

Tweedmouth Community Middle School

Billendeane Terrace, Spittal, Berwick-upon-Tweed, Northumberland TD15 2DJ

Inspection dates

3–4 November 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
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Tweedmouth Community Middle School has not improved significantly since the previous inspection.
- Leaders have not held teachers to account in a sufficiently robust manner for the quality of their teaching.
- The skills of middle leaders in observing teaching have not been developed well enough.
- Year 6 national test results in 2016 indicated that all groups of pupils had underachieved.
- Teaching, learning and pupils' progress across the curriculum are currently too variable and a long way short of being consistently good.
- Some teachers do not plan sufficiently well to make best use of lesson time and so pupils' learning is often too slow.
- In some lessons, teachers do not use the school's assessment data sufficiently well to stretch and challenge pupils of all ability, especially the most able.
- Some pupils do not set their mathematics work out well enough. Their presentation and diagrams are often untidy.
- Homework does not sufficiently consolidate or extend pupils' learning.

The school has the following strengths

- Year 6 national test results in 2015 indicated that almost all groups of pupils had made good progress in reading, writing and mathematics from the time that they joined the school.
- The unsatisfactory Year 6 national test results of 2016 acted as a trigger for greater leadership emphasis on pupils' progress.
- A far more robust and challenging target-setting and assessment system is beginning to help leaders to lever up attainment.
- Progress in some subjects, such as art, design and technology and science, is good.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in lessons and around school are consistently good and sometimes outstanding.
- Parents and carers have very positive views about the school and say that their children feel safe and enjoy their education.
- Welfare arrangements are very good. Safeguarding procedures meet all requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement to consistently good or better by:
 - ensuring that teachers plan lessons in ways that make the best use of the time available so that the pace of learning is consistently good, especially for the most able pupils
 - making better use of the school's assessment data in lessons to provide pupils of all abilities with sufficiently challenging work
 - improving the arrangements for the setting of homework to enable pupils to make faster progress by consolidating and extending their learning
 - ensuring that pupils set their work out well in mathematics and produce diagrams of good quality.
- Strengthen leadership and management by:
 - making sure that leaders and managers hold teachers fully to account for pupils' progress
 - sharpening middle leaders' skills in observing teaching.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leadership and management at all levels have not been good enough in the period following the previous inspection. Weaknesses in achievement and teaching remain because they have not been tackled with sufficient rigour.
- Even when weaknesses have been identified, senior and middle leaders have not called teachers to account sufficiently robustly for the quality of their teaching or pupils' learning in lessons. This lack of rigour contributed to the disappointing Year 6 national test outcomes.
- Leaders knew that the 2016 results were not good enough and produced an action plan to raise attainment, increase progress and improve the quality of teaching. The local authority has provided help in the form of better checking of the school's overall performance and brokering support from an outstanding school.
- These actions are beginning to have an effect but much remains to be done. Revised target-setting for all subjects and year groups reflects vastly greater expectations of what can and must be achieved. Development planning is of good quality and correctly targets improved outcomes for all groups of pupils. The recently introduced behaviour policy is working well.
- There are emerging strengths in leadership. The new senior team has the full respect of all members of staff and morale is very good. Middle leaders are enthusiastic about the roles they need to play but their observations of lesson quality still require development.
- A greater sense of urgency now means that the progress of all groups of pupils is under scrutiny and beginning to accelerate. More effective targeting of pupil premium funding means that disadvantaged pupils are also doing better than in the recent past.
- The school has used its Year 7 catch-up funding well. The very few pupils who had not reached expected levels in English or mathematics in Year 6 did so by the time they left Year 7.
- The broad and balanced curriculum enables pupils to study a wide range of subjects, often delivered by specialists. Work in the classroom is supplemented by a fine range of extra-curricular activities. These include visits and speakers which form an integral part of the very successful spiritual, moral, cultural and social development programme. Primary sport funding is used well to provide many extra-curricular opportunities for pupils, for example tennis, cricket and dance.
- The school provides pupils with plenty of opportunity to study topics related to life in modern Britain, especially through citizenship days. Pupils can speak with confidence about different cultures and faiths. They understand aspects of tolerance, government and democracy.
- Equal opportunities have a high profile. When leaders or members of staff perceive that individual pupils have either slipped behind or require assistance they are quick to provide it. Welfare provision is one area of the school's work which is very effective and highly valued by parents and carers.

- The marking of pupils' work is much better than at the time of the previous inspection because most teachers now indicate clearly to pupils how to improve their work. Frequently, teachers set extra exercises for pupils to enable them to master fully the topics they are studying.
- The school is currently fully staffed. There are no major difficulties in appointing or retaining teachers and classroom assistants.
- Responses from parents and carers, either through Parent View or free-text messages sent in to the inspection team, indicate a good level of satisfaction with the school.

Governance of the school

- Governance is a developing area and improving quickly. Governors fully understand their responsibilities and know that the school has not been doing well enough.
- They are benefiting from training and are now beginning to probe and challenge when they think that more can be done.
- They understand how pupil premium funding is used and to what extent it is having a positive impact.
- Governors play their part in ensuring that performance management arrangements follow the intended procedures and that any salary enhancements are fully merited.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective because there are good systems in place which members of staff implement consistently. Safeguarding has a high profile and permeates the culture and daily life of the school. For example, the checking of the identities of all adults who have access to pupils is of high calibre.
- Pupils confirmed that the school teaches them very effectively about e-safety and other potential threats to their welfare such as drugs, alcohol and radicalisation.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching and learning has not improved since the previous inspection, when it also required improvement.
- Many of the weaknesses identified two years ago remain because leaders have not monitored lessons with sufficient rigour.
- Consequently, expectations of pupils are sometimes not high enough, especially the most able. Frequently, tasks are not well enough matched to pupils' ability. Teachers sometimes allow pupils far too much time to complete tasks and so the pace of learning declines.
- The setting of homework is disorganised and does not routinely enable pupils to make good progress outside lessons, either through consolidation of learning or through conducting further research.
- In mathematics there are many examples of pupils producing untidy work, showing little or no working and drawing poorly presented diagrams.
- Even where teaching promotes learning at a relatively slow pace, the management of pupils' behaviour is just as good as it is in lessons, where the pace of learning is much quicker.

- The school's recently improved assessment and data collection system is helping leaders to identify quickly pupils or groups who are not meeting the more challenging targets they have set for all subjects.
- Use of a daily reading programme designed to improve all pupils' fluency is increasing the progress that all groups of pupils are making.
- Some good teaching enables pupils to progress well. In lessons where pupils make fast gains in their learning, teachers explain tasks clearly and expect pupils to achieve much in the time available. For example, in a Year 5 girls' physical education lesson on lacrosse skills, the pupils very quickly learned how best to use their racquets to transport the ball. The lesson was organised in a way that enabled pupils to participate fully, keep moving vigorously on a cold day and really enjoy their learning.
- The teaching of art and design and technology is also good. Design portfolios are of high quality, as are the portraits and human figures in art sketchbooks. Science teaching is good too. Teachers ensure that all groups of pupils are challenged and the standard of written work is good and extensive.
- There are many examples of skilled classroom assistants really making a difference to some of the school's most needy pupils, enabling them to make good progress from their starting points.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils become more mature as they move from Year 5 to Year 8, by which time they are well prepared for and confident about the move to the next stage in their education.
- As they move through the school, pupils do become more effective learners, but they are still quite dependent upon their teachers for direction, even in Year 8. The development of individual study skills through tasks set to be completed at home is quite limited.
- The very effective programme of spiritual, moral, cultural and social education underpins the whole curriculum. It provides a rich source of extra-curricular opportunities, including sporting and musical activities, together with a series of very popular visits, for example London in Years 7 and 8 and an Italian ski trip. These all help to extend pupils' knowledge and first-hand experiences of the world outside the classroom.
- Pupils really do value the amount of help and support that members of staff provide. They know that there is always someone at hand to listen and advise if they become worried or upset.
- Suitable levels of supervision at breaks and movement times mean that pupils are kept safe. Pupils say they feel perfectly safe in school and that bullying of all types is rare.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.

- The school runs smoothly on a daily basis. Pupils conduct themselves well when they are moving between lessons and when they are learning in the classroom. This is because teachers and classroom assistants have high expectations of them in this respect. Pupils pay due regard to the safety of others. They are polite and welcoming.
- Behaviour in class is generally good and frequently outstanding. Although some pupils are a little too chatty at times, teachers manage them well and soon restore a sense of calm and industry. Pupils listen well and cooperate with teachers and their assistants whom they respect fully.
- Pupils themselves confirmed that unacceptable conduct is rare and that they have every confidence that members of staff would deal with it effectively if it should occur.
- Pupils' attendance in 2016 was average, and better than it was in the previous year. Persistent absence is falling, especially for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Year 6 national test results in 2016 were far too low. Results for reading, writing, spelling, punctuation and grammar and particularly mathematics were all very disappointing. They indicated strongly that all groups of pupils, including the most able, the disadvantaged and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, had underachieved.
- These very disappointing 2016 results contrasted strongly with those of a year earlier, when pupils did well. The difference was partly because extra staffing had been drafted in to support pupils who fell behind in 2015 but the arrangement was not continued into 2016.
- Current outcomes for pupils in all year groups, although improving, are very variable and require improvement overall. This is because the quality of teaching and learning across the curriculum and between year groups is not yet consistently good.
- Progress currently being made by the most able disadvantaged pupils and other high-ability pupils is improving, but it still requires improvement because there are many instances of lessons not providing sufficient challenge for them.
- Disadvantaged pupils are doing better than in the recent past because leaders are checking their progress with greater rigour. However, their overall progress across the curriculum still requires improvement because the teaching they receive is not yet good enough overall.
- Pupils in Year 8, who achieved above-average national test results in Year 6, are now attaining at a more average expectation for age in English and mathematics because progress has slowed.
- In mathematics, many pupils, even the most able, produce work which is not set out well enough. Diagrams are often untidily produced and insufficient working is being shown. This means that the skills necessary for success at GCSE are not being developed well enough.
- Nevertheless, progress in art is consistently good, enabling pupils to produce work which is often of high quality. Progress in design and technology good because pupils

have well-developed drawing skills and produce design work which forms a strong basis for further development towards GCSE.

- Progress in science is also good for all groups of pupils because teachers ensure that the pace of learning is rapid and that much is achieved in the time available. Pupils develop good experimental and recording skills as they study physics, chemistry and biology.
- These examples of good progress in subjects contrast with others where pupils' progress is much slower because teaching still requires improvement, for example English, French, mathematics and history.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and disabilities are doing better than in the previous school year because much more specialist help is available for them.

School details

Unique reference number	122348
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	10019742

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

Type of school	Middle deemed secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	9 to 13
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	310
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Gilchrist
Headteacher	Benjamin Hulbert
Acting Headteacher	Ben Ryder
Telephone number	01289 307480
Website	www.tweedmouth.schooljotter2.com
Email address	admin@tweedmouth.northumberland.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	3–4 December 2014

Information about this school

- Tweedmouth Community Middle School is smaller than the average-sized middle school.
- Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- There are few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and very few who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average.
- An above-average proportion of pupils are supported through pupil premium funding. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.
- It works in partnership with other schools in Berwick, including the academy, which caters for older pupils.

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- An acting headteacher and an acting deputy headteacher were running the school at the time of the inspection due to the very recent absence of the headteacher.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 18 lessons, including eight jointly with senior leaders, and looked at a wide range of pupils' written work.
- They held meetings with the acting headteacher, the acting deputy headteacher, middle leaders, the special needs coordinator, groups of pupils, the chair of governors and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documentation, including the school's review of its performance, development planning, records of pupils' progress, safeguarding procedures and incident logs.
- They took account of 44 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, 17 responses to the staff questionnaire, 37 responses to the pupils' questionnaire and 41 free-text messages.

Inspection team

John Paddick, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Ashley Wood	Ofsted Inspector
Karen Gammack	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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