

Consett Infant School

Teasdale Street, Consett, County Durham DH8 6AF

Inspection dates

20–21 March 2018

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

- Teaching, learning and pupils' achievement have improved rapidly because of the relentless drive of school leaders and governors to ensure the best outcomes for pupils.
- The latest information about the school's performance, work in pupils' books and evidence in lessons show that pupils are making good progress in their learning, with some pupils making accelerated progress.
- Pupils who benefit from the pupil premium funding and those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are well supported and as a result they make strong progress and at times outperform their peers.
- Teachers use accurate assessments to plan work that is well matched to pupils' needs. They understand what pupils need to do to get better and, as a result, plan challenging work for all groups.
- Children make a good start in early years and thrive in the caring and stimulating learning environment. Children from all groups make strong progress, demonstrated by their workbooks. They are well prepared for Year 1.
- Middle leaders have worked hard to have a greater role in monitoring their subjects; however, not all middle leaders are confident about the impact of their work on outcomes.
- Governors are knowledgeable about the school and are keen to continually improve their effectiveness. They have made rapid changes since the last inspection and are confident in challenging the headteacher and other leaders.
- Outcomes are improving. By the end of key stage 1, pupils achieve in line with national figures in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion achieving greater depth is above the national average.
- Occasionally, inconsistencies in the teaching of phonics means pupils do not achieve as well as they could. At times, the lack of strong progress is due to inconsistent teacher subject knowledge.
- The headteacher and family support worker are highly effective in developing and sustaining pupils' well-being. This is beginning to have a positive impact on attendance, although they acknowledge that there is still work to do.
- Attendance is improving; however, some pupils do not arrive at school on time and this is slowing their progress.
- Pupils generally behave well. They feel safe and show respect for themselves and others. However, at times, pupils do not always move around the school calmly and sensibly.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring that:
 - the teaching of phonics is consistent, so that activities are closely matched to the needs of pupils
 - all staff's phonics subject knowledge is consistent.
- Strengthen leadership and management by increasing the role that middle leaders play in improving and assessing the impact of the quality of teaching and learning across the school and improving outcomes for pupils.
- Further improve behaviour by ensuring that pupils move around the school in a calm and positive manner and enter lessons ready to learn.
- Work even more closely with parents and carers so that they make sure their children attend regularly and always arrive at school on time.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders and governors are ambitious for the school. Leaders know the strengths of the school well and are successfully addressing issues they have identified. This includes outcomes for phonics and reading, which are improving.
- Leaders have established a positive ethos which permeates the school. Parents and carers are positive in their praise for the school. One parent said, 'Consett Infant School is a lovely school with passionate staff, who work hard to help the children be the best that they can be.' The large majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's parent survey, or who were spoken to, felt that their children were happy and safe in school.
- Leaders' evaluation of the school's work is accurate. Improvement plans reflect a clear focus on the right priorities to make the school even better. Joint observations with the headteacher showed that her judgements are accurate and that feedback to teachers focuses on the ways in which they can improve their practice.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development permeates the school. An extensive range of educational visits and visitors to the school enriches pupils' experience. Pupils learn about democracy through the school council. They become aware of different faiths through studying different cultures and festivals.
- Leaders use the pupil premium funding effectively. The impact of spending is checked closely to ensure that the school provides good support for disadvantaged pupils. This support helps pupils both in the classroom and in developing their emotional and social skills. This is having a positive impact on the outcomes, as disadvantaged pupils are performing as well as their peers, and in some cases outperforming them.
- Provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and for children in early years is very well led by skilled teachers. They have brought about many improvements in these areas since the previous inspection.
- Leaders have ensured that teachers' performance management has been highly focused on securing improvements. Outcomes are scrutinised and probed closely by senior leaders and governors, a process which has had a positive effect on pupils' progress. Leaders have acted to improve teaching, identifying when this a strength and supporting staff where there are weaknesses.
- The local authority has given effective support to the school on its recent journey to good. It believes that the headteacher is a 'strong leader'. There has been a strong emphasis on working collaboratively with other schools to provide support and challenge to ensure that outcomes for pupils improve.
- Middle leaders are now developing in their roles. They have a clear overview of their areas of responsibility and have undertaken relevant training to help equip them with the skills for their roles. More middle leaders are now influencing the development of teaching and learning across the school. For example, the mathematics leader has provided training to staff on a new mastery approach, and the literacy leader has conducted monitoring to ensure that pupils have more independent writing opportunities across the school. However, this work is in its early stages and is not yet

impacting strongly on improving outcomes.

Governance of the school

- Governors are knowledgeable about the school and are keen to continually improve their effectiveness. They have reorganised their structure, so they have a more focused approach to holding leaders to account. They have made rapid changes since the last inspection and are strong in challenging the headteacher and other leaders. They have worked hard to make difficult decisions through a period of financial instability.
- Since the previous inspection, governors have undertaken a review of how the governing body works and implemented an action plan to address areas for improvement. The governing body was reorganised, based on the skills governors could offer. Governors undertake various development programmes to support them to execute their duties effectively, and draw on a wide range of services to help them develop further. They attend training, for example, in understanding published data about the school. This provides them with the skills and knowledge to understand pupils' outcomes. Consequently, governors now have the skills needed to hold leaders to account effectively.
- Governors work alongside other leaders to gain first-hand knowledge of how the school runs on a day-to-day basis. They receive high-quality information from school leaders, which they use to inform their work. They are not afraid to ask challenging questions or take decisive actions when they have concerns.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- School leaders make safeguarding a high priority. There is a strong culture of safeguarding throughout the school to ensure the welfare of pupils. All staff attend regular safeguarding training and know how to keep pupils safe. Staff have a good awareness of safeguarding issues and procedures to follow should they be concerned about a pupil's welfare, and are aware of issues relating to the 'Prevent' duty.
- The family support worker takes a lead in supporting pupils and their families. She works closely with the families at the local nursery to support children with their transition to school. The school has a strong ethos of care for all families and this is reflected in the 24-hour phonenumber that is open to families who may need additional support. The school goes 'above and beyond', and this was seen when the family support worker was supporting families on Christmas Eve.
- All parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire or communicated in writing stated that their children are safe, and they praised the quality of care provided by the school. Parents described the effective way in which the school has supported their children.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved rapidly. This is largely down the highly effective assessment strategies that have been implemented since the last inspection. All staff now have an accurate understanding of where the pupils currently are, and set aspirational targets for the pupils to achieve. Pupil progress meetings are used to great effect to ensure that class teachers are held accountable for the progress of their pupils and are challenged if pupils are not on track.
- When pupils appear to be making less progress than the school expects, effective interventions are put in place to support the pupils to catch up quickly.
- Leaders and staff have created a happy, purposeful environment, which helps pupils to become independent and confident learners. Staff have built positive relationships with pupils that enable pupils to develop self-esteem and resilience. As a result, pupils are eager to learn and enjoy their lessons.
- Teachers and teaching assistants ask challenging questions. This makes pupils think about their learning and explain their reasoning. This is a strength, particularly when supporting pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- Pupils write well because teachers are skilled at demonstrating and explaining different styles of writing. Pupils write at length and for a wide variety of purposes. Teachers encourage pupils to use ambitious vocabulary to make their writing interesting. Teachers develop pupils' writing skills by enabling them to write in a range of styles by threading writing through the themed topics.
- Pupils are incredibly proud of their writing. In one lesson, a pupil danced with excitement when they had finished their work and shared it with the class teacher.
- In mathematics, staff have sound subject knowledge to support pupils to make strong progress. Pupils are becoming more confident in solving more complex mathematical problems.
- Pupils are supported to complete their homework; school leaders contact parents if homework is not completed. This has had a positive impact on the progress of reading throughout the school.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities progress well in classes. Challenge is appropriate and extends their academic learning. Other needs, such as social and emotional and mental health needs, are well supported by focused targets identified in regular reviews.
- Most-able pupils are challenged well and are given work that supports them to achieve the higher standard.
- The teaching of phonics has improved considerably since the last inspection and, as a result, pupils get off to a good start in their reading. Those children who did not reach the standard required in the phonics screening check catch up quickly. However, activities are not always effectively matched to the needs of the pupils and, as a result, progress is not as rapid as it could be. Some inconsistencies in teachers' subject knowledge mean that the teaching of phonics is not consistent across the school.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils enjoy learning. They are keen to find out new information. Almost all parents who responded to the survey said that their children are happy at school.
- Pupils know how to keep safe. They understand what bullying means and speak positively about what they learned during anti-bullying week. They are clear that incidents of bullying in school are rare and they are confident that an adult will deal with any concerns quickly.
- Pupils are confident. They are willing to speak up in class and are articulate in putting forward their point of view. They listen well for most of the time when a teacher or another pupil is speaking.
- Pupils are resilient and determined and persevere well. They get tasks finished in class.
- At times, a minority of pupils are not punctual to lessons.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' attendance is lower than the national average. Leaders have worked hard at identifying ways to improve it and there are signs that attendance is rising, especially for pupils who are persistently absent.
- Lessons are rarely disrupted by poor behaviour. Occasionally, when pupils are not given sufficient challenge, they are less attentive and do not listen as well as they could. As a result, some transitions between activities are not as sharp and focused as they could be. The breakfast club provides a good, nurturing start to the day for those who attend.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Outcomes are improving. Throughout the school, pupils make good progress from their starting points. By the end of key stage 1, pupils achieve in line with national figures in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion achieving greater depth is above the national average. Current tracking data shows that pupils are on track to achieve above national averages for the proportion of pupils achieving expected and greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Children join Reception Year with skills below those typical for their age. A good level of challenge ensures that they make good progress in the early years classes. The proportion of children who achieved a good level of development rose in 2016 and remained the same in 2017. Assessment records indicate that current Reception children are developing their skills more rapidly, indicating that more will reach a good level of development, and so bring overall achievement closer to the national average. In addition, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels is set to increase.

- The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the phonics screening check in Year 1 has improved steadily, although there was a dip in 2017. Leaders could effectively explain that this was a dip and can show strong evidence of improvement since September. Current assessment records indicate that the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in phonics will be above the national average in 2018.
- Those pupils who did not reach the standard required in the phonics screening check in 2017 are being well supported to catch up with their peers. As a result, the vast majority of pupils achieve the phonics standard by the time they leave Year 2.
- Pupils read widely and often. Reading is a priority of the school and leaders work effectively with parents to share the importance of reading. As a result, more parents are engaging with supporting their children at home.
- Disadvantaged pupils progress well, and the majority of pupils progress as well as their peers, due to high expectations and challenge. Pupil premium funding is used well to support the progress of disadvantaged pupils.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are supported well. Progress for these pupils is strong. Pupils are challenged appropriately and supported well and, as a result, a significant proportion are making expected and accelerated progress. At times, some progress is above that of their peers.

Early years provision

Good

- Children start Reception with knowledge and skills that are generally below those typically expected for their age. They make speedy progress in their learning and development because of very effective teaching. The school's assessment information shows the very strong progress made by children in Reception.
- The leadership and management of early years are good. The headteacher and early years leaders have worked tirelessly to improve this area of the school since the last inspection. They now have a good overview of strengths and priorities for development.
- The quality of teaching is strong. Staff have an accurate view of the progress that children are making and plan well for their next steps in learning. Adult-led activities are challenging and focused on developing children's next steps. Routines have been established very quickly and high expectations have been set.
- Staff know the children extremely well and have forged strong relationships with all children. Leaders and staff make incisive evaluations of what is working well and what is not. Where specific goals and targets are not being achieved, they quickly plan and provide extra activities to address this. Consequently, children make rapid and sustained progress from their starting points.
- Disadvantaged children and children who have SEN and/or disabilities make progress that is equal to, or better than, that of their classmates because the teacher plans for each child individually, enabling them to make good progress.
- Some minor inconsistencies in teachers' subject knowledge of phonics mean that the children's progress in phonics is not always as strong as it could be.
- Children behave well. Staff have created a caring and positive environment where

children feel secure and able to engage in their learning.

- Safeguarding arrangements for the early years provision are effective. Risks are managed well and all staff are vigilant. Statutory welfare requirements are met.

School details

Unique reference number	114052
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	10042162

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	157
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Judith Davidson
Headteacher	Mrs Julia Graham
Telephone number	01207 504464
Website	www.consett-inf.durham.sch.uk
Email address	consettinfant@durhamlearning.net
Date of previous inspection	23–24 February 2016

Information about this school

- Consett Infant School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Nearly all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils for whom the pupil premium provides support is above average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or who are looked after.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is in line with the national average. However, the proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is significantly above the national average.
- The school runs its own breakfast club and offers a range of after-school activities.
- Consett Infant School federated with Beechdale Nursery School in January 2016. There is one executive headteacher for both schools and a joint governing board.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors held meetings with: the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other leaders, including the family support worker; a group of pupils; and governors, including the chair of the governing body. The lead inspector spoke to a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors gathered a range of evidence to judge the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Inspectors observed learning across the school. Some observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher.
- Together with leaders, inspectors looked in detail at a range of pupils' books and work in different subjects. Inspectors heard four pupils read and spoke with pupils throughout the inspection about their learning.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including the school's checks on the suitability of adults to work with children and other documentation regarding safer recruitment of staff.
- Leaders made available the school's own self-evaluation document, termly assessments, subject action plans, minutes of governing body meetings, and documentation regarding child protection.

Inspection team

Eve Morris, lead inspector

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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