maintain their concentration.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and generally ensure that any misunderstanding is addressed quickly. The accurate teaching of phonics, for example, ensures that an above-average proportion of pupils reach the required standard by the end of Year 1.

- Teaching assistants provide effective support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. They work closely with teachers. Their careful records of pupils' learning aids teachers planning for these pupils.
- Homework encourages pupils to increase their knowledge and apply what they have learned in creative ways. A menu of different tasks provides appropriate challenge which pupils respond to enthusiastically.
- Occasionally, most-able pupils in particular are not challenged sufficiently to help them think more deeply. Scrutiny of their work indicated that in mathematics they are not stretched enough and are not given enough opportunities to solve problems and apply the skills they have learned. Similarly, in writing, they have few opportunities to write at length applying the skills they have learned.
- Sometimes in subjects such as history or geography all pupils are given tasks which do not demand enough of them.
- In some classes pupils have insufficient opportunities to use the spelling, grammar and punctuation they have learned in their writing. As a result, some older pupils still make errors such as not using capital letters for the names of countries.
- Pupils' handwriting and presentation in some subjects are not of the same high standard as they are in mathematics and writing.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils are exceptionally proud of their school and welcome visitors warmly. They hold doors for adults without prompting and display good manners at all times.
- Teachers' excellent relationships with pupils and their use of encouragement and praise give pupils the belief that they can be successful learners. Close working with a local secondary school gives pupils the opportunity to learn more about secondary education, the world of work and university, so that they can aspire to achieve highly.
- Pupils are polite and considerate to each other. Those who are new to the school are helped to feel part of the school family quickly. A 'buddy' is allocated to them so that they do not get lost in the building and have someone to play with.
- Pupils act safely both inside and outside the building. They walk around school in a quiet and orderly manner. They use playground equipment sensibly and do not take inappropriate risks.
- Pupils' understanding of how to keep safe when using the internet is excellent. In computing lessons, they learn not to share personal information when using social media and that not all people are who they say they are.
- The programme of personal, social and health education is comprehensive, so that pupils are acutely aware of how they are kept safe within school and how to avoid danger out of school. They understand the risks associated with alcohol, for example.
- Pupils understand the different forms that bullying can take and learn how to combat

racism and homophobia. They know that when they report any incidents they are dealt with promptly by staff. School records confirm that the few incidents which do take place are dealt with promptly.

- The inclusion manager plays an important role in ensuring that pupils' emotional well-being is of the highest priority. Pupils have confidence in her ability to help them overcome any difficulties they are experiencing.
- Excellent sporting opportunities are led by a sports coach and supplemented by a very effective curriculum. This ensures that pupils understand how to live healthy lifestyles. Pupils' physical well-being is given a very high priority.
- The breakfast club helps the few pupils who attend to have a calm and settled start to the morning.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Their conduct in lessons is exemplary. Disruptions to learning are extremely rare and learning proceeds unhindered. Pupils respond to adults' instructions immediately, including those who are occasional visitors.
- Pupils behave equally well at lunchtime and during playtimes. When disputes occur they are resolved promptly. School records indicate that poor behaviour during these times is rare.
- Pupils' pride in their school means that it continues to be maintained to a very high standard, with attractive displays of pupils' work. The grounds are litter-free.
- The vast majority of pupils come to school on time and attend regularly. Absence rates are below the national average. School procedures to check absence are stringent, so that very few pupils have high absence levels.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Improvements to teaching and to the checking of pupils' learning have led to rising standards and increased rates of progress. An analysis of current pupils' work and the school's own performance information shows that overall progress across the school in reading, writing and mathematics is good.
- Progress across a range of subjects is good. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is extremely strong. In subjects such as PE and French, pupils are reaching standards for their age from typically lower starting points.
- Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Higher than average proportions of pupils reached the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2 in 2015. Current information for pupils leaving in 2016, although not finalised, shows the same pattern.
- In key stage 1 in 2015, proportions reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics at the expected standard were broadly similar to the national average. This was as a result of good progress from below-average starting points at the end of the Reception Year.
- The progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is good.

They receive carefully tailored support from teaching assistants which helps them to build up knowledge and skills progressively.

- Funding to support disadvantaged pupils has been used effectively to enable these pupils to make good progress. Additional support is provided when it is needed to maintain a good rate of progress. In 2015, this resulted in attainment gaps diminishing in reading, writing, mathematics and grammar, punctuation and spelling at the end of key stage 2
- Although most-able pupils make good progress overall, scrutiny of their work indicates they could be stretched to make better progress in some year groups and subjects. In mathematics workbooks, there are limited opportunities to solve problems. Test information for 2016 suggests that few pupils attained at the higher standard in both key stages 1 and 2.

Early years provision

Good

- Children settle quickly when they enter Nursery and form warm and trusting relationships. They gain confidence to try new things and 'have a go' with gentle encouragement from adults.
- Children learn rules and routines quickly and respond to adults promptly. They behave extremely well and learn to play together harmoniously so that it is always calm and purposeful.
- From starting points which are typically lower than those expected for their age, they make strong gains, so that when they leave the Reception Year, the proportion of pupils that have reached a good level of development and are ready for Year 1 is just above the national average.
- Children are well supported by vigilant adults who help them to understand how to keep safe. For example, while making soup, children were supported to use a knife safely. Inspectors saw adults giving the support needed to keep children safe during a balancing game outdoors.
- Adults' records of children's learning are extremely thorough and detailed. Their planning to help children progress is based on their careful observations of children's interests and knowledge. The effective teaching of reading helps children to learn letters and sounds quickly.
- Adults support children's play well. They help children learn new vocabulary and provide ideas to develop their imagination. Occasionally, opportunities are missed to deepen children's thinking through asking probing questions.
- The dedicated team in the early years is led effectively. There are strong procedures in place to ensure that all adults are aware of children's needs and abilities and to identify any weaknesses in teaching.
- Good procedures are in place to involve parents in their child's learning. An informal start to the day provides an opportunity to share information and there are more formal events throughout the year so that parents can find out about their child's progress in school.

School details

Unique reference number	111690
Local authority	Hartlepool
Inspection number	10019730

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	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	352
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Taylor
Headteacher	Lynn Chambers
Telephone number	01429273695
Website	www.staidansschool.info
Email address	admin.staidans@school.hartlepool.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	30 September – 1 October 2014

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported through the pupil premium is twice the national average.
- Almost all pupils are White British. The vast majority of pupils speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils who have support for special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average.
- The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is below average.

- In the early years children attend the Nursery class for five mornings or five afternoons each week. In the Reception Year children attend full time.
- The school organises a breakfast club.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The headteacher took up post in January 2015. Three other teachers have joined the school since the last inspection.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of teaching and learning in parts of lessons in every class and a PE lesson outdoors. Two of the observations were undertaken jointly with the headteacher.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils about learning and school life, both individually and in groups.
- Inspectors listened to pupils reading. They reviewed pupils' work in lessons and analysed samples of work in pupils' books from this academic year and from last academic year. Senior leaders participated in analysis of some of the samples.
- A telephone conversation was held with the chair of governors and there was also a meeting with six other members of the governing body. There was a telephone conversation and a meeting with two representatives from the diocese of the Church of England. There was also a telephone conversation and a meeting with two local authority representatives. Inspectors also held meetings with senior leaders and other staff.
- Inspectors looked at the school's review of its own performance, its improvement plan, a number of key school policies and the minutes of the governing body meetings. They considered a range of documentation in relation to child protection, safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- Informal discussions were held with parents and the 32 responses to the online questionnaire for parents (Parent View) were analysed.
- There were 20 staff questionnaires completed and considered by inspectors.

Inspection team

Susan Waugh, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Andy Jones	Ofsted Inspector
Lucie Stephenson	Ofsted Inspector

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