

Sedgefield Hardwick Primary School

Hawthorn Road, Sedgefield, Stockton-on-Tees TS21 3DA

Inspection dates

2–3 November 2017

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- An inspirational headteacher leads the school. She has exceedingly high expectations of herself, her staff and her pupils. The headteacher, together with the deputy and assistant headteachers, embodies the school's mission to instil, inspire and innovate.
- Governance is exceptionally strong and very professional. Governors challenge leaders with integrity and support them with vigour.
- Leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's effectiveness. Their plans to develop the school further are precise and informed.
- Subject leadership is strong and developing.
- Pupils make outstanding progress from their individual starting points in all three key stages.
- The proportion of children who reach a good level of development at the end of the early years is well above the national average and increasing year-on-year.
- In 2017, every pupil reached the standard in the Year 1 check of phonics knowledge and skills.
- More pupils reach and exceed the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stages 1 and 2 than nationally.
- Leaders spend the additional government funding for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities very wisely to ensure that pupils make the progress of which they are capable.
- Teachers know their pupils well. They assess pupils' skills and abilities constantly by asking insightful questions. Teachers provide work that enables pupils of all abilities to make rapid and sustained progress.
- Teaching assistants carry out their duties with aplomb. These professionals have a deep understanding of individual pupils' strengths and areas that require further development.
- The pupils are wonderful ambassadors for their school. Their pride in the school shines brightly in all that they do. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They take on roles of responsibility willingly and carry them out enthusiastically. They have developed a thirst for knowledge and a determination to succeed.
- The school's early years provision is exceptional. Teachers and teaching assistants enable children to be inquisitive and independent learners. Children are prepared extremely well to meet the demands of Year 1.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to implement the actions already identified by leaders in the school's plans for further development, such as the further development of subject leadership.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The headteacher has extremely high expectations of herself, her staff and her pupils. She is truly inspirational and leads by example. She is a fantastic role model for her staff and her pupils. The actions that she takes are rooted in pedagogy, the method and practice of teaching. All involved in school life buy in to her educational ideals and vision.
- The headteacher, deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher form an impressive team. Parents describe them as 'transformational'. They truly fulfil the school's strategic plan and mission to instil, inspire and innovate. Leaders have established highly structured systems that enable all learners to 'instil' a balance of academic and social skills. Learners are 'inspired' to apply these skills in 'dynamic learning opportunities' throughout the curriculum. These firm foundations allow learners to 'innovate' and achieve considerable success.
- Leaders' evaluation of the school's effectiveness is pinpoint accurate. Identified areas for further development feed seamlessly into leaders' plans for improvement. Governors and external development partners evaluate the success of actions undertaken by leaders against ambitious targets in the school's improvement plan. Systems and procedures, such as those exemplified in school improvement planning, are embedded in all aspects of school life.
- The leaders of English and mathematics are exceptionally strong. Following the headteacher's lead, they carry out research, formulate plans to improve provision, deliver staff training, check on pupils' learning in lessons and analyse pupils' assessment data. This systematic approach to school improvement leads to pupils achieving outstanding results. For example, all of the Year 1 pupils achieved the phonics standard in 2017 following the implementation of a new way to deliver phonics. As a result, the school is in the top 3% of all schools in the country.
- Senior leaders have established a rolling programme and a comprehensive framework to develop subject leadership further across the curriculum. The subject leaders for science and computing completed the programme during the last academic year. As a result, their expertise in leading and developing their subjects is greatly enhanced. They are playing an increasing role in school improvement.
- The government's additional funding for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is spent extremely well. These pupils make outstanding progress from their individual starting points because of the bespoke provision for their needs. Similarly, the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is spent increasingly well to ensure that all pupils meet and most pupils exceed the standards expected for their age.
- The deputy headteacher has an admirable knowledge of the impact of the additional funding for physical education and sports in primary schools. He has identified and met gaps in the school's provision. As a result, the range of sporting activities available has increased, together with the number of pupils taking part in competitive sport.
- Leaders manage the school's breakfast club and after-school provision extremely well.

Pupils who attend the after-school provision, 'in2', access an extremely wide range of enticing extra-curricular activities, including graffiti art, street dance, taekwondo, yoga and toy-making. Their confidence grows while trying new activities in the company of their friends and trusted adults. These activities support the school's more formal curriculum, including the curriculum for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education, very effectively. Pupils' knowledge of their own personal, social, physical and mental health is developed exceedingly well during 'think about... talk about' lessons.

- Leaders ensure that pupils have a deep, and by Years 5 and 6 sophisticated, knowledge about fundamental British values. All pupils, including the very youngest, understand the rule of law and difference between right and wrong. Pupils understand individual differences. They welcome new pupils into their school family and are keen to get to know them better.
- Leaders acknowledge the effective part the local authority has played throughout the school's improvement journey. The local authority directs other leaders, including other governing bodies, to the school because they have identified it as a beacon of excellence.

Governance of the school

- The governing body was reconstituted during the 2015/16 academic year and is now exceptionally strong. Governors use their individual skills and abilities in an exemplary manner to support and challenge the headteacher and other leaders robustly.
- Governors welcome challenge themselves. They have established strong systems to appraise the performance of individual governors, including the chair of the governing body. In addition, governors value external validation of their effectiveness through the regular health checks carried out by the local authority.
- All governors share the headteacher's vision and values. They understand that 'only the best is good enough for pupils at Sedgefield Hardwick Primary School.' Governors appoint high-quality practitioners who they judge to have the potential to become outstanding, given the school's highly effective coaching and mentoring systems. Governors quite rightly believe that talent acquisition and retention are strong in school.
- Governors work willingly in the pursuit of excellence for the school. For example, they recognised that pupils were not gaining early reading skills rapidly enough and developed a business case for introducing a different way of teaching phonics. The fact that all Year 1 pupils achieved the standard in phonics in 2017 is testament to their insightful work.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school's safer recruitment procedures and records are fully compliant with the government's requirements.
- All staff and governors attend safeguarding and child protection training on a regular basis. They fully understand how to keep children safe in education.

- The designated leaders for safeguarding keep detailed records of the actions taken to support vulnerable pupils. They work cooperatively with a wide range of external agencies to ensure that pupils are safe and protected.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Teachers and teaching assistants have extremely high expectations of their pupils. They ask pupils searching questions as a matter of course. They dig and delve to discover the extent of pupils' knowledge and understanding in order to plan challenging lessons with just the right level of difficulty.
- Teachers plan sequences of lessons across the curriculum. As a result, pupils 'secure, process and apply' new skills. A parent told the inspection team that the school's ethos of instil, inspire, innovate 'provides vital learning skills for my child to use now and in the future'.
- Pupils are taught how to be independent and curious learners from entry into the early years. Their thinking and reasoning skills are highly developed because that is what the school expects of them. Pupils are taught to assess their own work. For example, in mathematics they may complete three calculations from ten correctly and then decide that they are ready to move on to the more challenging tasks provided. In addition, pupils are very adept at assessing the work of other pupils in their class. Whole-school systems to 'pair, share and compare' enable pupils to check their own and their peers' understanding and progress systematically.
- Pupils' work is extremely well presented. All work is completed to the very best of individual pupils' abilities. That is what teachers expect. Pupils live up to their teachers' expectations.
- Teachers plan opportunities to apply and develop reading, writing and mathematics skills in other subject areas systematically. For example, the older pupils develop their vocabulary through their studies of famous artists such as Kandinsky, Dali and Gormley. As a result, they use words such as 'surreal', 'dislocation' and 'dilapidation' in their creative writing appropriately.
- Teaching, learning and assessment in phonics are excellent and lead to pupils making outstanding progress. Pupils' achievements in phonics, together with closely targeted teaching, are leading to even better progress in reading.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in school, at home and online through work completed in 'think about... talk about' lessons. Recent lesson themes include the Catalanian view, lest we forget, homophobic bullying and the Gunpowder Plot.
- Pupils willingly take on areas of responsibility around the school. For example, the e-safety crew promote online safety through peer tutoring.

- Pupils know which actions constitute bullying. They are adamant that there are very few incidents of bullying in school. All would share any troubles and worries with a trusted adult in school.
- Parents are delighted that their children are happy at school. One said, 'This is an amazing school and my child loves attending.' Another commented, 'My child thoroughly enjoys attending this wonderful school.'

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils behave extremely well in lessons and during the less-structured times of the school day. Pupils understand the headteacher's clear expectations of behaviour.
- Pupils become resilient and successful learners during their time at Sedgefield Hardwick. They discuss and debate their own learning and challenge each other's learning in a thoughtful and supportive manner.
- Parents are overwhelmingly happy with the standard of behaviour in the school, as are the pupils. A Year 5 boy told one of the inspection team that pupils' behaviour is 'much, much' better now than it was when he was in Year 1.
- The vast majority of pupils attend school every day and on time. A very small minority of pupils at risk of becoming disadvantaged by persistent absence are identified swiftly. Leaders collaborate with their families to ensure that their attendance improves rapidly.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- In 2017, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected and higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stages 1 and 2 was significantly above the national average.
- Overall, pupils in all year groups, including disadvantaged, the most able and those who have SEN and/or disabilities, make outstanding progress in reading, writing and mathematics at Sedgefield Hardwick Primary School.
- The proportion of pupils who reach the standard in the Year 1 check of phonics knowledge and skills has increased year-on-year. Impressively, all Year 1 pupils achieved this feat in 2017.
- Pupils who attend the school currently are making the same exceptional progress as their predecessors across the curriculum.
- All pupils are exceptionally well prepared for their next stage of education, whether it is in a new class, a new key stage or a new school.
- Parents told the inspection team that they are very pleased with the progress their children make in school. One described her son's progress as 'massive'.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- The assistant headteacher took up his post as early years leader in September 2016.

Since that time, he has led a host of successful developments to improve the provision, including the upskilling of teachers and teaching assistants. In the past, staff in the early years supervised children's learning. Now, they teach children all of the time. They focus on the development of children's basic skills.

- Teaching, learning and assessment are of an exceptionally high standard in the early years. Adults use observations of children's learning astutely to plan the next steps in learning for the children while considering the children's interests. A teaching assistant's clarity of explanation was judged by an inspector to be 'second to none' during the inspection.
- During the inspection, a teacher asked a group of Nursery children how the three little pigs could catch the big bad wolf. These three-year-old children constructed the wolf trap themselves. They manipulated masking tape with confidence because they remembered how to hang lengths of tape from a table. A child used his previous learning to ask what the three little pigs could use as 'bait'. The teacher encouraged the children to solve problems themselves. He gave them time to think and make decisions. Their learning and progress were palpable.
- Children in the early years make outstanding progress in both the Nursery and the Reception classes. The proportion of children who reach a good level of development has increased each year over time and is now well above the national average. The very small number of disadvantaged children and children who have SEN and/or disabilities make outstanding progress too.
- Children acquire phonics knowledge and skills rapidly because of closely targeted teaching and high expectations. Leaders are using their own learning from the successful implementation of a new phonics scheme to develop the school's own scheme to acquire basic number facts. Although at an early stage of development, children are making much more rapid progress than previously. This is a telling example of innovative practice in the early years.
- The school meets the welfare requirements of the early years fully. The indoor and outdoor environments are safe, secure and enticing. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the provision in the early years. One parent commented that her child leaves the Reception class with a 'smile on her face' every day because she has 'fun and learns through play in a safe, friendly environment'. Parents enjoy contributing to their children's assessments. There is a true partnership between home and school.
- Teachers model positive behaviours overtly in the early years. For example, children learn about listening effectively by the teacher saying, 'We are talking together, I am listening to you.' Children's attitudes to learning are extremely positive. They do not flit from one activity to another but sustain their concentration over long periods of time. For example, a child in Nursery worked on a painting for over half an hour during the inspection. This very young child amended and modified her painting while talking the process out aloud.
- Children are more than ready to meet the increased demands of Year 1 at the end of the early years.

School details

Unique reference number	114161
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	10036483

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	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	259
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nicki Clark
Headteacher	Sally Newton
Telephone number	01740 620041
Website	www.sedgefieldhardwick.co.uk/
Email address	hardwick.primary@durhamlearning.net
Date of previous inspection	27–28 November 2012

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- Although the school admits two-year-olds, there were none on roll at the time of the inspection.
- The school met the government's minimum floor standards for primary schools in 2017.
- The school is smaller than an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, those eligible for support through pupil premium funding, is below average.
- The overwhelming majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below

the national average.

- Children in the early years attend full-time provision in the Reception classes and part-time provision in the Nursery class.
- The school runs its own breakfast club and after-school provision.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited 20 part-lessons, five of which were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Inspectors visited the school's breakfast club and talked with parents at the beginning of the school day.
- Meetings were held with senior, middle and subject leaders, and four governors, including the chair of the governing body. The lead inspector also spoke with the school's education development partner from Durham local authority.
- The inspectors spoke informally to pupils in lessons and at various times during each day. They also spoke formally with two groups of pupils, a group from Years 2, 4 and 6 on day one and a group from Years 1, 4 and 5 on day two.
- Questionnaire returns submitted online by 24 members of staff and 90 pupils were taken into consideration.
- The inspectors scrutinised a range of pupils' workbooks and information about pupils' current progress in lessons. They also reviewed a number of documents, including the school's improvement plan, attendance records, information relating to the work the school does to keep pupils safe, headteacher's reports to governors and minutes of meetings of the governing body.
- The inspectors took account of the views of 70 parents from the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, together with 20 free-text submissions.
- An inspector read with pupils in key stages 1 and 2.

Inspection team

Belita Scott, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Zoe Westley	Ofsted Inspector
Gillian Nimer	Ofsted Inspector
Lucie Stephenson	Ofsted Inspector

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