School report

Seaview Primary School

The Avenue, Deneside, Seaham, County Durham, SR7 8PD

Inspection dates	25–26 February 2015

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The very effective headteacher, ably supported by a recently strengthened leadership team, is highly ambitious and determined to eradicate past underachievement.
- Concerted action has ensured that teaching is good and the quality of learning constantly improving so that all pupils can achieve well.
- The strong governing body is well informed about the quality of learning and holds senior leaders to account in challenging ways.
- Children enter the Nursery class and make a rapid start acquiring early confidence and independence to develop the skills that allow them to play and learn happily together. They make a good start acquiring crucial speaking, listening and number skills.
- Pupils' progress from their below-average starting points in Year 1 is good and accelerating steadily as improved teaching has an increasingly consistent impact over time. This includes for those disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and the very few who speak English as an additional language.
- Classrooms are lively, busy places in which to learn. This encourages often high levels of enjoyment which is evident in pupils' much improved attendance.
- The behaviour of pupils is good and occasionally exemplary; it has further improved since the previous inspection. Pupils are considerate and kind and enjoy good relationships with staff.
- Pupils feel very safe and secure because the school takes exceptional care of them. They are keen to learn and are hard working.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although progress is accelerating in Key Stage 1 and attainment is now starting to rise by the end of Year 2, this has yet to be sustained over time in the results of national tests.
- Occasionally, not enough is demanded of pupils.
- Opportunities are missed to share inspiring practice that exists in school even more widely, to make sure that pupils practise key skills in all subjects and to pose problems and challenges for pupils to solve.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in lessons, including five paired observations carried out with the headteacher. Work scrutiny was also carried out with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. In addition, the inspectors made a number of short visits to lessons and undertook learning walks around the school in order to check the quality of what is provided for pupils.
- The inspectors spoke with pupils and had discussions with the headteacher, middle leaders, staff, governors, the local authority educational development partner and the senior officer responsible for early years.
- Inspectors also examined a range of documents including those related to safeguarding, the school's view of how well it is doing, the monitoring of staff performance, the school's improvement plan and records relating to pupils' progress and behaviour.
- The inspection team took account of the 65 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and of the 19 responses to the inspection questionnaire for staff.

Inspection team

Clive Petts, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Alan Sergison	Additional Inspector
Graeme Clarke	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- A very large majority of the pupils are of White British backgrounds, with very few who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is over twice the national average.
- Currently, there is a much higher than average proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for pupil premium funding. This funding is to support those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The provision in the early years is full time for some children and part time for others.
- The school provides a breakfast club each day for pupils.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are is the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- In September 2014, the senior and middle leadership team was restructured and six new teachers took up their posts.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all teaching is inspiring and thought-provoking to enable pupils to make rapid progress, and reach higher standards, especially in Key Stage 1, by:
  - raising expectations even further to make sure that the knowledge and understanding of pupils of all abilities is continuously challenged and stretched
  - sharing even more widely the inspiring practice that already exists in the school
  - offering more opportunities for pupils to think critically, to enable them to work things out for themselves and make decisions
  - maximising the opportunities that exist in all subjects for pupils to practise and build upon their literacy and numeracy skills.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management **are good**

- The headteacher and the governors have worked tirelessly to eliminate underperformance and raise standards since the previous inspection. Recently strengthened leadership has successfully energised staff into an increasingly effective team. Consequently, teaching has improved considerably and underachievement systematically tackled and eliminated.
- Senior leaders have an accurate view of what the school does well and have clear-cut priorities for those areas that require further improvement. Although the full impact of the actions taken to improve teaching has still to be evidenced, there is no doubt that senior leaders, including governors, are highly committed and relentless in their drive to sustain the improved gains in the outcomes for pupils.
- Routines to check the quality of learning are well established. This includes the checking of assessment information, observations of learning in lessons and the scrutiny of work in books. Leaders and managers, including subject leaders, are increasingly skilful in ensuring that their analysis and interpretation of pupils' progress information is carefully considered and their judgements are accurate.
- Staff performance is managed effectively and ensures no automatic pay progression. Staff training is closely linked to the needs of the school and of individual members of staff. The talents and skills of those newly qualified teachers are extremely well nurtured. Nevertheless, opportunities are sometimes missed to share the most successful practice even more widely.
- Pupils gain much from a varied and interesting curriculum which helps to bring learning to life. Well-thought-out literacy and numeracy policies are developing pupils' skills effectively and at an increasingly faster rate. Themes and topics, such as World War One, link subjects together well to promote curiosity and team working, although now and then opportunities are missed to enable pupils to practise and consolidate essential skills even more in all subjects.
- The school's promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong and reinforces traditional British values, thus preparing pupils well for life in modern Britain. This includes a rich range of visits and visitors, such as to a local beach to provide first-hand experiences matched to their reading of the Michael Morpurgo novel, *The Giant's Necklace*.
- Links with parents are highly positive. Their views are valued and many families benefit from the inclusive way in which the school involves them. Parents appreciate that the school gives all children an equal opportunity to succeed, fosters good relations and does not tolerate discrimination of any kind.
- Primary school physical education and sport funding is used effectively to ensure high pupil participation rates in a wide range of sport, extend staff coaching expertise and provide additional opportunities for pupils to develop individual sporting skills, such as in girls' football and tag rugby.
- Extra funds to support disadvantaged pupils are used successfully; that there is a positive impact on their progress and attainment is checked closely.
- The local authority knows the school very well and provides effective support and training, such as training for governors. It is challenging, holding senior leaders to account in positive ways. This helps to underpin the school's continued drive for further improvement.
- Safeguarding and child protection meet requirements. Procedures are firmly established and much highly effective practice is adopted in the day-to-day management, care and protection of pupils.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The incisively led governing body is well informed and both challenges and supports senior and middle leaders effectively.
  - Governors have a clear view of the quality of teaching because they frequently check the quality of learning in lessons and the work in pupils' books. They have a good grasp of the school's performance information. This includes checking the impact of pupil premium funding.
  - Governors ensure that staff performance management is rigorous and that teachers only receive financial reward if pupils meet their progress and attainment targets. The governors have a firm grasp of the strategic direction of the school and manage financial resources effectively.

The behaviour and safety of pupils **are good**

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. At times, the conduct and attitudes of older pupils are exemplary. This is because the staff provide excellent role models, set high expectations and clear boundaries for their behaviour. Pupils' polite and friendly manner contributes much to the extremely harmonious and positive

climate throughout the school day.

- Pupils are keen to learn and are interested in the activities provided for them. They follow classroom routines particularly well and have a clear understanding of the school's system to manage their behaviour. This includes both the rewards for their positive achievements and the consequences for any inappropriate behaviour.
- At social times, including in the breakfast club at the start of the day, the highly positive school ethos is evident in pupils' considerate and courteous attitudes. There is very little mean or unkind behaviour. Throughout the school there is a strong sense of family, which helps to encourage meaningful friendships. During those few occasions when pupils' concentration wavers, the pace of learning is unimpeded.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils know how to keep safe and are well informed about identifying risk and danger, such as in cyber bullying. In their responses to the online questionnaire, all parents feel that their children are safe and happy in school. Pupils thrive on the responsibilities that they are given, such as when setting up and running a school parliament. This helps pupils to learn to value British democracy and freedom.
- In conversations, pupils demonstrate an awareness of the various forms of bullying they may encounter. They display confidence that, if on the very rare occasion an incident were to occur, staff will resolve any issues promptly and effectively.
- The school has worked hard with both families and specialist agencies to improve attendance. As a result, attendance has improved significantly since the previous inspection and is now average and rising.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good and occasionally inspiring and exciting. Senior leaders have been resolute in their actions to strengthen the quality of teaching, such as in early years. Consequently, improvements are having a decisive impact on accelerating and sustaining the rate of pupils' progress. For example, the skills of pupils when blending letters and sounds together to form words (phonics) have been considerably improved in the Reception class and in Year 1.
- High expectations of what pupils of all backgrounds and starting points can achieve are evident in most lessons. Staff are extremely well informed about the needs of individual pupils. Their clear understanding ensures that tasks and activities are usually well matched to pupils' abilities and needs, although on occasion expectations and the demands made of them are not high enough.
- When pupils' progress is consistently fast and achievement high:
  - the demands made of pupils are high with good opportunities offered for pupils to apply their skills in a wide variety of ways
  - tasks are carefully shaped and adapted to meet the learning needs of each pupil
  - questioning skilfully and frequently checks, tests and reinforces pupils' knowledge and understanding
  - pupils' imagination is stimulated in imaginative ways by knowledgeable staff.
- When progress rates are a little variable and not quite as quick:
  - tasks lack the essential trigger to spark both pupils' imagination and thinking enough
  - activities are not always closely enough tailored to the individual needs of pupils and are sometimes insufficiently challenging
  - opportunities are missed to enable pupils to practise and consolidate their skills, particularly in reading, writing, number and calculation, in all subjects.
- When achievement is high, well-organised activities stretch and constantly deepen understanding. For example, a group of pupils were observed using a range of different grammatical features when improving their sentences to describe their favourite super hero in diary entries. Much imagination is used by staff, successfully hooking and holding the interest of pupils, particularly of boys.
- The progress children in the Reception class and younger pupils make in their early reading and writing is speeding up quickly. This is because the activities adopted to teach letter and sound relationships in order to make sense of words is rigorous, systematic and enjoyable in fun ways.
- Teachers mark work frequently and thoroughly. Pupils are left in no doubt what they have completed well and how they can improve their work. Requests for corrections by the teacher are always completed by pupils. Teaching assistants work well together with teachers to give pupils timely prompts and advice, including for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.

The achievement of pupils is good

- The warm, welcoming school atmosphere ensures that children and pupils of all ages settle quickly and develop positive attitudes to learning. Since September 2014, the rates of progress made by younger pupils in particular have accelerated quickly and consistently as a result of a stronger focus upon raising their achievement.
- In the past, progress in Key Stage 1 has not been fast or consistent enough. Consequently, attainment has been consistently low by the end of Year 2. Much greater demands are now made of pupils of all abilities, including the most able. Pupils are acquiring essential skills, such as in reading and writing, much faster. As a result, attainment is rising and the wide gaps between the disadvantaged pupils and their classmates evident in the past are being narrowed more quickly.
- The school's own progress information, confirmed by inspection evidence and work in pupils' books, shows that attainment for the current Year 2 is on track to be much closer to the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils in Key Stage 2 make consistently good progress because of good teaching, effective classroom support and pupils' eagerness to learn. Current assessment information and work in pupils' books point to average attainment in mathematics and reading, and above-average attainment in writing by the end of the current Year 6. This indicates at least good progress and achievement from where pupils started in Year 3. It represents a big improvement on the below average attainment in mathematics and reading and the broadly average attainment in writing in the 2014 Year 6 national tests.
- The most-able pupils make similar good progress to their classmates, although opportunities are sometimes missed to add further to the level of challenge and ensure that they move on at an even faster rate. The proportion who reached the higher levels in the 2014 tests was in line with the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. The most-able pupils in the current Year 6 are on course to achieve at least equally well.
- Staff accurately identify the requirements of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Most pupils make good progress because they are well supported, although in individual cases progress can be a little variable at times.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress from their starting points in relation to those of other pupils nationally. The school is successfully closing attainment gaps between the disadvantaged and other pupils, both within the school and nationally. In the 2014 national tests at the end of Year 6, disadvantaged pupils attained at least as well as other pupils both within the school and nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. Current Year 6 disadvantaged pupils are on track to attain equally well.
- Reading is taught well, with pupils now quickly catching up from their low starting points. Skills are practised frequently and, increasingly, pupils are reading more fluently and widely. Older pupils are ever more confident and accurate in their understanding of what they are reading and are well informed about a wide range of authors and themes.

The early years provision is good

- Children enter the Nursery class with skills below those typical for their age. A substantial proportion has considerable weaknesses in their speech, language, social and emotional development. Children get off to a flying start, developing essential social and emotional skills, especially acquiring self-control and independence. This continues throughout Nursery and Reception classes and underpins their good progress in all areas of learning. As a result, they are catching up quickly even though their skills are sometimes still below those typical for their age when they start Year 1.
- The happy, vibrant and caring atmosphere ensures that children work and play cheerfully whether outdoors or indoors. All children are kept extremely safe and secure. This includes those with complex needs and those potentially vulnerable.
- The recently strengthened teaching is good and at times imaginative and exciting. Well-established routines encourage children to investigate and explore for themselves. Good and sometimes excellent opportunities are provided for children to practise their speech and language skills, recognise shapes and numbers and learn to measure. This also includes ensuring that specialist support is provided, such as by speech therapists.
- Staff check and with increasing accuracy measure children's skills on entry into the Nursery and the progress they make in their early years development. All areas of learning are being systematically developed in a balanced and effective fashion by an increasingly confident and skilled staff. This ensures children are well prepared for Year 1.

- Parents are positively involved in their children's learning and development. They appreciate the high quality of interaction between staff and their children, and the support and encouragement that they receive.
- Proficient leadership ensures that day-to-day management and organisation of children's learning and welfare are effective. The much firmer emphasis upon nurturing early reading, writing and number skills is paying dividends as the progress that children make in their learning and development is accelerating, enabling them to catch up at a quick rate.

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	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. 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.

School details

Unique reference number	129823
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	449676

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	262
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stephen Turns
Headteacher	Karen Field
Date of previous school inspection	15 March 2010
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