

Throckley Primary School

Hexham Road, Throckley, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Tyne and Wear, NE15 9DY

Inspection dates

7–8 November 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- The school has improved rapidly since the previous inspection. It provides an outstanding education for all pupils and this includes their personal development as well as their academic achievement.
- Pupils achieve very well and make rapid progress from very low starting points. By the time they leave in Year 6, they reach standards of attainment that are now above average especially in reading and writing. Standards in mathematics, while above average, are not quite as high.
- The quality of teaching is often outstanding and never less than good. Teachers plan interesting lessons which make pupils eager to learn and help them to progress rapidly. However, pupils do not have enough opportunities to use their mathematical skills in other subjects to solve real problems and do not always consolidate their basic mathematical skills before moving on to new skills.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary, both in school and when on visits. They are very proud of their school and are always extremely polite and welcoming.
- Pupils say that bullying is very rare and that they feel very safe in school. Parents and staff agree with this view. Pupils are known and cared for as individuals throughout the school.
- The headteacher and the leadership team, ably supported by an extremely effective governing body, are highly successful. They set themselves the highest of standards and respond rapidly to any apparent weakness, ensuring that the achievement of pupils, the quality of teaching and the behaviour and safety of pupils are now all outstanding.
- Leaders at all levels are highly ambitious and determined to continue to improve teaching and pupils' achievement.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 13 lessons, two of which were joint observations with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- A meeting was held with pupils from Year 6, with the Chair of the Governing Body and other governors, school staff with leadership responsibilities and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of 28 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and 19 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors observed the school at work and looked at a range of documents, including internal and external information relating to pupils' progress, their workbooks and folders, school improvement planning and the school's procedures for gaining an accurate view of its own performance. They also considered reports written by the local authority, documents relating to the management of teachers' performance and safeguarding and child protection documents.

Inspection team

Peter Eeva, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Anne Vernon

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is slightly above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is much larger than average and makes up almost half the school. 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 school meets the government's floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has been through a period of significant change in staffing, including at senior level.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further raise attainment in mathematics by:
 - making sure that all pupils consolidate their basic mathematical skills
 - consistently providing opportunities for all pupils to use their mathematical skills in other subjects and to solve real-life problems.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Children join the school in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge that are very low. They make rapid progress in their knowledge, understanding and skills so that, by the end of Key Stage 2, they reach standards that are above average.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage settle in quickly and get off to an excellent start, as a result of the deeply caring environment, excellent teaching and the detailed knowledge that all the adults have of individual children's needs. As a result, they make very good progress from their very low starting points.
- A programme to develop pupils' reading helps younger ones make a rapid start to learning to read. Year 2 pupils read accurately and can decode new and difficult words with confidence. This very good start is built on as they move through the school so that by the end of Year 6 pupils read very well.
- Pupils write with a lot of imagination and use their developing skills in their topic work and can adapt their writing style to suit a range of audiences and purposes.
- Pupils' mathematical skills and understanding are generally good. However, they do not always consolidate their basic skills before moving on to new skills and so the foundations of mathematical understanding and knowledge are not as secure as they might be. They do not always have the chance to use their skills in other subjects to solve real problems.
- The school's own data shows that, in 2013, pupils throughout the school made excellent progress so that pupils in Year 6 attained standards that were above average in reading, writing and mathematics in the end of year national tests. Their performance in mathematics, while above average, was not as strong as in English.
- The progress and attainment of pupils who are eligible for free school meals and supported by the pupil premium achieve very well. School data shows that there are no gaps in attainment in English between these pupils and others in the school. The small gap in mathematics has closed very rapidly. This is because of the excellent quality of the extra help provided for them, such as learning in smaller groups.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is very closely checked and regularly reviewed. Carefully planned support, which closely matches individual pupil's needs, makes sure that these pupils make progress that is similar to that of others.
- The most able pupils make similar excellent progress to reach standards that are above average, with standards in reading and writing being higher than the standards reached in mathematics.
- Central to the school's work is equality of opportunity and the school is very successful in removing any barriers to learning so that there are no differences in the achievement of different groups of pupils in the school.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- The quality of teaching is often outstanding and never less than good regarding the impact it has on pupils' attainment and progress over time. The school's own records and other evidence gathered during the inspection shows that consistently high quality teaching is the norm.
- Teachers plan very interesting and stimulating lessons, which give pupils opportunities to make rapid progress. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils enthusiastically used their imagination to write detailed descriptions of alien life forms.
- Adults and pupils have created very positive relationships and the well-established classroom routines mean that lessons proceed without interruption and no time is lost for learning. As one pupil said, 'teachers make you really want to learn'.
- Teaching assistants play a very important role in helping some pupils to learn. They have a very detailed knowledge of what individual pupils need in order to learn. They use this information

extremely well and intervene very effectively to help pupils overcome any difficulties which might slow their learning.

- The teaching of English is consistently strong. In a Year 6 lesson, for example, pupils animatedly used a range of different ways to explore whether the captain of the Titanic should have abandoned ship or not in order to write from different peoples' points of view.
- The marking of pupils' work and the feedback given to pupils about how to improve is of an extremely high quality and pupils always respond to the suggestions for improvement.
- Pupils read widely and often, and say that they enjoy reading, both in school and at home. The love of reading is a very obvious thread that runs through all that the school does.
- Teachers have very high expectations of what pupils are capable of and all pupils are challenged to achieve as well as they can and they willingly respond by trying their very hardest.
- In mathematics lessons, some pupils make simple mistakes because their basic skills are not as secure as they should be. They also do not consistently have opportunities to use their mathematical skills in other subjects or to solve real problems and so do not independently select the appropriate mathematical skills to use when not in a mathematics lesson.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils is exemplary both in and out of class and also when on visits. They are always polite and courteous and welcome visitors warmly. Pupils are rightly proud of their school and eager to talk about it.
- Pupils are very enthusiastic learners and throw themselves into all they do. They listen carefully to their teachers and show a genuine passion for learning. As a result, lessons proceed without any interruptions and the school is always calm and orderly.
- Staff have the highest of expectations of pupils' behaviour. All adults set excellent examples for pupils to follow and older pupils provide first-class role models for younger pupils.
- Pupils contribute enthusiastically to all aspects of school life. They willingly take on roles of responsibility such as being peer mentors and they take these responsibilities very seriously and are extremely conscientious in carrying out their duties.
- Pupils feel very safe in school. They say that bullying in any of its forms is very rare. They know how to keep themselves safe, especially when using the internet.
- Attendance is above average and has improved as a result of the school's thorough systems for checking on, and following up, any absences. Pupils are eager to come to school even when not feeling their best.
- Pupils have a wide range of after-school and lunchtime activities and clubs which they appreciate. The school is using some of its Primary School Sport funding to extend these and to make the teaching of physical education more effective. This is having a positive impact on pupils' physical well-being. Pupils enjoy their physical education lessons and participation in sport out of lessons is high.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The inspirational headteacher, supported by leaders at all levels, has skilfully guided the school through a period of staffing turbulence with great determination. Senior leaders know the school very well and provide excellent leadership and management. They, together with the equally effective and determined governing body, and with the support of all the staff, demonstrate a passion and commitment for further improvement with a determination to continue to improve teaching and pupils' achievement still further. They are not complacent and continue to strive for excellence.
- Systems and procedures for checking on pupils' progress throughout the school are highly effective and as a result, pupils who are at risk of falling behind are very quickly identified and given extra help individually or in small groups in order to help them catch up.

- There are rigorous systems for checking on the quality of teaching and learning and these provide accurate information about teachers' performance to make sure that teaching continues to improve. This information is used extremely well to identify and share best practice across all areas and to advise the governing body about teachers' pay awards.
- The curriculum has been successfully developed so that it meets the needs and interests of all the pupils. Boys in particular enjoy topics ranging from Space to the Titanic.
- The development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very important to the school. As a result, pupils' personal development is highly effective and pupils develop into very confident, independent, inquisitive and eager learners who are very well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- Safeguarding and child protection policies and practice meet current requirements.
- The local authority has provided much appreciated support in the past.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is extremely effective and determined and knows the school very well. Governors bring a great deal of experience and a wide range of skills which they use to great effect. If there are any gaps in their skills governors make sure that they receive training to help them carry out their roles. Governors monitor the school's performance rigorously and systematically and ask challenging questions to promote further development. They are highly ambitious for the achievement and welfare of the pupils and make sure that they are very well informed about all aspects of school life, in particular about the quality of teaching and information about pupils' achievement. Governors are familiar with Teachers' Standards and use them to help manage teachers' performance. They oversee the spending of pupil premium funding and are well aware of the very positive impact this is having on pupils' achievement. They are also involved in planning the spending of the Primary School Sport funding and how its impact will be measured.

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	108446
Local authority	Newcastle Upon Tyne
Inspection number	425780

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	232
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Helen Richardson
Headteacher	Julie Stuart
Date of previous school inspection	12 January 2012
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