

Tweedmouth Prior Park First School

Dean Drive, Tweedmouth, Berwick-upon-Tweed, Northumberland TD15 2DB

Inspection dates

21–22 March 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
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 is not consistently good enough to ensure that all pupils achieve as highly as they can.
- Expectations are not high enough. Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, have special educational needs and the most able, are not challenged consistently well. Poor presentation sometimes hampers learning.
- Pupils have insufficient opportunities to apply the writing and mathematical skills they have been taught.
- Leaders' checking of the quality of teaching is not frequent or incisive enough to identify precisely how to make a difference to all pupils' progress.
- Leaders' plans for improvement are not sharp enough to ensure that improvements are the right ones or that they stay on track and make a difference to pupils' outcomes.
- Middle leaders' skills are not well enough developed to ensure that they can check the difference their actions are making.
- Governors have insufficient knowledge of the school's performance to ensure that they can provide the right level of challenge to school leaders.
- Newly implemented procedures to follow up absence have not yet made a difference. Attendance remains below average and persistent absence of disadvantaged pupils is above average.

The school has the following strengths

- The early years is good. Effective support helps children make good gains to reach standards that are close to the national average.
- Pupils' personal development is effective and their emotional well-being is well supported by caring adults.
- Pupils feel safe in school and behaviour in class and in the playground is good.
- The teaching of letters and sounds is effective and consequently standards in reading are higher than in other subjects.
- Funding for the physical education and sport premium is used effectively to provide a wide range of activities which help to keep pupils active and healthy.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - increasing the frequency and rigour of checks on the quality of teaching so it is clear what needs to improve and inconsistencies are rapidly addressed
 - enabling all middle leaders to gain the skills needed to check the impact of the developments they have introduced
 - sharpening improvement plans to include actions which will make the biggest difference to pupils' outcomes and which have clearly measurable steps to success and well-defined timescales
 - increasing the frequency and range of checks governors make on school performance so they have sufficient knowledge to provide the right level of challenge to school leaders.
- Ensure that teaching is consistently good or better so progress accelerates for all groups of pupils by:
 - having high expectations at all times by providing work that is consistently challenging
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills to think more deeply and solve problems
 - giving pupils more opportunities to apply grammar and punctuation knowledge in longer pieces of writing
 - insisting on high standards of presentation to aid learning.
- Improve attendance and reduce persistent absence of disadvantaged pupils by ensuring that newly adopted procedures are rigorously implemented.

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

- Leaders have not acted with sufficient urgency or rigour to ensure that teaching is consistently good across the school. Efforts have been hampered by frequent changes of staff and leaders have been too focused on these changes to accurately identify the aspects of teaching that require improvement. Current procedures in school to check on teaching are not precisely targeted on the main priorities or frequent enough to ensure that teaching improves rapidly enough.
- Improvement plans are not sharply enough focused on actions to accelerate pupils' achievements in reading, writing and mathematics. Timescales are not clear enough to ensure that developments stay on track, and measures to check the impact of the actions are too vague to help governors evaluate their impact.
- Middle leaders are keen to make a difference and know their subjects well. However, they have not had the opportunity to develop the skills needed to check that their actions are making a difference to pupils' outcomes. For example, the introduction of new ways to teach writing has not been checked to ensure that these are consistently implemented.
- Pupil premium funding is becoming more carefully targeted so that it makes more of a difference to this group of pupils. Its use to provide additional support is helping pupils progress more rapidly, such as with their reading. Pupils' emotional well-being is also enhanced. However, disadvantaged pupils' higher than average levels of persistent absence have not been tackled and this is affecting their progress.
- The curriculum effectively supports pupils' personal development and well-being. For example, a residential visit for pupils in Year 4 developed their confidence and self-esteem. Good opportunities are provided to enhance pupils' understanding of their local culture. Links with schools in other countries help to give them an appreciation of other cultures and ensure that they are suitably prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Staff care deeply about the school and want to improve. Procedures to manage their performance are clear. They report that it has been helpful in supporting their development as teachers. They cite visits to other schools and training as making a difference.
- Checking of pupils' performance now takes place regularly and is used to identify those pupils who need to catch up with their peers. Additional support is put in place to help those pupils catch up so that their progress is accelerating.
- The school uses the physical education and sport premium effectively to provide a wide range of sporting opportunities and to give pupils the chance to take part in competitions. Pupils can prepare healthy meals alongside their parents in after-school clubs.
- Partnerships with parents are highly valued. Parents are encouraged to support their child's education and participate in the life of the school through activities such as the pre-start programme for children entering Nursery.

Governance of the school

- Governors are extremely supportive and committed to the school. They have a desire for every child to thrive and have a very good understanding of the local community but they are not providing the well-targeted challenge needed to ensure rapid improvement.
- Their knowledge of the school's performance is underdeveloped and, as a result, they are still too reliant on the headteacher for information. Their knowledge of pupils' attendance rates is limited and they have not ensured that the school website meets statutory requirements. They are beginning to be more systematic in their checks on the school, but this is at a very early stage.
- Governors are keen to improve their skills and have begun to undertake some training, but this is ad hoc and not planned strategically so there is not yet a good grasp of their duties, roles and responsibilities or of what they should expect of school leaders.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All staff training is up to date and they know what to do when there is a concern about a pupil.
- Records are well maintained and concerns carefully documented using effective procedures.
- Staff work well with other agencies to ensure the safety of pupils.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Over time, changes to staffing and a lack of rigorous checks have resulted in teaching that remains variable so that pupils' progress is not consistently good.
- Teachers do not have consistently high expectations of what pupils can achieve. As a result, pupils, including the most able, are not sufficiently challenged. Too many tasks are undemanding, requiring pupils who are capable of more to write a word or short sentence or to complete too many calculations that are the same. Most-able pupils in particular recognise that they are not stretched and that work is too easy.
- Pupils write at length infrequently, both in English and in other subjects so they do not apply the grammar and punctuation they have been taught. Learning does not move on at a rapid enough pace to ensure that they apply their knowledge in a more demanding way.
- Opportunities for pupils to think more deeply and solve mathematical problems are variable. In some classes, too much time is spent completing lists of calculations that are too easy. Where they have been given more challenging work, it is not tackled.
- Presentation of pupils' work is not consistently of a high standard. This leads to inaccuracies in mathematical calculations and in gathering information from different forms of data, for example. Pupils who are capable of using joined-up handwriting are not expected to do so.

- Relationships between pupils and teachers are good. The vast majority of pupils listen to teachers and set to work promptly.
- The teaching of letters and sounds is effective. Pupils are taught at the right level for their capabilities. Lessons are well structured so that learning builds logically and clearly.
- Well-briefed teaching assistants provide effective support to pupils. They are given close individual guidance. Those pupils who struggle to concentrate are well supported to maintain their focus.
- The teaching of specific, well-structured reading and mathematics programmes that boost the achievement of small groups of pupils is effective and helps them to catch up with their peers.
- Specialist teaching of music, for example, is effective because of the strong subject knowledge these teachers possess.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils have warm and trusting relationships with adults and they say that teachers keep them safe in school.
- Pupils who are new to the school are welcomed and settle quickly. They make friends easily.
- The breakfast club provides a calm, positive start to the day for pupils who use it. They enthuse about the varied menu on offer and the games they play with supportive adults.
- Pupils understand what bullying is and are confident that bullying is not a problem in their school. Although there is some name-calling, pupils say that it is swiftly dealt with and none is of a discriminatory nature. School records, and a large majority of parents, confirm this view.
- Pupils' emotional well-being is particularly effectively supported. They are well aware of the specially trained staff who can support them and who will work alongside their families to improve their confidence and help resolve their difficulties.
- Older pupils willingly take responsibilities in roles such as those of school councillor or member of the sports crew, or for ringing the bell at the end of playtime. School councillors help to decide which charities the school will support and organise events to raise money.
- Pupils understand the dangers of using the internet and know how to keep themselves safe in water and on the road, for example.
- The physical well-being of pupils is effectively supported through the many sporting activities they take part in and through opportunities to learn about eating healthily.
- Pupils are aware that they have targets to improve and support their learning but they

are not clear enough about what the targets are to make a difference to their learning.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Pupils' attendance is below average and persistent absence of disadvantaged pupils is high. Until very recently, absence has not been followed up rigorously or quickly enough to ensure that all pupils attend regularly and learn well. Leaders' checks have lacked the thoroughness to ensure that attendance improves.
- Behaviour in class is good and learning proceeds uninterrupted. Sometimes when tasks are not demanding enough, pupils' attention wanes and they become uninterested.
- Pupils conduct themselves well around school. They are polite and friendly. They hold doors open for each other and for adults. Lunchtimes are generally calm and sociable occasions.
- Behaviour in the playground is good. Pupils occupy themselves sensibly and observe playground rules.
- The school successfully supports pupils who struggle to behave well by accurately identifying what help they need. Good relationships with adults and an understanding of individual needs mean that these pupils are helped to stay calm and learn.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Variable teaching over time has resulted in inconsistent progress in reading, writing and mathematics from pupils' different starting points.
- Inconsistent progress across key stage 1 has resulted in below-average proportions reaching the expected standard in reading and mathematics. Standards in writing have been particularly low. Work seen in pupils' books indicates that progress is now accelerating but is still inconsistent.
- Work seen in pupils' books and the school's own performance information confirm that pupils continue to make inconsistent progress throughout key stage 2 and not all pupils are reaching the standard expected for their age.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those eligible for pupil premium funding are enabled to learn at the same rate as other pupils. As a result of variable teaching, their progress is not consistently good.
- Most-able pupils make the same inconsistent progress as a result of variable teaching that does not challenge them sufficiently. For example, work seen in some older pupils' books indicated that basic punctuation is not used accurately. Insufficient attention is paid to how this group of pupils will be supported to learn at a more rapid rate. No pupils met the higher standard in writing or mathematics at the end in key stage 1 in 2016.
- Pupils who have been targeted to receive additional tailored support are starting to make more rapid progress and have fewer gaps in their learning.
- Increasing proportions of pupils are now meeting the expected standard in letters and sounds at the end of Year 1, with most pupils reaching the standard by the end of Year

2. This is enabling more pupils to reach the expected standard in reading at the end of Year 2, and a proportion similar to the national average to reach the higher standard.

Early years provision

Good

- From starting points that are typically below those expected for their age, children make good gains so that proportions that have a good level of development and are ready for Year 1 are close to the national average.
- Successful partnerships with parents and thorough induction procedures mean that children get off to a good start in Nursery. Those who need extra help with their communication or social skills are quickly identified and given the support to enable them catch up.
- Children learn rules and routines quickly in the safe and secure environment. They settle well, have good behaviour and learn to play with each other, guided by sensitive and caring adults.
- Well-structured sessions help children to learn reading, writing and mathematical skills. Adults introduce new vocabulary such as 'numeral' and make sure that children have a good understanding of these new words.
- A good range of resources and equipment is provided to enable children to consolidate the skills they have been taught. For example, in the Nursery, children have many opportunities to develop their story-telling skills through imaginative play in the outdoor garden.
- Children learn about the importance of hygiene by being prompted to wash their hands before eating a snack. They have good opportunities to take exercise through climbing, running and riding a bicycle in the outdoor area.
- Sometimes adults do not challenge children sufficiently. Opportunities to encourage them to solve problems or think more deeply as they play are missed. During some sessions, learning does not move on quickly enough and children do the same as they have done before.
- The early years leader is passionate about doing her best for the children in her care and is keen to continually improve. Regular team meetings provide staff with the opportunity to develop their teaching and consider children's learning and development. The early years leader organises sessions to review the accuracy of assessments to help children receive the right level of support. The training she attends is used to develop the quality of teaching in the early years. Like all middle leaders in school, she does not yet have the skills to make checks on all aspects of teaching in the early years.

School details

Unique reference number	122187
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	10002732

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	First
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	176
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Isobel Hunter
Headteacher	Pauline Molloy
Telephone number	01289 306667
Website	www.tweedmouthpriorpark.northumberland.sch.uk
Email address	admin@tweedmouthpriorpark.northumberland.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	7–8 March 2012

Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about the pupil premium on its website.
- Tweedmouth Prior Park First School is smaller than the average-sized school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage and speak English as their home language.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is over twice the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, and those eligible for support through the pupil premium, is above the national average.
- The school runs a daily breakfast club which was inspected as part of this inspection.
- The headteacher was appointed after the last inspection.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes and scrutinised pupils' work. Two of these activities were conducted jointly with the headteacher and one was conducted jointly with the literacy leader.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils to discuss their work and school life.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, staff, and members of the governing body, and discussions were held with representatives from the local authority.
- Inspectors observed pupils moving around school and during breaks and lunchtime.
- Inspectors analysed 44 responses from the online questionnaire (Parent View) and met parents informally at the beginning of the school day.
- A range of school documentation, including the school's view of its own performance, plans for improvement, attendance and safeguarding, was scrutinised.
- The seven responses to the Ofsted questionnaire completed by staff were also considered.

Inspection team

Susan Waugh, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Anne Vernon	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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Manchester
M1 2WD

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