

White Mere Community Primary School

Sherburn Way, Wardley, Gateshead, Tyne and Wear, NE10 8BA

Inspection dates 15–16 October 2014

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

- Pupils' achievement is good and overall the vast majority make good progress from their starting points. Pupils achieve above average standards in reading and writing.
- Most disabled pupils and those with special educational needs usually make progress at similar or better rates to those of their peers.
- The quality of teaching is nearly always good, with examples of outstanding practice. As a result, pupils enjoy learning and produce good quality work.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work very well together to plan activities which enthuse and engage pupils. This is particularly effective in supporting those pupils who are disabled and those with special educational needs.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They are keen to learn and show very positive attitudes to work. This supports their good progress and achievement in the classroom. Pupils say they feel safe in school and show respect and care towards one another.
- Children make a good start in the early years where they settle down readily as a result of highly positive relationships. They enjoy learning and finding things out through first-hand experiences. They achieve well.
- The headteacher and the governing body have ensured that the school has continued to improve since the last inspection. They have raised attainment in writing and phonics (the sounds letters make) and the quality of teaching. All leaders share the same vision for bringing about the best outcomes for pupils' personal development and academic achievement.
- There is a warm and positive atmosphere throughout the school, so that pupils enjoy working in a happy, safe environment.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Achievement and teaching in mathematics is not always as good as it is in reading and writing, because tasks are not always adjusted to extend pupils' learning at the higher levels.
- Not all parents feel fully informed or supportive of the work of the school.
- Not all leaders are fully involved in checking the progress pupils make across the school.
- Teachers have too few opportunities to observe and learn from the outstanding practice in the school.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors held meetings with staff, groups of pupils and members of the governing body. Discussions were also held with representatives from the local authority.
- The 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. The inspectors observed pupils’ behaviour during break times and lunchtimes.
- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 16 lessons and parts of lessons taught by teachers and support staff. Two lesson observations were undertaken jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspectors took into account the 67 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). They also took into account the views of 18 other parents informally at the start of the school day.

Inspection team

Irene Cochrane, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jim Hall

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium is additional government funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is lower than that found nationally.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in English and mathematics.
- Since the previous inspection there have been some changes in staffing, including a temporary appointment to cover maternity leave.
- White Mere childcare is a privately run nursery located on the site, but is not managed by the governing body. It is subject to a separate inspection. Reports for this setting may be read on the Ofsted website.
- A private provider runs a breakfast club from 7.30am until 9.00am and after-school care from 3.15pm until 6.00pm. This is subject to a separate inspection. Reports may be read on the Ofsted website.
- The school has received the Silver Eco-School Award.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to improve the quality of teaching to that of the best by:
 - sharing the outstanding practice that exists in school
 - ensuring that work for mathematics is planned at the correct level of challenge for all groups of pupils and marking and feedback to pupils is as good as it is in writing.
- Improve further the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring:
 - that all leaders have access to, and understand how to use, systems to track pupils' progress so that all staff can contribute to evaluating the school's actions to bring about improved progress for pupils
 - that the recent improvements to communicate with parents are fully developed and used to help parents become fully supportive of school actions.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher knows the strengths of the school and key priorities for further development. In partnership with senior leaders and governors she has improved the quality of teaching and raised standards over three years since the last inspection. Communication with parents has more recently further improved through newsletters and the school's updated website.
- Early years provision has improved, which is reflected in the good outcomes children achieve.
- A calm, orderly and very caring environment is evident, which enables good learning to take place and enables a young and enthusiastic staff to give of their best. The changes to staffing throughout the school have been managed well.
- Senior leaders play an increasing role in monitoring the quality of teaching and looking at pupils' work. For example, the English leader regularly checks on the quality of work in pupils' books and is involved in coaching new members of staff to achieve the best they can. There have been several changes to the senior leadership team and new members have readily accepted training opportunities to improve their skills. Although there is a strong team approach and commitment for further improvement, not all leaders and teachers are familiar with or make use of the school's existing tracking systems to evaluate the progress pupils make.
- The headteacher regularly checks on the quality of teaching. She understands what constitutes good teaching and judges it accurately. However, teaching remains good rather than outstanding, because the school is not yet making best use of the outstanding practice that exists in school and mathematics is not taught as well as English.
- Leaders use assessment information to keep a careful watch on pupils' progress in all subjects. If any pupils are at risk of falling behind, they are picked up quickly and given extra help, so they can catch up. This demonstrates the school's good commitment to promoting equal opportunities.
- In preparation for the planned changes to the primary curriculum this year, much work has already begun and training attended. As a result, the current curriculum is well planned and has been reviewed to take into account pupils' interests such as the historical topics they enjoy. The curriculum is enriched with a range of activities, visits and visitors to the school, which pupils say they enjoy. They also appreciate finding out about others less fortunate than themselves and fundraising, for example supporting 'Children in Need'.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social, cultural and moral development is good. Pupils now play an increasing role within the community through fund-raising events and projects such as litter-picking in the local park and neighbourhood. The range of pupils' high quality work displayed around the school reflects the on-going priority given by leaders to international links and topics shared in assembly.
- The school has used its allocation of sport funding monies effectively to increase pupils' access to a wider range of sports activities and improve their skills. In addition, training opportunities have been provided for staff to develop their own skills through observing coaches deliver lessons. This is contributing well to pupils' physical development and well-being. Providing opportunities for all pupils demonstrates the school's commitment to ensuring equality for all.
- Approximately half the number of parents who made their views known through the on-line questionnaire, (Parent View) were not in full agreement that the school was well managed. However, the school's new systems of communication with parents are recent. The vast majority of parents spoken to during the inspection were of a different opinion and in full support of the headteacher, appreciating the care provided. One parent stated 'they do so much that they enjoy – they learn without realising they are being educated'. They felt that communication with parents had improved.
- The school has effective systems to ensure that safeguarding requirements are met and are effective. Parents and pupils are clear that the school looks after them.
- The school welcomes the support it receives from the local authority and advice received from its school improvement partner. This has helped in the introduction of curriculum and assessment changes, safeguarding and joint lesson observations.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors who spoke to inspectors have an accurate view of the quality of teaching and how it is linked to staff salaries. They have been instrumental in eliminating weak teaching. They have increased their involvement in monitoring the quality of teaching through lesson observations. They are aware of the impact teaching has on the progress pupils make and how it is linked to teachers' performance and with pay. The Chair of the Governing Body is very knowledgeable about the work of the school and is supported by other governors who have clear areas of responsibility, which they check through regular

meetings. Governors are working towards Governor Mark accreditation, acknowledging the commitment to further improve and evaluate their own effectiveness as a governing body.

- They undertake statutory duties, making sure safeguarding meets requirements so that pupils and staff are safe. The finance committee ensures that financial resources made available to the school are managed. They keep an eye on how pupil premium funding and primary school sport funding are spent. They ensure that they have a good impact on the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and all pupils' health and well-being.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Inspection evidence and the school's own records show that behaviour is good in lessons, around school and in the dinner hall. Pupils typically work hard, respond readily to instructions and try to do their best. As a result, learning in classrooms is rarely interrupted by incidents of inappropriate behaviour. As one pupil said, 'we never don't do what the teacher says'.
- Pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development encourages considerate and caring relationships. This is demonstrated by the very strong friendships between all pupils. In addition, assemblies are used effectively to promote good behaviour, manners and awareness of others.
- Parents who completed the online questionnaire, (Parent View), hold the view that behaviour in school is good and that their children are safe and happy at school. All parents spoken to informally at the start of the school day echoed this view.
- Pupils show respect towards one another and are extremely polite to adults. They are keen to talk about their work and their school. Pupils show maturity and enjoy taking on responsibilities such as playground buddies and school councillors. They develop social skills through the many opportunities to learn together in the classroom, school clubs and sports activities.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel safe and well looked after at school. They have very positive relationships with each other and the adults around them.
- Pupils understand different forms of bullying and for example, the importance of e-safety, both when at school and at home. In conversations with pupils they report that, 'if anything does happen, teachers deal with it straight away'.
- Pupils are actively engaged in their own health and safety group which helps them to check that the school is helping to keep pupils and staff as safe as possible.
- Attendance is average. The school has clear systems to check attendance and encourage parents and pupils to see the importance of coming to school. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are keen to attend and arrive on time. There have been no permanent exclusions over the past three years.

The quality of teaching is good

- School records, evidence in pupils' work and inspection evidence show that teaching is good over time. Writing and reading are taught well across the school, evidenced in the good or better progress that pupils make. However, teaching in mathematics, although improving, is less effective, because lessons do not always provide enough challenge to extend pupils' learning.
- The quality of marking has improved since the previous inspection and a more consistent approach is evident across the school, particularly so in writing. Although work is marked regularly in mathematics and work in books show a range of opportunities for pupils to develop their skills, marking is not as consistent and pupils are not always as clear about the next steps they have to take to improve their work. Pupils take a pride in their work and as a result, books are generally well presented.
- Classrooms are well organised and provide a stimulating environment for pupils to extend their learning. Displays help to support pupils' learning in the basic skills and promote independent learning.
- During inspection, lessons got off to a prompt start because teachers have high expectations. Learning is effective and fun because teachers plan activities that encourage pupils to think. They enjoy working in pairs and are confident in sharing their learning with others, because they are familiar with routines and relationships are good.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to work and show perseverance in completing their activities. An example of this was evident when a pupil in Year 6 stated that they would rather stick at something challenging for

over an hour, in order to get it right.

- Changes in staffing have been well managed by leaders and coaching is provided by more experienced staff, where necessary. Staff appreciate this support and respond readily to the opportunities provided because they want to improve their skills and improve outcomes for pupils.
- Pupils' love of reading is evident across the school. The carefully planned teaching of letters and sounds that they make has had a positive impact in accelerating progress and impacted upon the good progress made in writing over time.
- Teaching assistants share teachers' high expectations for the progress of all pupils. Staff work closely together to ensure that extra sessions are planned for pupils who need extra help with their work. During the inspection, sessions observed support the view that pupils made good progress as a result of sharply focused and well-matched activities and high expectations. Pupils enjoyed participating.
- Information about pupils' progress is collected regularly, but is not used consistently well to ensure that work is always well matched for all pupils, particularly in mathematics.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' achievement is good. Inspection evidence confirms that current school data show that all groups, including disadvantaged pupils, are making good progress overall from a range of different starting points across the school.
- The 2013 national data reflected a three-year trend of improvement in attainment in reading and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 to slightly above average attainment. Writing had improved in 2012, but saw a slight decline in 2013. Disadvantaged pupils did less well than their peers by approximately two terms, but were similar to those seen nationally. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs generally attained levels above those of similar groups nationally.
- At the end of Key Stage 2 in 2013, attainment was significantly above average in reading, writing and grammar, punctuation and spelling and average in mathematics. There has been a three-year trend of improvement in writing.
- In 2013, disadvantaged pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 attained a level similar to that of all pupils nationally in reading and writing, but were approximately three terms behind in mathematics. In comparison to other pupils in the school, their attainment was approximately five terms behind in both mathematics and writing and three and a half terms behind in reading.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs attained above average standards compared to those seen nationally overall. Progress was strongest in writing and reading, with fewer pupils making better than expected progress in mathematics.
- Unpublished data for 2014 indicate that attainment has dipped at Key Stage 1 in all subjects attributed by the school to the much lower starting points. Fewer pupils attained the higher levels and progress was not as strong in mathematics for this year group. Leaders have swiftly implemented intervention and support and as a result, progress is accelerating. At Key Stage 2, unpublished data show a dip in attainment in all subjects to average outcomes. This is attributed to pupils leaving and joining the cohort during Year 6, impacting on outcomes. An improvement has been seen in the proportion of pupils making better than expected progress in all subjects compared to the previous year.
- The most-able pupils are now challenged to aim high. The most-able pupils currently in Year 6 and across the school have been identified and work is targeted to help them attain standards that are above or well above expectations for their age. Good support from teachers and teaching assistants helps them to make the best progress and involve them closely in understanding what they need to do to reach their end-of-year expectations.
- The school is proud of the above average standards achieved by Year 1 pupils in the phonics screening test, which tests pupils' ability to link letters to sounds. This is as a result of daily focused sessions in supporting pupils to recognise the sounds that letters make. Inspection evidence shows that pupils were keen to read and showed resilience in their ability to tackle new words successfully.

The early years provision is good

- Children generally enter the early years at levels that are broadly typical for their age. However, there are variations and more recently their skills are lower in their personal, social and emotional development and physical development. Good teaching helps children make good progress in the early years provision. As

a result, more children than in the past are exceeding the expectations for their age and have a good level of development when they enter Year 1.

- Children quickly settle into the Reception class and become confident in their surroundings. They understand daily routines well and are keen to take part in the interesting activities planned and build well on previous learning. They form good relationships with their teacher and other adults who work closely with them to develop their personal, social and emotional skills. As a result, adults know the children very well and relationships are a key strength in ensuring that individual needs are met well.
- The classroom and outdoor areas are organised well and resources are carefully chosen to match children's interests. Children are clear about what they are going to learn and know what is expected of them. As a result, they are eager to learn and no time is wasted. Their activities are recorded in learning journals to share with parents.
- There is a strong emphasis on activities to promote the core skills of language and mathematics through interesting and stimulating practical activities, which the children enjoy. Daily teaching of the sounds that letters make and attention to the correct formation of letters enables children to make good progress in their word-building and early writing skills. Good opportunities are given to children to share their skills with others, for example during the inspection children were observed enthusiastically writing the sounds they recognised on the whiteboard.
- Children with special educational needs are identified early and receive the extra help they need to settle quickly, gain in confidence and participate in everything their friends enjoy. Expectations are high for all children.
- The leadership and management of the early years provision is good. The enthusiastic and effective early years leader shows a good understanding of the needs of the children in her care. She has been instrumental in working closely with the recently operating White Mere Childcare on site providing nursery provision. There are clear procedures to assess children's skills and progress and to further involve parents in their children's learning. Activities build firmly around their interests and the next steps in their learning. As a result, children are well prepared for learning in Key Stage 1.

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	108362
Local authority	Gateshead
Inspection number	449233

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	159
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alan Davies
Headteacher	Gail Howe
Date of previous school inspection	17 January 2011
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