

Beamish Primary School

Co-operative Villas, Beamish, Stanley, County Durham DH9 0QN

Inspection dates

27–28 September 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	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders know their pupils well. They work closely with staff in planning teaching and additional support, so pupils succeed academically and in their personal development, often from low starting points.
- Leaders promote an inclusive ethos and robustly address barriers to learning through extensive support for children and their families. Leaders work closely with families to support learning and build constructive relationships, contributing to the increasing numbers of pupils joining the school.
- Effective planning and targeted support encourage high levels of pupil engagement. These are leading to good rates of progress for the majority of pupils and rising levels of attainment, although the most able pupils are, at times, not challenged rigorously enough.
- The school works effectively within its federation to review standards, build leadership capacity and strengthen curriculum provision and planning. Wider partnerships with the local authority and external partners help to moderate standards and enhance safeguarding.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress in mathematics and writing but less progress in reading. They receive good individual support, although leaders do not always review the overall effectiveness of provision.
- The arrangements for safeguarding pupils are effective. Leaders and dedicated support workers are tenacious in the actions they take to promote pupils' welfare and well-being.
- Leaders promote a culture of respect and courtesy through high expectations, clear routines and the cultivation of positive relationships between pupils and adults.
- Governors are committed to the progress and well-being of pupils at the school. They are active in supporting leaders but also in questioning them on key aspects of pupils' progress and the effective use of funding.
- In the most recent key stage 2 national tests, pupils made better progress in mathematics and writing than they did in reading. However, progress in reading is improving at key stage 1 and for current key stage 2 pupils.
- Effective teaching in the early years enables children to make good progress and prepares them well for learning in Year 1.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate the progress of the most able pupils, by:
 - building swiftly upon their prior understanding to improve the pace of learning
 - setting work that clearly adds challenge for these pupils in a range of subjects.
- Build upon improving progress in reading by:
 - ensuring that pupils read a wider range of more demanding texts
 - developing their reading and understanding skills, including inference and deduction.
- Strengthen the leadership of provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, by:
 - supporting the positive strategies to meet individual pupils' needs with clearer processes to review the overall effectiveness of the provision.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Senior leaders have established a positive ethos whereby all staff maintain a consistent focus on the personal and academic development of every pupil. Pupils are very well supported and this enables them to develop self-confidence and generally make good progress.
- Senior leaders have used links with the federation to build leadership capacity, enhance curriculum provision and provide extra-curricular breadth for pupils. Leaders from both schools carry out regular monitoring visits to check the quality of teaching and the standard of work in books. These activities have contributed to improvements in the quality of teaching and greatly enhanced early years' provision.
- Collaborative planning contributes to a broad and balanced curriculum. The strong focus on addressing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills is complemented by thematic approaches that deepen knowledge and understanding in subjects including science, history, art and technology. Close partnerships between the federation's schools provide pupils with additional access to trips and residential visits while joint sports teams enable pupils to take part in competitions.
- Leaders' self-evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for improvement is accurate. They regularly refine improvement plans to address emerging areas of underperformance.
- Performance management arrangements are thorough. Teachers' targets are linked to pupils' progress and key priorities in the school improvement plan. Their progress towards meeting them is reviewed on a regular basis.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Pupils develop an understanding of different cultures and religions. A culture of respect for others permeates the school and helps to prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- School leaders have effectively used pupil premium funding to remove barriers to learning and improve outcomes. For example, funding has purchased home learning equipment to support homework. Teaching assistants are deployed judiciously. This has contributed to improving progress of disadvantaged pupils over time.
- Leaders plan thoroughly to improve provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Support plans that address pupils' individual needs are regularly reviewed to check their impact. As a result of improving support, pupils are beginning to make better rates of progress. However, leaders do not always combine their knowledge of individual pupils' progress with a wider overview of the effectiveness of provision for particular groups of pupils.
- Funding from the government to promote sport and increase physical activity is being used effectively to heighten participation in competitions and festivals and to provide appropriate kit for all pupils. Specialist coaches have provided additional expertise and opportunities to take part in new activities, including dance and judo.
- The local authority provides support for the school through a school improvement

partner and formal opportunities to moderate standards of pupils' work. The school's work with consultants in the early years has significantly enhanced provision.

Governance of the school

- The governing body has a close understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Within the federation, governors ensure that the school receives appropriate focus to hold leaders to account for the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. Governors have the expertise to question information on pupils' progress and they ensure that this is linked to performance management.
- Governor committees provide an appropriate focus on pupils' progress and the curriculum and they closely scrutinise the impact of additional funding, such as the school's use of the pupil premium.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Pupils' welfare is of central importance and the school has its own school and family support worker to ensure that pupils' well-being is a constant focus. Staff training is up to date and school procedures are rigorous. Appropriate checks are made on adults working at the school. Leaders have good links with other agencies and act decisively to address any concerns over pupil welfare.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers plan learning activities effectively, for example, integrating local history and exciting content to motivate pupils and capture interest. Collaborative planning with teachers from across the federation is adding additional rigour to the quality of teaching.
- Teachers and teaching assistants use effective strategies to develop pupils' reading skills. The most able pupils read with clarity and less-able pupils use decoding strategies to effectively enable them to read and pronounce less familiar words. More effective teaching of reading in the early years and key stage 1 have contributed to faster rates of progress and better attainment.
- Teachers are bringing increasing challenge to learning, and this is contributing to improving progress. In Years 5 and 6, pupils show confidence in applying their understanding of the order of operations to a range of mathematical problems. Pupils apply increasingly challenging grammatical understanding to their English writing in Years 5 and 6. However, pupils' improving progress at key stage 1 is sometimes not built upon rapidly enough in the early stages of key stage 2.
- New assessment systems enable teachers to track pupils' progress over the course of the year and to develop a good understanding of pupils' needs. Regular progress meetings enable teachers to modify plans and target interventions in order to address emerging areas of underperformance.
- The quality of teaching across key stage 1 is contributing to improving rates of progress and a higher proportion of pupils working above age-related expectations. Teaching supports continued progress across key stage 2, where pupils experience increasing expectations as they progress to Years 5 and 6. Writing is taught well. There

is an increasing use of word problems in mathematics, which challenges pupils to apply their mathematical reasoning in more demanding ways.

- Pupils tackle difficult work in their science topic books, although there is some unevenness in its consistency, with work in Years 3 and 4 lacking the rigour of that in Years 5 and 6. In the past, pupils did not have sufficient opportunities for extended writing beyond English lessons, but current books are showing greater opportunities for pupils to apply their writing skills in a wider range of genres.
- Teachers work effectively with teaching assistants to plan learning and target interventions. Teaching assistants know pupils well and show confidence in developing their handwriting skills and mathematical understanding.
- Leaders and teachers plan carefully to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress is closely reviewed. This is contributing to increasing rates of progress reflected in pupils' books and school assessments.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Teachers create a positive and nurturing environment where pupils feel safe and are ready to learn. Adults know their children well and regularly engage with pupils at play and in the classroom, creating an atmosphere of trust and understanding.
- Pupils' physical well-being is promoted through encouragement to participate in a wider range of sporting activities. There are specifically commissioned sports coaches and pupils take part in festivals and team sports. Specifically designed play areas, including a basketball court, are used to good effect at playtime. Children in the early years frequently use the outdoor learning area. Pupils have access to breakfast at the start of school which contributes to a punctual and purposeful start to the day.
- Teachers have a strong understanding of their pupils' needs, and this enables them to quickly identify any concerns over a pupil's emotional or social welfare at an early stage and provide timely support.
- Pupils are able to discuss personal safety and describe the actions the school has taken to help them keep safe. Incidents of bullying are extremely rare and pupils are confident that staff address any concerns seriously. Pupils could communicate clearly how to keep safe online.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils show respect for one another and adults and conduct themselves in an orderly manner.
- The school has a strong inclusive ethos and works strenuously to remove barriers to learning. The work of staff to promote good attendance has been highly successful and their use of a dedicated school and family worker has established positive relationships between the school, families and the wider community. Absence rates are below those seen nationally and are well below those of similar schools.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Children enter the early years with knowledge, skills and abilities that are below those typically expected for their age. As a result of better teaching and more focused planning, children are making very good progress in the early years and are beginning to emerge with outcomes above those seen nationally.
- The proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard in the phonics screening check dipped in 2015 but pupils still made good progress from their starting points. Teachers are relentless in pursuing improvement and all pupils who missed the standard in 2014 reached it the following year. Reading standards reflect good progress from low starting points. Unvalidated results for 2016 suggest that the proportion of pupils working at greater depth in reading at key stage 1 increased significantly, reflecting better outcomes for the most able pupils.
- More robust reading assessments in key stage 2 are providing current pupils with access to more challenging texts and comprehension tasks that are contributing to improving progress in reading in Years 5 and 6, addressing some of the slower progress in reading in earlier years.
- The school has a much higher proportion of pupils who enter and leave the school at times other than the usual. In both 2015 and 2016, over 50% of the pupils who sat key stage 2 assessments did not start key stage 2 at the school. Pupils educated continuously at the school for the entirety of their key stage 2 education make very good rates of progress and in 2015 achieved levels of attainment in line with those seen nationally. Pupils who joined the school at later points made progress, but often from lower and less certain starting points.
- Work in books reveals that most pupils are making good progress in science, history, geography and art. There is, however, scope to provide greater challenge for the most able in the early stages of key stage 2, particularly in science. Pupils are receiving increasing opportunities to complete extended writing and deeper tasks in history and technology, although this has not always been the case.
- The school has a much higher proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities than the national average. Individual case studies and work in books reveal that pupils make good progress from their starting points and their development is carefully tracked. External results in 2015 confirmed that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities made good progress in mathematics and writing but less progress in reading.
- Disadvantaged pupils are making improved rates of progress at key stage 2. Over a three-year period, a higher proportion of disadvantaged pupils achieved the expected standard in phonics than their peers and unvalidated results in 2016 show that a much higher proportion achieved a good level of development in the early years. The attendance of disadvantaged children has increased consistently over a three-year period to be in line with all children nationally as a result of the close and effective links between the school and families.
- Standardised assessments show that currently a higher proportion of the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, are working above age-related expectations in Years 5 and 6. However, these pupils do not make consistently good

progress across all years as work set does not always build sufficiently on what they already know and can do.

Early years provision

Good

- Children enter the early years with knowledge, skills and abilities that are below those typically expected for their age. Improvements in planning and the quality of teaching have contributed to ongoing improvement, such that the proportion of children achieving a good level of development has increased significantly to a level above that achieved nationally.
- Teachers plan creative and imaginatively linked tasks that engage children and enhance learning. Children followed a reading of 'The enormous turnip' with dramatic recreation and observational drawing in the garden, while the next day they chopped vegetables and cooked and tasted turnip soup. Children could express preferences by showing their like and dislike of the soup before tallying responses to develop numerical skills.
- Through effective routines, children are able to switch from independent play to more formal activities in carpet time, when wider learning is summarised and checked. Teachers manage learning to ensure that children gain a balance of experiences. For example, a group of boys, who chose not to draw on one occasion, were directed towards drawing activities the next day.
- Teachers have worked with external partners to improve the use of space and overall planning. Learning environments are separated into zones to promote reading, writing, measuring, role play and a range of other activities. Outdoor spaces complement the internal environment effectively.
- Teachers monitor children's progress closely and record this in their learning journals. Progress over time was evident as children moved from early mark-making to writing phonetically plausible words as they progressed through Reception. The local authority formally checked teachers' assessments in 2016 and, as a result, leaders have an effective understanding of standards in their school. Teachers have a good understanding of children's skills and abilities and they use this well to plan the next steps in their learning. As a result, children are well prepared for learning in Year 1.
- Safeguarding practices in the early years are effective and there are no material breaches of statutory welfare requirements as children are safe and well cared for.

School details

Unique reference number	114021
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	10019373

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	102
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Hayley Openshaw
Headteacher	Mrs Wendy Edwards
Telephone number	01913 700181
Website	www.beamish.durham.sch.uk
Email address	beamish@durhamlearning.net
Date of previous inspection	23 November 2013

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- This school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school other than at the usual time is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above average. The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is above average.
- Almost all pupils are White British.

- The school's 2015 results met the government's floor standards for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.
- The school is in a hard federation with Pelton Community Primary School.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed a wide range of lessons, covering all classes in the school. The executive headteacher and deputy headteacher accompanied the lead inspector on four occasions.
- Meetings were held with the executive headteacher, deputy headteachers, middle leaders and the school's family support worker. The lead inspector also met the chair of the governing body and one other governor and the local authority school improvement partner. The lead inspector talked to a group of pupils at lunchtime.
- Pupils' behaviour was observed during lessons, lunchtimes and playtimes.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils read and talked to them about their reading.
- The lead inspector examined the quality of work in a wide range of books and examined outcomes from formal assessments. He discussed pupils' work and their learning with them in lessons.
- The inspector looked at the school's work and considered documents including the school's self-evaluation, the school improvement plan, curriculum plans and information relating to pupil achievement and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Malcolm Kirtley, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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