

Delves Lane Primary School

Delves Lane, Consett, County Durham DH8 7ES

Inspection dates

13–14 December 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	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Delves Lane Primary School is improving quickly in response to the very effective work of the newly appointed senior team and a fully committed staff.
- Most parents are very happy about the quality of education that the school provides and really value the improvements that have been made recently.
- Good teaching ensures that most groups of pupils learn quickly and achieve well.
- An effective tracking system enables leaders at all levels to check pupils' progress accurately and provide good-quality support for those who fall behind.
- Teachers ensure that pupils take a pride in the layout of their work in numeracy and literacy, but they do not consistently apply the same rigour to work in science.
- Lessons are normally very productive in terms of what is achieved in the time available. There are, however, occasions where the pace of learning is slower when teachers allow pupils too much time to complete work.
- There is further scope in some lessons for the planning of more challenging work for the most able pupils.
- Good support for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities enables them to do better than in the recent past. There are diminishing differences between their attainment and progress and those of other pupils nationally from the same starting points.
- Skilled classroom assistants play a vital and effective role in the education of the school's most needy pupils through individual tuition and teaching in small groups.
- Children in Reception and Nursery make good progress in response to a well-managed and very lively indoor and outdoor programme. Welfare arrangements, personal development and behaviour are all good.
- Pupils are polite, considerate and welcoming. They behave well and move around the site with due consideration for others.
- In response to effective interventions by school leaders, pupils' attendance has improved over the last year to broadly average levels, while persistent absence has fallen quickly.
- The headteacher, governors and leaders at all levels work tirelessly and effectively together to ensure that the school provides pupils with a good and improving quality of education.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement to outstanding by:
 - making sure that teachers consistently make the very best use of the time available and increase the pace of learning further
 - providing more challenging work for the school's most-able pupils in some lessons to enable them to reach their potential
 - ensuring that the school's most disadvantaged pupils make at least as much progress as other pupils nationally from the same starting points
 - ensuring that the quality of teaching in science at least matches the consistently good quality to be found in numeracy and literacy.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher provides the school with strong and effective leadership. She has a clear vision for the school and constantly seeks to improve the quality of education that the pupils receive.
- She is ably assisted by the deputy headteacher and the middle leaders. Staff morale is excellent and all members of staff are playing their part in ensuring that ever higher standards are achieved.
- The school is currently fully staffed. It does not experience problems in finding suitably qualified teachers and classroom assistants when vacancies arise.
- Very effective methods for measuring how well the school is doing enable leaders to identify any weaknesses and make every effort to eliminate them.
- A robust and accurate tracking system monitors the progress that all individuals and groups of pupils are making. Leaders are quick to respond to any pupils who are not making the progress expected of them by providing bespoke tuition which enables them to catch up. An example is the recently introduced and effective reading programme, which was introduced to eliminate a deficit in progress.
- Leaders monitor lessons with precision and quickly identify what works well and what still needs to be improved. The more experienced members of staff provide teachers with plenty of advice and pointers for improvement as a result of their visits. Newly qualified teachers are very complimentary about the quality of help that they receive.
- Although the quality of teaching has improved quickly, there is still scope to develop it further, particularly in relation to the pace of learning in some lessons and provision for the school's most-able pupils.
- The curriculum puts great emphasis on the development of pupils' numerical and literacy skills and still enables pupils to benefit from studying many other subjects. Some of these are skilfully embedded into literacy lessons, for example where pupils in Year 5 learn about France and Mexico while they develop their writing skills.
- A good range of extra-curricular activities and visits supports the effective provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education which pervades the school. It enables pupils to develop into well-rounded individuals.
- The school ensures that pupils have a good grounding in British values. Pupils have plenty of opportunity to learn about democracy, voting, Parliament and law-making. They also study a range of cultures from around the world. Pupils' understanding of the different cultures and religions that make up modern Britain is currently relatively limited, but improving.
- The school uses its sports funding well to provide pupils with opportunities to try new activities, for example rugby, swimming and netball. The funding is also used to assist disadvantaged pupils to buy sports kit which they could otherwise not afford.
- Equal opportunities have a high profile. Leaders look carefully for signs that pupils are not thriving as they should and soon act to remedy matters. The school uses its pupil premium funding effectively to support its disadvantaged pupils. The success of this

work is evident in the fact that the performance of disadvantaged pupils is quite quickly improving towards that of other pupils.

- Most parents and carers are very happy about the way that the school provides for their children. They have high praise for the new headteacher and fully recognise the improvements that she has made. One parent said, 'Lovely staff that always put the children first. Each day starts with a smile and a "Good morning" at the gates.'

Governance of the school

- Governance is good. Governors have a good knowledge of the school and how well it is doing. They know what is successful and fully understand what still needs to be improved.
- They probe and challenge when they want further detail, when they think that more can be achieved. They play their part in ensuring that performance management arrangements follow intended procedures.
- Governors visit the school regularly for fact-finding tours to give themselves first-hand knowledge of what pupils are doing and how well they are progressing. They understand how pupil premium funding is being used to raise levels of attainment of disadvantaged pupils.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective because there are rigorous systems which members of staff implement consistently.
- Supervision of pupils is of a high and effective standard, so they are kept safe while they are on the school site. Parents and carers understand all the safeguarding procedures and are happy about them.
- The school is very secure because it is well protected by fences and gates, which are kept locked when it is in session.
- Arrangements for checking on the identity of any adult who has access to pupils are rigorous, as are arrangements for issuing passes to visitors.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching has improved substantially since the new senior leadership team took over the running of the school. This is evident because school data shows clearly that pupils are making better progress and reaching higher levels of attainment than they were in the two previous years.
- Teachers now have far higher expectations of what pupils can and should achieve. They have good subject knowledge and plan lessons that adequately challenge pupils of most abilities. The only variation lies in provision for the most able pupils. While some teachers fully challenge them, others expect them to complete the same work as other pupils with little if any additional difficulty or extension.
- Typically, teachers manage their classes well and check carefully to ensure that pupils

have understood new work. Effective questioning of pupils soon identifies any who need further assistance.

- Teachers insist that pupils set out their work in numeracy and literacy well. They ensure that it is logically produced and that handwriting is of good quality. This insistence on precision means that pupils make good progress in these subjects and know exactly how to improve their work.
- The robust monitoring of the quality of pupils' work does not always extend to science. Teachers provide pupils with plenty of opportunity to conduct experiments. However, there are several instances where teachers do not routinely ensure that diagrams are of good quality and that tables of results and general written work are completed. Key scientific spelling errors sometimes remain uncorrected.
- The teaching of reading has improved recently because it has been a fully activated focus from the school development plan. Guided reading lessons are promoting very rapid progress for some pupils. They respond enthusiastically to the comprehension exercises on computers relating to the books they have been reading.
- A strong feature of lessons is the way that pupils usually conduct themselves in response to high expectations of conduct from their teachers and classroom assistants. This means that pupils can concentrate fully on their work without distraction and discuss it with their peers in a mature manner.
- Teachers usually plan their lessons to make best use of the time available and allow pupils just enough time to complete tasks if they work quickly. However, there are lessons where the pace of learning is a bit slower, because teachers allow pupils more time than they actually need to complete work.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit from teaching which is increasingly focused on their needs. Consequently, their progress is accelerating substantially, like that of other groups of pupils. Classroom assistants play a vital role in the effective teaching of the school's most-needy pupils. Their skilled help in class frequently enables lower-ability pupils to access the same work as their peers. When pupils fall behind expectations for age in reading, writing or mathematics, classroom assistants provide bespoke assistance for them either individually or in small groups, enabling them to catch up.
- The teaching of the school's most-able pupils has also improved recently. Teachers now have a clearer idea of what they can achieve and frequently provide more challenging tasks to enable them to reach their potential. However, there is still scope for the provision of more challenge for this group of pupils in some lessons.
- The school's sophisticated tracking system shows leaders quickly where groups are making expected or better progress, and where leaders need to intervene.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The school provides many extra-curricular activities for pupils of all ages through the

good programme of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. These activities all help to improve pupils' confidence, enable them to learn new skills and become interested in and participate in many musical and sporting activities.

- Pupils become much more mature and aware of the needs of others as they move from Nursery to Year 6. They really do value the amount of help and guidance that members of staff provide. They know that there is always an adult on hand to help them if they need further assistance with their work or advice about personal matters.
- Many pupils really do develop independence and a thirst for knowledge as they move through the school. However, some still rely rather heavily on their teachers for direction, even in Year 6.
- Good levels of supervision, caring adults and a secure site ensure that pupils are safe at all times, especially when they are enjoying playtime, having lunch or moving between lessons. Pupils say that there is always someone to turn to if they need reassurance. They say that bullying is rare and that they know that if it should occur, members of staff would deal with it promptly and effectively.
- Pupils confirm that the school teaches them about potential threats to their welfare so they understand road safety, that they should not talk to strangers and that the internet should be used wisely with due regard for e-safety.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis because pupils conduct themselves well in response to teachers' high expectations of them whether they are in class or moving between activities. Pupils conduct themselves sensibly with due regard for the safety of others.
- Behaviour in class is usually good and sometimes outstanding. There are just a few occasional instances of low-level disruption or inattention when pupils become bored because they are not asked to do enough. Pupils really respect and like their teachers and classroom assistants.
- Exclusions for unacceptable conduct are low and falling because members of staff are consistent in the way that they encourage pupils to conduct themselves. Racist incidents are rare, as is bullying of any description, because teachers generate a strong focus on right and wrong and the needs and feelings of others.
- Attendance has improved recently to broadly average levels, in response to the very effective efforts that members of staff have made. They ensure that parents and carers are clear that absence from school is likely to result in their children falling behind with their work. Persistent absence is reducing quickly.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils' attainment is rising throughout the school in response to improved teaching and leaders' greater expectations of what all groups of pupils should and can achieve. Differences between outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and others are diminishing

quickly while pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are progressing much quicker than previously.

- Children join Nursery with stages of development that are below average for their ages. In 2014 and 2015, the proportion of children leaving Reception with good levels of development was below average. Improved teaching the following year brought about a substantial improvement, as the proportion with good levels of development rose to above average and indicated strongly that children had progressed really well. The improved levels of attainment have been maintained and children currently in the early years setting are progressing well, especially in speech, language and communication.
- National phonics test results in Year 1 were also below average in 2014 and 2015. As with the early years programme, improved teaching made a substantial difference after that. In 2016, phonics test results were just above average and there was no difference between the performance of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally. This meant that pupils had progressed well as they had left Reception with below-average attainment in reading. Current attainment in phonics indicates strongly that the school's improved performance in this area has at least been maintained.
- In 2016, assessments at the end of Year 2 showed that pupils had reached broadly average levels of attainment overall. Attainment in writing and mathematics was around average but reading was slightly lower. Disadvantaged pupils performed well short of standards reached by other pupils nationally from similar starting points.
- Accurate predictions show that the proportions of pupils on course to meet expected attainment for their ages in Year 2 are exceeding national averages in reading and writing and equalling them in mathematics. Proportions attaining at a greater depth are similar to national averages. Differences in the performance of disadvantaged pupils compared with other pupils are reducing in mathematics and have been eliminated in reading. Disadvantaged pupils are currently doing better than other pupils in writing.
- The improvements in attainment and progress also extend to Years 3 to 6 in response to good teaching. In 2016, national test results and assessments in Year 6 were broadly average in writing, mathematics, and spelling, grammar and punctuation and below average in reading. From Year 1, progress was average overall, but there was a large difference in that of disadvantaged pupils compared with other similar pupils nationally. Figures suggested strongly that the most able pupils, including those who were disadvantaged, had not done as well as other pupils nationally with similar starting points.
- Current work in class is better. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are all progressing well. Test result predictions for 2017 indicate very strongly that attainment is rising quickly compared with previous years. Expectations are that results in reading, writing, mathematics and also in spelling, grammar and punctuation will all rise to above average levels. Observations of pupils' work in class confirm that the predictions are accurate. An accelerated reading programme is having a substantial effect on the performance of pupils in terms of fluency, word recognition and comprehension.
- Pupils' work in numeracy and literacy in Years 3 to 6 is extensive and set out well. Working is shown in mathematics and pupils' writing for a variety of audiences develops well. Pupils take a pride in these aspects of their work and ensure that it is

well presented.

- In science, however, these high standards are not always maintained. Although pupils have plenty of opportunity to conduct experiments, their work is sometimes incomplete and tables of results and diagrams are untidily drawn. Key scientific spelling errors are not routinely picked up by teachers who always notice similar errors in literacy work and correct them. Nevertheless, science work produced by several classes is of similar standard to the other subjects they are studying because their teachers insist that it is so.
- The school's highest attaining pupils are progressing much better than previously in response to many challenges that teachers provide for them. Nevertheless, there is still scope for some of them to respond to even greater academic challenges than at present. It is interesting to note that a few of the most able pupils say they find their work in class too easy because it is the same as that provided for the rest of the class.
- The pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are also doing much better than in the recent past, in response to a well-crafted programme that indicates to their teachers what their needs actually are and how much progress they should make. Leaders have been effective in working with several families to improve the attendance of their children. This has had a great effect on the improving progress being made by some of the school's most needy pupils.

Early years provision

Good

- Parents and carers are welcomed into school. They assist members of staff in ensuring that baseline assessments are accurate in terms of what their children have already learned to do. They are regularly informed about their children's progress while the 'Stay and Play' sessions enable them to support their children's learning.
- Children's behaviour for learning is very good. They relate exceptionally well to the adults who work with them and trust them. Children listen well and find learning interesting. They soon develop social skills, make friends and work well in groups and pairs.
- Assessment is now much more accurate than it was previously. It has drawn extensively on local authority advice. Children join Nursery with stages of development that are generally below those expected for their ages, particularly in terms of speech and language. They progress well, and by the end of Reception, a greater proportion than average now reaches a good level of development. This is a great improvement on previous years when progress was much slower.
- The school uses its pupil premium funding well to ensure that disadvantaged children have extra help and reach the same level of development as other children in the school by the time they transfer to Year 1.
- The quality of teaching is good overall and enables children to progress well in all of the topics they study. In most lessons, time is used really well, but there are others where the pace of learning is slower, because children are allowed a little more time than really necessary to complete tasks.
- The curriculum is very much focused on children's interests. For example, books and items that fully capture boys' attention have recently had a considerable impact on

improving their reading and writing. Children enjoy the activities that members of staff provide and benefit from individual attention when they are working in class or experimenting and exploring outside. By the time they leave Reception, they have the skills and knowledge necessary to join Year 1.

- All safeguarding arrangements are effective and the setting is exceptionally secure. The welfare of children has a high profile because many of them come from disadvantaged backgrounds and need extra help to catch up on life skills compared with their peers.
- The early years foundation stage is led and managed enthusiastically and very effectively. Leaders have a very accurate view of the strengths of the provision and know what still needs to be achieved, especially in relation to the eagerly anticipated arrival of two-year-old children from disadvantaged families.

School details

Unique reference number	114047
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	10023788

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	350
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Claire Fewster
Headteacher	Rebecca Woods
Telephone number	01207 503984
Website	www.delveslaneprimary.durham.sch.uk/
Email address	delveslaneprimary@delveslane.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Delves Lane Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- It was formed by the amalgamation of the previous infant and junior schools in April 2014.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have been recently appointed to their posts following a period when they worked in an acting capacity.
- Most pupils are White British.
- There are few pupils from minority ethnic groups. Very few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average.
- An above-average proportion of pupils is 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.

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 18 lessons, including six jointly with senior leaders, and looked at a wide range of pupils' written work. They heard pupils of all abilities reading.
- They held meetings with the headteacher, senior staff, middle leaders, the special needs coordinator, groups of pupils, a group 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 15 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, 24 responses to the staff questionnaire, 10 responses to the pupils' questionnaire and 15 free-text messages from parents.

Inspection team

John Paddick, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Donna Callaghan	Ofsted Inspector
Deborah Ashcroft	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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