

Seahouses Primary School

James Street, Seahouses, Northumberland NE68 7UE

Inspection dates

19–20 September 2017

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	Requires Improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The new headteacher and other leaders have worked rapidly to transform the school. They have created a happy and inclusive school where pupils thrive and are excited to learn.
- Leaders have a clear vision and high expectations for all pupils and everyone at the school is committed to 'being the best they can be.' Pupils use this phrase independently, within their own discussions.
- Middle leaders regularly check the quality of learning in English, mathematics and science. They track pupils' progress rigorously in core subjects. Leadership is not yet as strong in the foundation subjects.
- Leaders monitor teaching and assessment closely. They tackle any hint of weakness quickly by providing highly effective training and support for all staff.
- Teachers use their good subject knowledge thoughtfully to plan engaging activities that pupils enjoy. Staff observe and listen to pupils carefully then ask probing questions at just the right moment to move learning forward.
- All groups of pupils make at least good progress across all key stages and subjects. A much larger proportion of pupils now reach the highest standards of achievement in their work, including disadvantaged pupils. Teachers challenge the most able pupils particularly well.
- Staff ensure that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities access the full curriculum. All pupils play and learn happily alongside one another. They speak out confidently against any form of bullying or intolerance.
- Phonics and reading are subjects of real strength across school. Pupils have a love of books and discuss texts in great depth.
- While pupils' progress in mathematics is good, it is not yet as strong as their progress in English. On occasion, some staff do not use resources adeptly enough to maximise mathematical learning.
- Pupils are polite, articulate and friendly. They cooperate with one another maturely in class. Staff plan many collaborative activities to ensure that pupils' social and emotional skills develop swiftly alongside their academic abilities.
- Governors have a wide range of skills to support and challenge the school's leaders. They make sure that pupils are safe and that all groups of pupils achieve well.
- In the early years, staff match learning carefully to each child's needs, interests and abilities. Children are well prepared for Year 1. Their learning outdoors is currently limited as a result of on-site building developments.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by making sure that:
 - the school's tracking system provides accurate information about the progress that pupils make in foundation subjects
 - leaders in foundation subjects, such as geography and history, are supported to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects
 - leaders continue to improve the teaching of mathematics by providing training so that all staff use resources effectively to develop pupils' mathematical thinking.
- Swiftly implement plans to develop the outdoor learning environment for children in the early years.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher and governors have led the school through significant changes with drive and determination. Since the previous inspection, they have transformed the school and addressed all of the areas for improvement identified. Parents, staff and pupils agree that Seahouses Primary School is now a good school.
- Leaders ensure that everyone involved with the school believes in their vision for continuous improvement. They have created an open and honest culture among staff and pupils, empowering them to share their views and learn from mistakes. Staff and pupils thrive on challenge and are enthusiastic learners.
- Leaders share their high expectations for the school passionately. The headteacher and governors have an excellent knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses and understand how to move the school forward swiftly. They tackle any trace of underperformance quickly and positively. Staff access individualised support if needed and benefit from a wide range of training and development opportunities. As a result, the quality of teaching and learning has improved considerably in all subjects.
- Middle leaders take on an influential role to raise standards in English, mathematics and science. They model highly effective teaching for others, make sure that assessments are accurate and track progress carefully. They observe teaching and learning in other classes and coach staff carefully to improve pupil outcomes. Subject leadership is not as strong in the foundation subjects, such as geography and history.
- Leaders use performance management to secure consistently good outcomes for pupils. Teachers are held to account for improving their practice and take on responsibility for raising standards across the school. Staff value the professional development provided, especially teaching assistants, who welcome the opportunity to learn alongside their colleagues.
- Leaders monitor pupils' progress and attainment closely in English and mathematics. They ensure that staff use the school's assessment procedures effectively to track pupils' strengths and areas for improvement. However, systems to track pupils' outcomes in the foundation subjects are not quite as accurate. Leaders scrutinise pupils' topic books diligently and their evidence shows that good progress is made by all groups of pupils over time in the foundation subjects.
- Staff have revitalised the school curriculum, introducing new and exciting topics that ignite pupils' interest and enthuse learning. Staff invite experts and other visitors in to school frequently to inspire pupils, such as a drama specialist who came dressed as a Roman soldier. Pupils enjoyed the visit and increased their knowledge of the Romans because of this fun opportunity. Teachers also choose fiction texts thoughtfully to link with each topic theme. Pupils develop a deep interest in books alongside a fascination with the topics studied.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a priority for staff. The school prepares pupils effectively for life beyond school, teaching them about rights and responsibilities in considerable depth. Pupils explain their rights and responsibilities with maturity. During discussion, pupils' comments include: 'We have a right to

education but also the responsibility to learn as much as we can to make the most of our education.'

- Several parents praised the school's swift action to support children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. They commented that the teaching and help provided made a very positive difference to their children's progress. Leaders and governors make good use of additional funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Leaders and governors ensure that pupil premium funding is used effectively. It is improving disadvantaged pupils' attainment and progress. These pupils achieve particularly well. Similarly, the physical education and sports funding is used well, enabling pupils to access a wide range of sporting activities, including regular swimming lessons and attendance at a variety of competitions.
- Representatives from the local authority have provided strong support for new leaders and governors at the school, helping them to improve teaching and learning quickly in a short time. The school is no longer isolated and now links with many other schools to share and develop good practice.

Governance of the school

- Following a review of governance, the quality and impact of governors' work has improved rapidly. Governors are fully committed to improving their own skills and actively seek training to increase their knowledge, for example in safeguarding and financial awareness.
- Governors audit their collective skills regularly, making sure that they have the breadth of expertise needed to carry out their responsibilities well. Governors challenge leaders robustly but also offer support in many areas of the school's work.
- Governors do not shy away from difficult decisions and manage performance-related pay astutely. They work alongside leaders to tackle any underperformance swiftly and consequently, outcomes have continued to improve for all groups of pupils.
- Governors keep a close eye on the school's finances to ensure efficiency and value for money. They set clear plans for the use of specific grants, such as pupil premium funding. Governors monitor pupils' progress and outcomes carefully to make sure that money is effectively used.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Governors set high expectations for robust safeguarding across the school. They have created a strong culture of keeping pupils safe and protecting them from harm. Leaders follow strict procedures for safer recruitment, ensuring that all vetting procedures are undertaken. A named governor frequently checks that the school's single central record and other safeguarding measures are up to date.
- Staff training in child protection is current and new staff complete a detailed induction process to prepare them for keeping pupils safe in school. Staff apply the school's policies adeptly in practice. They report any concerns about pupils' safety promptly and

record information carefully while securely maintaining confidentiality.

- Leaders work collaboratively with many other agencies to support pupils and families in need. They seek external support persistently from outside services so that pupils at risk of harm receive the help they need to stay safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good across each of the key stages. Teachers encourage pupils to think deeply about their learning, asking questions skilfully to explore pupils' knowledge. Staff set challenging tasks in English, mathematics and science so pupils learn new skills quickly. In particular, the most able pupils now make rapid progress and tackle their work in far greater depth.
- Since the previous inspection, leaders have provided high-quality training to improve teachers' subject knowledge, especially in English, phonics and reading. Staff offer many opportunities for pupils to read and apply their phonic skills across other subjects. As a result, pupils of all abilities develop a love of books and stories. They decode unfamiliar words with confidence and staff teach them how to analyse texts using inference and deduction. For example, in key stage 2 pupils share their ideas about photographic scenes, separating fact from opinion and finding evidence to corroborate their ideas.
- In mathematics, most staff use apparatus and resources effectively to demonstrate mathematical concepts. For example, in Year 1, pupils enjoy using a variety of apparatus to add and subtract numbers on a dice. Staff give clear explanations in this class to help pupils move from adding with cubes to working out written calculations on a whiteboard. Not all staff have been trained to support such swift progress in mathematics. Subject leaders in English and mathematics have clear plans to demonstrate their effective techniques to newer members of staff.
- Many pupils identify science as one of their favourite subjects. They explain that teachers make learning science exciting and memorable. In a key stage 2 class, pupils worked outdoors to carry out experiments involving space and gravity. They cooperated maturely to investigate how the size of a meteorite relates to the size of the crater it makes upon impact. Staff used clever questioning throughout the experiments to assess the level of each pupil's understanding. The class used measuring skills accurately to assist their investigations. Work in pupils' science books shows that they make strong progress because of effective teaching over time.
- Staff support any pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities adeptly alongside their peers. Support staff have a good knowledge of the children who benefit from additional support and work positively to ensure that this group of pupils access the full curriculum. For example, teaching assistants step in opportunely to give pupils additional explanations whenever needed.
- Teachers make sure that all subjects in the curriculum stimulate pupils' interest. For example, in religious education, older pupils think about information they would like to know about Sikhism and write letters to the Sikh gurdwara to find out information. Pupils also develop their writing skills accurately within history and geography when they write fact files about ancient and modern Greece. Pupils' books in each of these

subjects are neat and demonstrate the good progress made.

- In each class and every subject, teachers prompt the most able pupils to think deeply about their learning. This was particularly evident in a key stage 2 mathematics class, where pupils compiled puzzle questions to challenge their peers. The teacher modelled the importance of learning from mistakes very clearly and this helped the most able pupils to identify their own errors and misconceptions independently.
- Staff teach phonics well and this contributes to the good outcomes that pupils achieve in the Year 1 phonics screening check. Teachers articulate sounds clearly and pupils follow their example as they blend sounds to read new words accurately and at pace. Pupils cooperate sensibly to complete phonic games together. They chat happily about the meaning of words and debate whether the words in their game are 'real' or 'nonsense' words. These activities build up pupils' reading skills successfully.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and are proud of their school, commenting: 'It's a great school. We couldn't ask for anything better.' Pupils are keen to do their best and praise their teachers for providing them with interesting and challenging work.
- Leaders and staff promote health and fitness frequently. For example, pupils relish the chance to walk 'a mile a day' around their new school field and understand how this is good for their health. Pupils access many different sports and physical exercise, including regular swimming lessons, rugby tournaments and dodgeball competitions.
- Pupils talk enthusiastically about teachers who make them feel safe and secure. They fully understand the different procedures that keep them safe, such as lock-down and fire drills. In particular, older pupils speak excitedly about a play they produced to teach younger pupils about internet safety. Their recall of the key safety messages in the play is thorough and precise. Pupils are knowledgeable about how to keep healthy and stay safe.
- Pupils explain that they can talk to a trusted adult about anything that might worry or concern them. Records show that incidents of bullying are rare, and pupils confirm this. Pupils feel valued and appreciate the way staff listen to their ideas.
- Older pupils cooperate maturely with others, setting a positive example for others to follow. They are passionate about respecting everyone, regardless of any differences, and state vehemently, 'We do not allow anyone to pick on people because of their gender, skin colour, religion, disability, transgender or homophobia.'
- Parents who completed the online survey, Parent View, all agreed that their children are well looked after and cared for at Seahouses Primary. One hundred percent of the parents said they would recommend the school to others.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils speak honestly about how much behaviour has improved since the previous inspection. They understand the school's behaviour procedures, recognising that the rewards and sanctions used by staff are firm but fair. Pupils in Year 2 and 3 were very proud to be named as 'the best behaved school' by staff at a local stately home they visited during the inspection.
- Attendance improved for most groups in school last year so that it is much closer to the national average now. Leaders take determined action and use many strategies to reduce absence. For example, they send letters home to parents if their children's attendance falls below expectations and hold meetings with parents and children to encourage better attendance. Many pupils who were frequently absent in previous years now attend with much greater regularity.
- Pupils' books show that they take a pride in the presentation of their work. They also conduct themselves calmly and responsibly as they move around the building throughout the school day. In classrooms, pupils are attentive and polite, treating adults and children with respect.
- Staff form positive relationships with pupils and are well trained to support pupils who have complex emotional needs and/or challenging behaviour. Staff use helpful behaviour techniques considerately, managing any incidents of poor behaviour quickly but with sensitivity. Consequently, staff tackle the occasional incidents of low-level disruption promptly.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Since the previous inspection, outcomes have improved and are now good in all key stages. Pupils settle in to their new classes quickly and make good progress from their different starting points across many subjects. Work in pupils' books, evidence from wall displays, observations of learning in lessons and the school's own assessment information show that all groups of pupils make good progress over time.
- The proportion of children who reach a good level of development at the end of the Reception class has increased continually since the previous inspection. Good teaching and improved provision ensures that children get a good start to their education.
- In Year 1, typically, an above-average proportion of pupils reach the expected standards in the phonics screening check. Pupils use their improved reading skills purposefully to support their learning in other subjects. They read with fluency and enjoyment, tackling new and unfamiliar words with confidence. Staff ensure that reading books match pupils' levels of ability so that the challenge provided increases gradually but at a good pace.
- Standards at the end of key stage 1 have risen. In 2016, an above-average proportion of pupils reached the expected levels in reading and mathematics and an average proportion did so in writing. This represents good progress from their starting points.
- Pupils achieve well in key stage 2. The current Year 6 pupils will be the first cohort to sit key stage 2 tests at the end of the school year in 2018. Work in their books and learning seen in their classrooms show that standards are high. These pupils have

made good progress in key stage 2 in all subjects of the curriculum.

- Currently, pupils' achievement in mathematics is good, but is not as good as in reading and writing. Leaders are still developing teachers' practice in developing pupils' mathematical thinking
- In 2016, pupils' outcomes in science at the end of key stage 1 matched the national average. In this subject, the less able pupils in particular achieved well. Work in pupils' science books shows that pupils make strong progress in both key stages 1 and 2.
- All staff are determined to remove any barriers that might prevent pupils from making the best progress they can and, in doing this, they have raised aspirations and attainment for all groups of pupils.
- The most able pupils achieve particularly well. In Year 2 in 2016, the proportion of pupils working at greater depth increased and was above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Staff challenge the most able pupils consistently. Pupils with average prior attainment are also supported to achieve at greater depth.
- Leaders make good use of the pupil premium funding for the small numbers of disadvantaged pupils. All staff use assessment regularly and effectively to identify any gaps in progress and are especially vigilant when identifying the needs of disadvantaged pupils. Work from pupils' books and the school's own information provide strong evidence that disadvantaged pupils make at least good progress in each key stage.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress from their different starting points. Teachers deploy staffing and other resources effectively. Their planning ensures that work matches closely to the individual needs of these pupils.

Early years provision

Good

- In the early years, outcomes have improved considerably since the previous inspection. A much higher proportion of children achieve a good level of development now. Most children attain the expected levels of skill, knowledge and understanding by the end of Reception and an increasing proportion of children are exceeding these levels.
- Pupils make strong progress during their year in Reception from starting points that, for the majority, are broadly typical for their age. However, a minority of children begin early years with skills and knowledge that are lower than would be typical for their age, especially in their speaking and literacy skills. Staff target these children particularly well by offering very specific catch-up programmes. As a result, they make swift progress in reading, writing and speaking.
- The indoor learning areas provide a wide range of interesting learning opportunities matched to children's interests, needs and different levels of ability. Staff observe children carefully to assess their skills and then intervene sensitively to adapt opportunities to meet their needs. For example, some less able children struggle to hold a pencil correctly to form letters. Staff guide them to use just their fingers and they form letters in trays of sand and slit peas. This slight adaptation ensures that the less able children make similar progress to their peers.

- Staff follow the school's policy to use books and stories as a stimulus for children's learning. They use storybooks imaginatively to develop many different aspects of learning. In mathematics, when reading a book called 'Stick man', children enjoyed collecting sticks and using them to make a variety of different shapes, comparing sizes and learning new vocabulary, such as shortest and longest. Exciting games and activities like these keep children highly focused and engaged in learning. Children's mathematics skills progress well.
- All staff are well trained in teaching phonics and other early reading skills. They model the sounds in letters precisely, taking great care to enunciate words clearly. Children use this role model to improve their own speech and staff step in gently if they need to help children correct mispronunciations.
- In writing, children's skills develop quickly. Many children begin early years unable to form any letters of the alphabet correctly. They move on swiftly to be able to write their own names. Most can write full sentences by the time they reach Year 1.
- Staff provide a safe and nurturing environment and promote personal development and welfare very effectively. Children's behaviour is calm and peaceful. They cooperate maturely to share equipment sensibly. Staff allow children to take risks in their learning while managing their safety in a balanced and measured way. For example, children learn how to use hammers and nails safely and effectively. Staff support them carefully and teach them how to stay safe while participating in potentially dangerous situations. Consequently, children become skilled at managing their own safety well. Staff ensure that all welfare requirements are met.
- Due to continuing building work, the outdoor area was unavailable for use during the inspection. However, photographs and other inspection evidence show that staff typically make good use of the outdoors to promote learning across the curriculum. Children have taken part in gardening activities, enjoyed digging for worms, designed their own hopscotch games with chalks and listened to stories outside. The headteacher is keen to ensure that the early years outdoor space is quickly up and running again.
- Strong early years leadership ensures continual improvements in teaching and learning. Leaders know the strengths and areas for improvement needed. They use assessment information astutely to provide effectively for children of all abilities. By the end of the year, the most able children can read fluently and with confidence and write impressive stories. Their books show excellent progress over time.
- Parents are invited in to the school for many activities to enjoy with their children, such as 'Maths and Munch' or 'Read and Lunch'. Staff provide workshops for parents to learn about phonics and the home reading scheme supports pupils' good progress in reading.

School details

Unique reference number	122214
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	10020989

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	88
Appropriate authority	Northumberland local authority
Chair	Bernadette Fisher
Headteacher	Vickie Allen
Telephone number	01665 720444
Website	www.seahousesprimary.com
Email address	admin@seahousesprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	3–4 March 2015

Information about this school

- Seahouses Primary School is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The vast majority of pupils in the school are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than the national average. The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium is lower than the national average. In some year groups, no pupils are eligible for this support.
- The headteacher took up her post in September 2015.
- All of the teachers are new to their posts since the previous inspection. Teachers in the early years and key stage 1 began working at the school in September 2017.
- The school moved to a new site at the beginning of September 2017 to accommodate

the growing number of pupils in key stage 2. Some building work is still under way.

- The school has made the transition from a first school to a primary school over the past two years. This year is the first year that the school has pupils in Year 6.
- Children in the Reception class attend full time and are taught in the same class alongside pupils from Year 1. The school does not have a Nursery.
- Older pupils are taught in three mixed-age classes consisting of Reception and Year 1, Year 2 and 3, and Year 4 and 5. Year 6 pupils are taught together in the same class.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning on both days of the inspection and examined pupils' books. The inspector also carried out a joint observation with the headteacher.
- The inspector met with a group of pupils to discuss their views and opinions about the school. The inspector also spoke informally to pupils in classrooms, the playground and at lunchtime in the dining hall.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, middle leaders and two newly appointed staff. The inspector met with six governors, including the chair of the governing body, and spoke to two representatives from the local authority.
- The inspector examined documents relating to governance, self-evaluation, school improvement planning, pupils' progress and attainment, safeguarding and behaviour.
- The inspector spoke informally to parents at the beginning of the school day and took account of the school's own survey of parents' feedback and opinions. The inspector took account of 23 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and read eight responses to the staff questionnaire. There were no responses to the online pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

Anne Humble, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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