

Aycliffe Village Primary School

North Terrace, Aycliffe Village, Newton Aycliffe, County Durham DL5 6LG

Inspection dates

1–2 December 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
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Teaching has not been consistently strong enough over time to ensure that all pupils are making good progress. Not enough work is well matched to the needs of pupils, particularly the most able.
- Pupils supported through the pupil premium do not always make the accelerated progress required to move closer to the levels that other pupils attain nationally.
- Leaders have not taken robust actions to improve promptly the quality of teaching and pupils' progress rates in key stage 1 and key stage 2. They do not check the quality of teaching carefully enough to establish an accurate view of strengths and weaknesses.
- Subject leaders for English and mathematics are relatively new to these roles. While they have begun to take action to improve teaching, they have not checked the impact carefully enough.
- Governors are supportive of the school. However, they do not fully check and challenge aspects of the school's work, particularly leaders' monitoring of the quality of teaching and the rate of pupils' progress over time.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders, staff and governors know the community well. Parents are supportive of the school and there are high levels of parental satisfaction with its work.
- Leadership, teaching and learning, and provision in the early years, are good. As a result, children make good progress from their starting points.
- The teaching of phonics is well structured. The proportion of pupils who achieve the expected standard is above that found nationally.
- A wide range of curricular opportunities, including specialist teaching in music, combined with after-school activities and residential visits, enrich learning.
- Pupils' personal development needs are well provided for. As a result, pupils develop strong citizenship skills.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and social times and when moving around school. Attendance levels are high and pupils enjoy being in school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that all groups of pupils make at least good progress, by:
 - sharing the stronger practice which exists within the school
 - planning and delivering activities that are well matched to pupils' needs and that provide opportunities for pupils, particularly the most able, to work at greater depth
 - making better use of the school's pupils' progress tracking information to identify promptly any slippage in pupils' progress
 - embedding the recently introduced approaches to developing pupils' mathematical reasoning and problem-solving skills
 - developing opportunities for pupils to use and apply their writing and mathematics skills across a wider range of subjects.
- Develop the rigour of leadership self-evaluation and improvement planning by:
 - improving the regularity and effectiveness of checking for improvement by senior and middle leaders, including reviewing a wider range of information about the quality of teaching and information about current pupils' progress
 - leaders and governors analysing and responding more promptly to nationally available pupils' progress information
 - sharpening school improvement plans with a greater focus on improving pupils' outcomes and introducing more specific time frames.
- An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.
- An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement. Over time, leaders, including governors, have not been effective enough in securing consistently good teaching and pupils' progress. Their actions have not fully addressed variability in pupils' progress over the last two years.
- Leaders have been too positive in their overall judgements of the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes. They have not checked the quality of teaching in a systematic fashion. While they have analysed the school's pupils' progress information, they have not used this information to come to accurate conclusions in their evaluations.
- Improvement plans are in place for whole-school improvement. However, the intended impact of actions on pupils' outcomes is not specific enough and time frames for completion are too vague.
- The pupil premium spending has a variable impact on accelerating the progress of disadvantaged pupils. The level of scrutiny by leaders and governors of the effectiveness of the pupil premium plans on progress is not sharp enough. The use of pupil premium spending to widen opportunities for disadvantaged pupils and raise their self-confidence has been used to greater effect.
- The mathematics subject leader has begun to take appropriate action to bring about improvements in teaching. For example, training for staff in developing the use of reasoning and problem solving shows early signs of improving practice in some classes. However, teachers do not use this approach consistently across the school.
- The English subject leader has received appropriate training to develop middle leadership skills. She has developed a plan, which aims to improve pupils' outcomes in English, and has completed activities to start to check improvements. There is some evidence of these having an impact. For example, standards of handwriting and presentation have improved and there has been a reversal of the three-year decline in key stage 2 pupils' progress in writing.
- The special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator and the headteacher provide joint leadership of provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. They ensure effective use of special educational needs and/or disabilities funding, including appropriate staff training. Consequently, these pupils succeed socially and academically, and they are well included in the school community.
- The school has an effectively planned curriculum based around the national curriculum subjects. Pupils benefit from specialist teaching in music. They also have access to various after-school clubs, which enrich the curriculum. Residential visits, in this country and abroad, develop pupils' cultural understanding effectively.
- Opportunities pupils have to enjoy physical activities have increased due to the effective spending of the additional funding for sport and physical education in primary schools. Consequently, pupils take part in a wider range of sports and develop healthy lifestyles. Involvement in after-school clubs has improved.

- Leaders and staff prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain. For example, pupils develop an understanding of democracy through activities such as the school council. Discussions with pupils demonstrated that they had a clear understanding of the need for respect for others who may come from a different background from themselves.
- Provision for pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Leaders and staff have created a culture of respect and tolerance in this welcoming and friendly school.
- Strong partnerships between staff, governors and parents assist the development of learning opportunities in school. Parents are supportive of the school as shown by their positive responses to Ofsted’s online questionnaire, Parent View.
- Performance management systems are in place. Leaders and governors ensure that they link teachers’ pay progression specifically to their performance management objectives. Staff value the training opportunities, such as the middle leadership development, organised by the school.
- The local authority has recently provided additional support to develop the early years, the teaching of writing and leaders’ monitoring skills. This has had a variable impact. Early years assessment and provision have developed. Improvements in the other aspects are less evident.

Governance

- Governors are supportive of the school and know the community it serves. They broadly understand the school’s priorities and the plans for improvement. Governors have begun to take a greater interest in the impact of actions taken to improve the quality of teaching and pupils’ outcomes. However, they have an overpositive view of pupils’ progress and do not provide sufficient challenge to leaders.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The leadership team has ensured that the day-to-day safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Regular updates ensure that safeguarding and child protection policies meet national requirements. All staff understand the procedures and their own responsibilities. Consequently, staff are knowledgeable about what actions to take if they have any concerns about the safety of pupils. Leaders follow up safeguarding concerns in a timely fashion. They make prompt contact with agencies and parents where required.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is inconsistent. As a result, over time, too few pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Where teaching is less effective, teachers do not plan work which is well matched to pupils’ abilities. Sometimes tasks given to the most able pupils do not provide them with sufficient challenge, and they complete work that they have already grasped with very little effort.

- Some teachers use a range of approaches to improve pupils' mathematical reasoning and problem-solving skills. However, pupils often complete extensive number exercises without an opportunity to put this learning into practice. The most able pupils rarely have work that provides them with opportunities to grapple with challenging questions.
- Teachers make limited use of developing pupils' writing and mathematical skills across other areas of the curriculum. Consequently, pupils miss opportunities for using and applying these skills.
- Assessment arrangements and pupils' progress recording have been improved. Last year the school established a more accurate baseline of current pupils' attainment to assist teachers' planning. At present, the pupils' progress records do not have the results of the most recent assessments.
- Teaching assistants support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities effectively. As a result, these pupils succeed in their learning and social development.
- Where teaching is stronger, teachers make effective use of questioning to assess pupils' learning and shape the lesson to meet pupils' needs. Teachers provide pupils with appropriate resources which support their learning and help them to understand new ideas.
- Pupils receive regular, well-structured phonics teaching. Consequently, they make good progress and develop effective early reading skills.
- The school has done much to improve the profile of reading and there are attractive reading areas, which encourage pupils' interest in reading. Younger pupils make good use of phonics and word recognition skills. Occasionally, the texts are too easy for the most able pupils. Older pupils demonstrate a love of literature and strong comprehension skills.
- The majority of teachers set high expectations for presentation and handwriting. Consequently, most pupils produce work that is neat with good-quality handwriting.
- Regular meetings keep parents well informed about pupils' progress. The vast majority of parents agreed that they receive valuable information about their child's progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils develop self-confidence as they progress through the school. This is because relationships are positive. Assemblies celebrate pupils' achievements and demonstration of personal qualities, such as resilience and determination. This helps to raise pupils' self-esteem.
- The curriculum develops pupils' physical and emotional needs well. For example, older pupils receive specific lessons to help develop their personal, social and emotional qualities from an expert external provider. Similarly, a programme of bicycle skills progressively develops pupils' abilities as they move through the school.

- Pupils feel safe and valued as members of the school community. They know how to keep themselves safe, including when online. Pupils, parents and staff all agree that the school is a safe place to learn.
- Pupils understand the different forms of bullying and while they report that incidents are rare, they believe that staff will address these appropriately. The school's records show that leaders and staff deal with the infrequent incidents of bullying promptly.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are attentive in lessons, keen to learn and work hard.
- During playtimes and lunchtimes pupils behave well, socialise suitably and engage in lively, friendly games. Activities such as the outdoor gym and riding tricycles for younger pupils encourage active lifestyles. Pupils move around the school in an exemplary fashion.
- The level of attendance is above that found nationally. This is because pupils value their education and enjoy being in school. In the limited number of cases where pupils' absence rates are too high, the school provides the required support and guidance to bring about improvement.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Outcomes for pupils require improvement because pupils' progress has been too variable since the last inspection. This is because the quality of teaching has not been consistently good enough over time and leaders do not check pupils' progress carefully enough.
- In 2015, pupils' progress and attainment were weak by the end of key stage 2. As a result, Year 6 pupils' results in reading, writing and mathematics were below the government's minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- In 2016, girls' progress in mathematics, by the end of Year 6, was significantly below that found nationally. As a result, the proportion of this group working at the expected and higher level was below that found nationally.
- In 2016, pupils' attainment by the end of key stage 1 was below that found nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. This was because not enough pupils made good progress from their starting points. As a result, too many of these pupils were not well prepared for starting key stage 2.
- The most able pupils do not make enough progress. For example, in 2016, higher attainers' progress in reading was significantly below that found nationally by the end of Year 6. Current pupils' work shows that the most able pupils often repeat work which they have already grasped and do not have sufficient opportunity to move to learning at a greater depth.
- The proportions of disadvantaged pupils are low across the school compared with national averages. In 2016, there were no disadvantaged pupils at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2. However, in 2015, this group of pupils did not make enough progress in writing and mathematics. Leaders do not check the progress of this group of pupils closely enough.

- Pupils achieve well in the Year 1 phonics screening check. The proportion of pupils achieving the expected level has been above the national average for the last three years.

Early years provision

Good

- Children start in the early years with skills and abilities that are generally at the level of those that are typical for their age. From their individual starting points, children make good progress. In 2016, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development improved substantially and was above that found nationally. As a result, an increased proportion of children are well prepared for Year 1.
- Strong teaching in the Reception class provides an effective balance of teacher-led activities and opportunities for children to explore and learn by themselves.
- The accuracy of early years assessment has improved and teachers use these more precise assessments to plan learning to meet children's needs. This approach has been particularly useful in identifying relative weaknesses in boys' progress in literacy and mathematics. Staff now plan more effectively to develop boys' learning in these areas.
- Staff intervene in children's learning at appropriate points and use questioning effectively to reinforce and develop children's learning. This helps develop children's understanding and language skills.
- Well-structured adult-led sessions with interesting activities develop children's phonic skills effectively. For example, during an activity aimed to improve children's knowledge of key sounds, children enjoyed searching for letters hidden around the classroom. The phonics group work which followed matched children's abilities fittingly. This focused teaching is helping children to make good progress in developing their early reading skills.
- The early years leader has a clear understanding of the learning needs of the children. Very effective provision is in place to meet the children's interests and to provide the next steps in learning.
- The numbers of children supported by the early years pupil premium funding are generally very low. Currently the school has no children entitled to this support.
- Early years staff work well with parents. Parents are very positive about the support that early years staff provide. For example, meetings have helped parents understand how to support their children with phonics knowledge.
- Children behave well, cooperate with other children and demonstrate good listening and turn-taking skills. This is because staff model these behaviours well. For example, a group of boys worked collaboratively to devise a method to cross a bridge that they had built together.
- There are good partnerships with other professionals. This helps the school promptly address children's developmental or special educational needs.
- Children feel safe and secure. Safeguarding is effective and the school meets welfare requirements.

School details

Unique reference number	114101
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	10019377

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	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	152
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	James Walsh
Headteacher	J Gargan
Telephone number	01325 300 227
Website	www.aycliffevillage.durham.sch.uk
Email address	aycliffevillage@durhamlearning.net
Dates of previous inspection	22–23 January 2014

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average primary school.
- The vast majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding is well below that found nationally.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities support is well below that found nationally.
- The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is below that found nationally.
- The school does not meet the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning in a range of lessons and part-lessons in all classes. The headteacher joined the lead inspector for three of the observations of lessons.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around school and reviewed the school's promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The inspectors observed pupils in the playground and during lunchtime.
- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and the teachers responsible for leading English and the early years, as well as the special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator. The lead inspector met with three governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- A group of pupils discussed their opinions about the school and their learning with an inspector. The inspectors listened to six pupils selected from key stage 1 and key stage 2 read.
- Inspectors took account of the 26 responses on Parent View, and held discussions with parents at the beginning of the school day. Inspectors considered the 13 responses in staff questionnaires.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including minutes from meetings of the governing body, information about pupils' achievement, the school's evaluation of its own performance and its development plans. Reviews were made of behaviour and attendance records, and information relating to safeguarding. The inspectors scrutinised pupils' work in their books.

Inspection team

Michael Reeves, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Geoff Dorrity	Ofsted Inspector
Andrew James	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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Manchester
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