

Hotspur Primary School

Mowbray Street, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Tyne and Wear, NE6 5PA

Inspection dates 12–13 February 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- From starting points that are sometimes well below those typical for their age, pupils make good progress to reach standards at the end of Year 6, which are in line with the national average in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and as such receive additional support, reach standards in line with the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teaching is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge, ask stimulating questions and act quickly to tackle any misunderstandings.
- Pupils acquire knowledge of letters and the sounds they make very quickly because of daily teaching by highly trained staff.
- The school offers a wide range of care and support to vulnerable pupils. Pupils feel safe in school and their behaviour is good.
- The broad and balanced curriculum, which has always celebrated creativity and the performing arts, has recently been enriched further by increased opportunities in sports.
- Leaders at all levels, including the governing body, have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. The Hotspur Achievement Team works tirelessly to improve the standards and progress of the pupils in school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Recently, the standards reached by girls have been lower than those reached by boys in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2.
- The pupils do not have their home reading books changed regularly enough and the most able pupils in Key Stage 2 do not read books with sufficient challenge.
- Marking does not always tell the pupils how to improve their work and, when it does, pupils rarely have the opportunity to act quickly upon the advice given.
- The school's systems for measuring how well children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are doing have been very varied and have provided unreliable information.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 22 lessons or parts of lessons. Three observations were conducted jointly with either the headteacher or deputy headteacher. The inspectors also observed pupils being taught in small groups, attended assemblies, listened to pupils in different year groups reading and observed pupils during breaks and lunchtimes.
- Discussions were held with pupils, the headteacher and deputy headteacher, middle leaders, members of the governing body and the school achievement partner.
- Inspectors looked at a range of evidence including the school’s improvement plan, the school’s data relating to pupils’ progress, the work in pupils’ books and the school’s documentation relating to safeguarding.
- Inspectors also looked at a range of other evidence including displays, the school’s website and evidence representing the school’s wider achievements beyond the classroom.
- The responses to 32 staff questionnaires were considered.
- The inspectors took into account 107 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View). Inspectors also talked with one grandparent, received three letters from parents and analysed the school’s own survey of parents.

Inspection team

Belita Scott, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

James Hannah

Additional Inspector

Deborah Wylie

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a much larger than average primary school.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is larger than average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and for whom English is spoken as an additional language is below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported through school action is above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school manages a breakfast club, an after-school club and a holiday club.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching even further so that more is outstanding by:
 - using the expertise of the very newly appointed Early Years Foundation Stage leader to improve the learning and play opportunities in the Reception classes, so they are as good as those in the Nursery class
 - improving the accuracy of assessment in the Early Years Foundation Stage
 - ensuring that pupils know what they are learning in lessons and how they will know if they have been successful
 - improving the quality of teachers' marking so that all pupils know exactly how to improve their work and are given the opportunity to respond to the advice.
- Increase further the impact of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that girls in Key Stage 2 achieve as well as boys do by making sure the curriculum meets their interests and needs
 - giving the pupils the opportunity to change their reading books more regularly and ensuring that the most able pupils are reading more challenging books.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- The children's skills on entry to the Nursery and Reception classes vary widely year on year, some having skills which are well below those expected for their age. Good routines, strong relationships and a carefully considered learning environment in the Nursery class contribute well to the children's progress, although standards are still below those expected when they leave the Reception class, because children do not make as much progress in their independent play as they do when learning with an adult.
- Standards in Key Stage 1 have risen steadily year on year over a five-year period with a recent rapid increase. By the time pupils reached the end of Year 2 in 2013, they were achieving in line with national averages in writing and mathematics and above average in reading. Progress in reading in Key Stage 1 is a strength of the school due to the school's expertise in the teaching of phonics.
- Standards in Key Stage 2 are in line with the national average in mathematics and reading and slightly below average in writing and, until recently, had been rising year on year. However, girls do not do as well as boys in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils currently in Year 6 are on track to achieve standards that are in line with those expected for their age. They are making good progress because they are benefiting from well-chosen and specific teaching programmes.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress, especially in reading, because of the individual and skilful support which they receive from teachers and teaching assistants.
- School data and national test results show that pupils in receipt of the pupil premium funding, including those who are known to be eligible for free school meals, are making good progress in reading and writing and slightly less progress in mathematics. In 2013, while these pupils attained standards that were in line with the national average, they were two terms behind other pupils in the school in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The most able pupils make good progress. These pupils achieved the higher Level 3 at the end of Key Stage 1 and, in 2013 for the first time, some achieved the highest possible Level 6 at the end of Key Stage 2 in mathematics and writing. Challenging work for the most able was exemplified during the inspection in a Year 3 mathematics lesson on symmetry. Two of the most able pupils worked diligently with the class teacher to reflect irregular shapes on a diagonal mirror line whilst the rest of the pupils in the class worked on their own to reflect regular shapes on a vertical mirror line.
- The school is clearly focused on identifying pupils who are not making enough progress and has introduced a range of methods to help them to catch up. This clearly shows the school's commitment to promoting equal opportunities and tackling discrimination.
- The standards in reading are good across the school. Pupils in Year 1 use the skills they have been taught to read unfamiliar words correctly and by Year 6, they are confident readers who talk about their favourite authors and discuss why those authors may have chosen specific words and phrases.
- However, progress in reading is good, rather than outstanding, because the younger pupils' home reading books are not changed regularly enough and the most able older pupils are not being sufficiently challenged in the material they read to enable them to reach the very highest level at the end of Key Stage 2.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is good. Teachers use their extensive knowledge of subjects to plan interesting activities, ask stimulating questions and quickly tackle any misunderstandings. Pupils are encouraged to talk through their ideas and thoughts and are then able to give reasoned answers.

- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, some of the learning that is led directly by teachers is outstanding and as a result, children make rapid progress. The wide range of interesting equipment in the Nursery class offers rich learning opportunities and interests and involves the very youngest children.
- Key Stage 2 pupils exhibit real musical ability during group singing. Their faces filled with joy as they produced a rich, vibrant and engaging sound in response to the enthusiasm and expertise of the teaching staff leading the session.
- Pupils make good progress in most lessons. They skilfully select equipment and information to help them with tasks. For example, in a Year 5 writing lesson, pupils delved into their magpie reporters' notebooks to find and use sophisticated vocabulary they had collected whilst listening to the class teacher reading a range of Greek myths.
- The school is alive with the teaching of phonics between 9am and 9.30am every morning. Every teaching space is filled with small groups of pupils led by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable adult. As a result, the acquisition of phonic knowledge and early reading skills is a strength of the school.
- The teachers are adept at identifying pupils who need a little extra help in reading, writing and mathematics and provide them with help in small groups to ensure that they make good progress.
- Sometimes in lessons, the pupils are unsure of what they are supposed to be learning and how to judge if they have been successful which slows their progress
- While pupils' work is usually marked, pupils are not always shown how to make their work better and they are not given time to respond to the advice. This results in pupils not making even better progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Good behaviour was evident in lessons and around the school during the inspection. Pupils behave well at lunchtime in the hustle and bustle of the dining room and support each other well whilst playing outside during break times.
- In lessons where pupils were totally involved in their work, their behaviour was outstanding. Sometimes, they take too long to get down to work and do not respond quickly enough to the teachers' reminders about behaviour.
- Pupils are polite and welcoming to adults and are very keen to talk about their school and their work. They develop their social skills well whilst attending the wide range of lunchtime and after-school clubs.
- The school's detailed behaviour records show that behaviour has been good over the last three years and that there have been no exclusions. The needs of the very small minority of pupils who have significant behavioural problems are met well by the dedicated staff in the school.
- Attendance is average. The school works hard to support pupils with low attendance through a range of strategies including a breakfast club, a school counsellor and in-school support from a dedicated mentor. One such pupil's attendance was 84.74% in 2013 and had increased to 96.04% at the time of the inspection.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. There are many opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own safety, for example, children in the Early Years Foundation Stage carry out risk assessments alongside their parents and teachers during regular visits to a woodland environment.
- Pupils feel safe in the school. The youngest children are fully aware of 'stranger danger' and because the school has a well-established system of issuing identification badges to visitors, the children knew they could talk to inspectors.
- Parents appreciate the individual personal support that the school provides. Inspectors were told by one that all professionals on the school staff, from dinner ladies to the headteacher, ooze love, affection and concern for the pupils in their care.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have high aspirations and expectations of pupils and have worked with determination and success to eradicate inadequate teaching in the school.
- They have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development and have developed well-structured plans for improvement, which include measurable targets and dates for completion.
- These plans are put into place and are closely monitored by the Hotspur Achievement Team, which meets regularly and includes governors, senior leaders and middle leaders.
- The leaders for English and mathematics are new to post this year and are being supported well by more experienced staff who led the subjects in previous years.
- Middle leaders, many of whom are new to post, have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. They are given time to check on standards and progress in their subjects and are held accountable by senior leaders, including governors.
- The headteacher and other senior leaders, together with the school achievement partner, check the quality of teaching on a regular basis. Teachers and teaching assistants are given clear feedback on areas for development.
- Staff appraisal systems are well established and individual targets are closely linked to areas identified in the school's development planning.
- The school has implemented an effective system to measure the standards reached and progress made by individual pupils and groups of pupils in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. However, this is not the case in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The school has a broad and balanced curriculum. Historically, there was an emphasis on creativity and the performing arts. Recent developments, following consultation with pupils, parents, staff and governors, have included measures to improve opportunities for sport throughout the school. A parent, in a letter to the inspection team, expressed delight that the school continues to pursue excellence in English and mathematics, whilst providing a stimulating and creative curriculum which enables children to thrive.
- Spiritual, moral social and cultural development is developed well and is evident in the pupils' behaviour and attitudes in and around school. The school fulfils its mission to provide an education based on quality with equality, creativity with rigour and entitlement with diversity. Pupils' cultural development is very strong because of the close links with a number of local enterprises including, for example, the Seven Stories National Centre for Children's Books.
- Funding to support the learning of those pupils eligible for the pupil premium has been used to implement a range of initiatives to raise standards. These include: the employment of a learning and equalities champion, the establishment of an assertive mentoring post in Key Stage 2, the addition of three staff to teach phonics daily, one-to-one reading for pupils in Key Stage 1 and the opportunity of counselling for individuals and groups. The school rightly identified in its review of its own performance that the success of these wide and varied initiatives is not currently being measured against the effect they have on the standards pupils reach and the progress they make. Consequently, leaders cannot identify the methods that work best and this, in turn, does not help them in making future decisions.
- The new primary school sport funding has been used very effectively to contribute to payment for a learning and achievement leader to work throughout the school and develop the range of physical activities on offer to pupils within and beyond the school day.
- The school welcomes the support and advice it receives from the school achievement partner and the local authority. The local authority's safeguarding advisor was very quick to respond to the failure of an electronic door system during the inspection to ensure that the pupils and staff were safe and secure at all times.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have extremely high expectations of the school. They are ambitious for all of the pupils who attend the school and celebrate the diversity in the school's pupil population. They

are knowledgeable about standards in all year groups, give strong support and robust challenge to the headteacher and senior leaders and are well informed about the improvement in the quality of teaching throughout the school, following a number of changes to staffing as a result of the school's actions to eradicate ineffective teaching. Governors have attended training to help them in their roles. They match their considerable expertise to improvement roles throughout the school carefully. The governors meet the statutory requirements for safeguarding, have an effective understanding of finance in relation to the pupil premium and understand the short-term nature of the funding for physical education and sport. Governors ensure that the headteacher's appraisal takes place early in the academic year so that his performance management targets are linked to those of his staff. Governors are well informed about the performance of teachers and their targets are linked to pay rewards.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	108491
Local authority	Newcastle Upon Tyne
Inspection number	431567

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	435
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Patrick Easen
Headteacher	Miles Wallis-Clarke
Date of previous school inspection	19 March 2009
Telephone number	0191 276 2762
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