

Langley Park Primary School

Langley Park, Durham, County Durham DH7 9XN

Inspection dates

1–2 May 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment varies across the school. Some teachers do not plan to meet pupils' needs from their different starting points. Typically, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), disadvantaged pupils and the most able make the least progress over time.
- In recent years, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6 has declined and in 2018 was well below average. However, more recently pupils' results in writing and mathematics assessments at the end of key stage 1 were above the national average.
- Additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils is contributing to pupils in key stage 1 making more progress recently. Disadvantaged pupils in key stage 2 do less well over time.
- Attendance is improving and persistent absence is declining. However, pupils do not attend as often as other pupils nationally and persistent absence remains above average.
- Leaders do not sufficiently hold staff to account for the impact of their work. Similarly, although improving, governors do not comprehensively hold leaders to account because they sometimes accept the information leaders present without confirming its accuracy.
- Leaders' checks on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment do not focus enough on pupils' learning and progress. Consequently, leaders' evaluations of the school are overly generous.
- The quality of provision in the early years shows a marked difference between the Nursery and Reception. Children do not sustain the strong start they make in Nursery when they move into Reception.

The school has the following strengths

- The vast majority of pupils behave well. They enjoy coming to school and show a great deal of respect for their teachers and other adults.
- The teaching of phonics is improving. This is helping pupils to develop their initial reading skills at an earlier stage than in the past.
- A highly effective personal development and welfare curriculum ensures that pupils, including the most vulnerable, receive strong support.
- Staff morale is high. Leaders have the support of the staff and the large majority of parents.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, so that all pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils, the most able and pupils with SEND, make at least good progress, by ensuring that teachers:
 - use the information they have in relation to pupils’ prior learning to plan activities that meet their varying needs
 - have high expectations of what pupils can achieve
 - do not provide too much support for pupils so that they become dependent upon it
 - identify and plan additional challenging opportunities for pupils to develop their mathematical mastery.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management, by:
 - ensuring that monitoring and evaluation at all levels is focused closely on the effect of leaders’ actions and that of teachers on pupils’ learning and progress
 - eradicating the inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment
 - redrafting school improvement plans and documentation so that actions are precise, clearly allocated, include measurable success criteria and are monitored and evaluated separately
 - rigorously holding staff and leaders to account for all aspects of their work
 - ensuring that governors appraise the information they receive from leaders in more detail.
- Continue to improve rates of attendance and reduce persistent absence so that they are in line with those achieved nationally.
- Improve provision in the early years, particularly in Reception, so that more children reach a good level of development, by:
 - developing the quality of teaching and learning so that staff consider children’s prior understanding when directing and supporting learning and play
 - ensuring that staff accurately assess children’s stage of development
 - planning more activities that develop children’s early reading, writing and mathematical skills.

An external review of the use of the pupil premium 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

- While leaders have managed to enhance pupils' learning in some respects, by improving pupils' behaviour and attendance for example, they have been unable to secure consistently strong teaching across the school. Pupils' attainment and progress across all key stages varies considerably.
- Leaders' evaluation of the school's effectiveness is overgenerous. The school's own self-evaluation rightly identifies many positives. However, leaders do not highlight the weaknesses in the school's provision in enough detail. This is because senior and subject leaders do not focus sufficiently on pupils' learning and progress when they assess the effect of their actions, and that of teachers.
- Leaders' documentation relating to school improvement lacks precision. The actions that leaders devise are sometimes confused for success criteria. Additionally, it is not always clear by whom, when and how progress will be monitored or that monitoring is not being done by people who are also leading the same action. In this way, some of the areas for improvement highlighted in the school's last inspection in July 2018 remain a priority.
- Procedures to hold staff to account are underdeveloped. Currently, some staff are unclear what leaders expect from them regarding teaching, learning and assessment and pupils' outcomes.
- Additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils is beginning to have more of an effect on improving disadvantaged pupils' attendance and progress than it has previously. Leaders ensure that funding is allocated to a wide range of activities and that they review disadvantaged pupils' work regularly. This is having a positive effect on disadvantaged pupils' attainment in writing and mathematics in key stage 1. However, leaders' strategies are less successful in improving key stage 2 disadvantaged pupils' learning. Leaders intend to review their work in this area so that they have a better understanding of the strategies that work and those that do not.
- Leaders' use of additional funding to develop school sports and physical activity is effective. A large number of pupils benefit from attending 'forest school' and learning in an outdoor environment. Pupils say that they look forward to outdoor lessons because they are able to learn in a practical and fun way.
- The curriculum ensures that pupils learn content and subject matter relating to all subjects within the national curriculum. Pupils spend a significant amount of the week learning the foundation subjects such as geography, history and art. This supports pupils' literacy and numeracy development because teachers ensure that pupils apply their recently acquired skills, knowledge and understanding from their English and mathematics lessons to the work they complete in their topic books. For example, during the inspection Year 4 pupils successfully refined their persuasive writing technique in history by creating arguments for and against the use of pit ponies in Langley Park Colliery. Furthermore, a wide range of after-school clubs ensures that pupils are able to extend their learning or try a new activity. Rates of attendance are high at clubs such as sports and fitness, coding, construction and multi-skills.

- The leadership of phonics teaching is improving. The leader of phonics has been supported well by senior leaders, governors and the local authority to ensure that the school's approach to the teaching of reading is a much higher priority than it has been previously. Leaders ensure that all staff use the same and accurate approach to teaching early reading skills. In this way, pupils now read books and learn sound–letter correspondences that are more closely matched to their stage of learning. More pupils are expected to pass the phonics screening check in Year 1 this academic year than last.
- Staff morale is high. Furthermore, the large majority of parents are pleased with the leadership of the school. For example, three in every four parents who completed Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, say that the school is well led.
- School leaders are outward facing and they draw upon the expertise of advisers from the local authority frequently. Recent advice and training from the local authority, including focused visits, has helped to improve provision in the early years and strengthen subject leadership.
- Leadership of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is effective. Pupils develop an appropriate understanding of right and wrong through the use of an effective school rewards scheme. Additionally, the school is an accredited rights respecting school. Through their work with UNICEF, staff and pupils explore a wide range of global issues, including the benefits of buying Fairtrade products.

Governance of the school

- Scrutiny of the minutes from governing body meetings demonstrates that governors are curious and eager to better understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They often seek opportunities to attend training or learn from others. For example, all governors have attended recent training to improve their understanding of the school's published outcomes and internal assessment information.
- Governors are increasingly involved in monitoring activities so that they can see for themselves how well the school is doing. Governors have volunteered to immerse themselves more in a particular area of interest to them. Governors often meet with school leaders to discuss provision for pupils with SEND, safeguarding and additional funding, for example. However, governors know that, currently, this is not consistent across the full governing body.
- While governors endeavour to validate the information they receive from leaders, this is not well embedded. Governors are sometimes too accepting of the information that leaders share with them. Subsequently, governors do not hold leaders to account as well as they could.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have developed effective working relationships with a wide range of external agencies to better support pupils' needs. Furthermore, staff know the pupils and their families very well; one parent stated that, 'the staff are very approachable, friendly and helpful. Any queries or concerns that I have about my child are dealt with straight

away.'

- Pupils learn how to stay safe. They demonstrate an appropriate level of maturity when asked about the possible risks that they may face in school or at home. Pupils know how to stay safe online and when crossing roads.
- Leaders make appropriate pre-recruitment checks to ensure that staff are safe to work with pupils.
- The school site is safe and secure. Suitable arrangements are in place to ensure that the shared access to the building does not cause any concern for pupils. For example, pupils and staff from the alternative education provision (The Willows) are unable to access the main school without supervision.
- Child protection or safeguarding referrals are completed swiftly. Staff demonstrate a thorough understanding of procedures where they are concerned about the safety of a pupil.
- Positive behaviour is promoted consistently across the school. One member of staff spoke for a number of others when saying: 'In this school we praise loudly but have a quiet word when needed.'

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment varies across the school. Some teachers do not use pupils' prior assessment information to plan learning activities that match pupils' starting points. This is particularly true for disadvantaged pupils, pupils with SEND and the most able. This can lead to pupils attempting activities that are sometimes too easy or too difficult for them to complete.
- Some teachers do not sufficiently challenge pupils, particularly the most able, to develop their mathematical mastery by solving demanding problems indirectly, creatively or by viewing questions and concepts in a different way.
- Pupils' positive attitudes towards their learning contribute to some pupils with SEND making strong gains in their learning. Staff often provide these pupils with specific one-to-one support or create learning activities that use a variety of resources and technology. However, when this support is withdrawn, for example during an assessment, pupils with SEND do not fare well. This is because many pupils with SEND have become accustomed to intensive levels of support and guidance.
- Some strong teaching exists in the school. In some classes, teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are high. Furthermore, these teachers use incisive questioning to assess what pupils know and can do. Teachers sometimes adapt their approach when it is evident that pupils misunderstand a concept or that they have grasped it quickly. By doing this, pupils make stronger progress over time because they spend less time covering old ground or deliberating how to answer a question.
- Time is used effectively in lessons because teachers and other adults have established effective routines that are well known by pupils. Pupils shift sensibly and swiftly from one activity to the next, ensuring that they use as much of their time in lessons as possible completing learning activities rather than organising them.
- The teaching of reading is improving in key stage 1. Teachers are becoming more

confident in their understanding of the school's chosen phonics scheme due to effective training and support from leaders and external training providers. Teachers and other adults model sounds in phonics accurately and they carefully listen to the sounds pupils make, correcting them if necessary.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- This is a school at the heart of the community. Pupils learn about local history and their elders through their work developing a community garden and links with the Miners' Institute.
- Pupils say that bullying is very rare and that they are confident in teachers' ability to identify and resolve any bullying issues. Inspection evidence confirms that pupils show genuine care for their peers when they are sad, playing on their own or when they trip over and hurt themselves.
- Pupils have a good understanding about health, exercise and eating a balanced diet. The school runs a healthy tuck shop and most younger pupils regularly eat the fruit and vegetables provided by the school. A large number of pupils participate in the school's sports teams and after-school clubs. Furthermore, pupils improve their physical development significantly during social times by taking advantage of the high-quality outdoor resources and play activities.
- Some pupils are not as resilient as others. They do not have well-developed skills or the aptitude to learn from their mistakes or resolve a problem without the help of an adult. Consequently, although most pupils demonstrate excellent attitudes to their learning, some are not making the progress that they should because they lack the confidence to 'have a go'.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Rates of attendance are increasing and persistent absence is decreasing. This is because leaders continue to ensure that improving pupils' attendance remains a top priority. Staff have introduced more attendance rewards this year and parents receive termly reminders of their children's attendance, which is set against school thresholds. Staff monitor pupils' attendance more closely this academic year. By doing so, staff are able to support pupils and their families when rates of attendance decline. Notwithstanding this, there is further work to do to ensure that rates of attendance and persistent absence are similar to those nationally.
- The proportion of pupils who are excluded for a fixed period is very low. This is because the vast majority of pupils behave well, enjoy school and respect their teachers and other staff.
- The very small minority of pupils who sometimes display challenging behaviour are supported effectively. The school works closely with family support workers and other

behaviour specialists to ensure that the root causes of any behavioural issues are identified and supported. This has been successful in improving pupils' behaviour or helping some pupils move to specialist alternative education provision.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics across key stage 2 has been average for the last two years. Furthermore, pupils' attainment highlights a declining trend. Between 2016 and 2018, pupils' combined results in the reading, writing and mathematics assessments at the end of key stage 2 fell by 20% and in 2018 were well below the national average.
- The progress of current pupils varies across the school. The school's own assessment information has been refined this academic year to ensure further accuracy. This, and scrutiny of pupils' workbooks, highlights that pupils with SEND, disadvantaged pupils and the most able make the least progress typically. Over time, only a small number of most-able pupils have achieved standards above those expected for their age.
- English grammar, punctuation and spelling assessment results at the end of Year 6 highlight that pupils do not have a firm understanding in this regard. Pupils' results have been below the national average and declining for the last two years.
- More than one third of disadvantaged pupils across the school are working at standards that are below those expected for their age. Disadvantaged pupils' results in the reading, writing and mathematics assessments at the end of key stage 1 in 2018 were above the national average in writing and mathematics. However, in key stage 2 the achievement of disadvantaged pupils lags still behind that of others nationally.
- Improved monitoring of pupils' attainment and progress through more formal in-school mathematical assessments is ensuring that leaders have an improved understanding of which pupils are doing well and those who need additional support. Pupils who are falling behind are identified swiftly and supported in their learning. However, it is too early to see the full effect of this strategy and a number of pupils continue to work at standards below those expected for their age.
- Stronger teaching in some year groups is contributing to pupils making more progress this academic year, particularly in upper key stage 2. Typically, in these classes, teachers liaise well with teaching assistants so that staff have a thorough understanding of the intended learning outcomes and, most importantly, their role in helping pupils to achieve them. Additionally, some pupils make strong gains in their learning because the teacher models new concepts well, quickly identifying pupils who need swift intervention to stay in touch with their learning.
- Improved phonics teaching in key stage 1 is contributing to pupils making more progress in their early reading skills than previously. Early indications show that a larger proportion of Year 1 pupils are on track to meet the expected standard in the phonics screening check this year when compared to previous cohorts.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- The quality of provision in the early years differs between the Nursery and Reception.

Children get off to a good start in Nursery, developing substantial knowledge and skills that are appropriate for their age. However, children's strong development is not sustained as they progress into and through Reception. Over time, the proportion of children who leave Reception having reached a good level of development has remained consistently below the national average.

- Observations and assessment of children's development in Reception lack the rigour and accuracy required for staff to be able to plan future learning activities that are matched to children's needs. Consequently, some children are not guided to, or supported well in, areas of provision that help to improve their weakest area of learning.
- In Reception, the quality of teaching varies. It is not sufficiently clear what children should be doing in each play area or how the activities that staff arrange improve children's writing, reading, mathematics, communication and language, aspects of learning that many children need additional support with. With only a few months to go until Reception children move up to Year 1, a large proportion of children are unable to write simple sentences which can be read by themselves and others or use their phonic knowledge to decode regular words and read them aloud accurately.
- The leader of the early years has an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in Nursery and Reception. She and her staff have been successful in developing provision in Nursery and Reception over time. Nevertheless, leaders know that further work is required to address the inaccuracies in early years assessment and reduce the variability in the quality of teaching.
- The early years environment has been improved considerably over the last 18 months. Children benefit from the well-organised indoor and outdoor spaces and the considerable number of resources that encourage them to build, make marks, count and investigate. This, and the strong teaching evident in the Nursery, ensures that most children make good early progress, including children with levels of development that are well below those typical for their age when they arrive.
- Staff in the Nursery model the use of language well. They encourage children to use words for purpose. For example, when children were using shapes to build a tower, the teaching assistant asked children to name the shapes or use words to describe the position of the shapes such as 'under' or 'beside'. Additionally, children were challenged further when the teaching assistant asked them if the shapes were 'larger', or 'smaller' than the next. Staff also look for opportunities to develop children's vocabulary and speech that are influenced by their experiences of books. For example, when the tower the children were building suddenly developed into a tower for a princess, the teaching assistant swiftly used the opportunity to begin a conversation relating to stories the children had read that included a princess.
- Provision for two-year-olds is very effective at developing children's personal, social and emotional development. Inspection evidence demonstrates that children quickly make new friends and demonstrate increasing confidence when speaking in unfamiliar situations.
- The welfare requirements are met in the early years. Leaders have a thorough understanding relating to these and other safeguarding requirements, including for two-year-olds.

- Staff reinforce good manners and the importance of friendships and they demonstrate to children how to be patient and share. Relationships across the early years, including in the provision for two-year-olds, are extremely positive. Children know that some words or actions can hurt other people's feelings. Consequently, they are increasingly successful at regulating their own emotions.

School details

Unique reference number	114193
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	10081102

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

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	204
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Claire Copestake
Headteacher	Dan Walton
Telephone number	0191 3731398
Website	www.langleyparkprimaryschool.co.uk
Email address	langleypark@durhamlearning.net
Date of previous inspection	10 July 2018

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and receive support from the pupil premium is higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is lower than the national average.
- Children attend full- and part-time early years provision in the Nursery and Reception.
- The school takes two-year-olds as part of their early years provision.
- The headteacher, deputy headteacher and early years leader are new to the school since the previous section 5 inspection in July 2014.
- Part of the school building is shared with staff belonging to the local authority behaviour team and alternative education provision, The Willows.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited all classes across the school, observing teachers more than once in most instances. Many of the observations in lessons were carried out jointly with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, the special educational needs coordinator, subject leaders, teachers, and members of the governing body, including the chair, and the lead inspector met with the school's educational development partner from the local authority.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work during lessons and with senior leaders in all subjects. In addition, an inspector scrutinised a large sample of learning journals belonging to children in Nursery and Reception.
- An inspector spoke on the telephone with a member of staff from the alternative education provider.
- Inspectors held informal and formal discussions with many pupils and observed interactions during social times.
- Inspectors listened to three groups of pupils read.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school and scrutinised a wide range of evidence, including the school's self-evaluation, analysis of performance information, action plans and evaluations, attendance records, safeguarding files, recruitment checks, headteacher reports and minutes of governors' meetings.
- Inspectors took into account the 72 responses from parents who completed Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. Inspectors also considered the responses from the 16 members of staff and 32 pupils who completed Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

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Her Majesty's Inspector

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