

# Seghill First School

## Inspection report

---

|                                |                    |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 122225             |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | Northumberland     |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 380428             |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>        | 18–19 January 2012 |
| <b>Lead inspector</b>          | David Shearsmith   |

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

---

|  |                                     |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary                             |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Community                           |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 3–9                                 |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed                               |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 116                                 |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body                  |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Lesley Laws                         |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Tracey Chappell                     |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 7 May 2009                          |
| <b>School address</b>                      | Seghill<br>Cramlington<br>NE23 7SB  |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 0191 2370419                        |
| <b>Fax number</b>                          | 0191 2373518                        |
| <b>Email address</b>                       | admin@seghill.northumberland.sch.uk |

---



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
[enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)



© Crown copyright 2012

---

## Introduction

Inspection team

David Shearsmith

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Twelve lessons and five parts of lessons were observed and all five teachers were seen teaching. Two of these lessons were carried out jointly with the inspector and the headteacher. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. The inspector also took into account the responses to the on-line parent questionnaire (Parent View) when planning the inspection. The inspector observed the school's work and looked at the plans for improvement, assessment information, lesson plans, the school's monitoring information, and school policies. Twenty-eight questionnaires from parents and carers, and questionnaires from pupils and staff were analysed and taken into account.

## Information about the school

The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average. The proportion of pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs is average, as is the percentage with a statement of special educational needs. The proportion of pupils entering or leaving the school other than at the usual time is in line with the national average for primary schools. The school is not subject to government floor standards.

Since the last inspection the school has experienced a number of staffing changes and restructuring, including the appointment of a deputy headteacher to further support the school's leadership. The school's Nursery and Reception classes are part of an Early Years Foundation Stage Unit. There is a Sure Start centre on site which is inspected separately. Years 1 and 2 are taught in separate classes and Years 3 and 4 are taught together. The school has achieved the following awards: Healthy Schools status; and Sports Active Mark.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate**  
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

|                                       |          |
|---------------------------------------|----------|
| <b>Overall Effectiveness</b>          | <b>3</b> |
| <b>Achievement of pupils</b>          | <b>3</b> |
| <b>Quality of teaching</b>            | <b>3</b> |
| <b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b> | <b>2</b> |
| <b>Leadership and management</b>      | <b>3</b> |

## Key Findings

- This is a satisfactory and improving school. It is well led by the headteacher who has put into place a range of strategies to raise standards.
- Achievement is satisfactory overall and by the end of Year 4, most pupils make satisfactory progress and reach expected levels for their age. Standards of reading at the age of six and overall standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are in line with the national average.
- Progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good giving pupils a good start to their time in school, from a starting point that is broadly typical for children of their age, but with some weaknesses in their literacy skills.
- Teaching is satisfactory. Observations of lessons confirmed that some teaching is more effective at enabling pupils to learn. In these lessons, there was good pace, the pitch of learning was just right and teaching assistants were well deployed. Expectations were higher and pupils were appropriately challenged to make good progress. The school is taking action to strengthen the quality of teaching, but there is still some way to go before it is consistently good.
- Pupils behave well in lessons. They also behave sensibly around the school. The few incidents of inappropriate behaviour are managed well. The school's behaviour strategy is well understood and works successfully to ensure pupils behave well the majority of the time.
- The headteacher works closely with the recently appointed deputy headteacher to raise standards and improve the school's overall effectiveness. There is also a clear understanding by all staff of what needs to be done and appropriate improvement priorities are being set, although members of the governing body are not always actively engaged in this process. Leadership responsibilities have also been distributed more equitably, to extend the involvement of all staff.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory, and where leadership and management is no better than satisfactory, may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment so that it exceeds the national average by:
  - ensuring pupils make consistently good progress each year
  - improving handwriting to ensure pupils can make better progress in their writing.
- Increase the proportion of good quality teaching by:
  - quickening the pace of learning, in order to maintain pupils' concentration
  - making better use of assessment information to promote pupils' progress in lessons
  - using teaching assistants' time in some lessons more productively to ensure they are actively engaged in supporting pupils' learning throughout lessons
  - ensuring pupils know how to improve their own work so they are more successful in making better progress
  - having higher expectations and challenging pupils to make better progress.
- Improve the effectiveness of the school's leadership by:
  - ensuring all leaders focus more closely on holding teachers and support staff to account for pupils' progress and overall achievement
  - improving the governing body's ability to act strategically in driving improvement.

## Main Report

### Achievement of pupils

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Most pupils make satisfactory progress in lessons and show good attitudes to learning. Behaviour is usually good, but occasionally the pace of the lesson drops and some pupils lose focus, which slows learning. This is one of the reasons why the rate at which pupils learn varies between classes and between year groups. As a consequence, pupils make inconsistent progress as they move through the school. By the end of Year 4, pupils reach age-related expectations in reading, writing and mathematics. Girls tend to slightly outperform boys in writing. The attainment of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is better than for similar pupils nationally. These pupils receive appropriate levels of support, and their individual learning needs are usually well met. Changes being introduced are showing signs of having a positive impact particularly in supporting pupils' progress. Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 is improving. It is now broadly in line with the national average, and higher than for previous cohorts. Similarly, the number of Year 4 pupils working at higher than age-related expectations is increasing.

The Early Years Foundation Stage provides a bright and stimulating learning environment that captures pupils' interest and imagination and helps them to make good progress, although some still have weaknesses in their overall literacy skills by the end of Reception. The school's assessment data shows that the vast majority of children make satisfactory progress from Year 1 to Year 4 and that progress in literacy skills are improving, particularly reading due to regular phonics teaching. By the age of six, most pupils' attainment in

reading is at the expected level and attainment by the end of Year 2 is broadly in line with the national average and improving. Similarly, by the time pupils leave school at the end of Year 4, attainment in reading is in line with age-related expectations and improving. Parents and carers are happy with their children's experiences in school and feel that they are generally making good progress and that the school is improving.

## **Quality of teaching**

The quality of teaching varies across the school. The best lessons are planned carefully, often with differing levels of challenge. In those lessons where pupils learn most, there is a purposeful working environment with pupils engaged actively in a range of tasks that are matched accurately to individual needs. This was particularly evident in a Year 2 English lesson where pupils were given differing levels of guidance and prompts to help them write speech bubbles. Teachers often use questions well to gauge pupils' level of understanding although the pace of learning and level of challenge is not always sufficient to ensure good progress. Similarly, teaching assistants sometimes make an important contribution to the lesson's effectiveness. In a Year 3/4 lesson, pupils working in groups were supported well in writing paragraphs about a creature from a rainforest. On other occasions, teachers do not deploy support staff effectively throughout the lesson, which reduces the time they are usefully engaged in working with pupils. Teachers generally assess and mark pupils' work regularly although expectations are not always high enough and handwriting often limits pupils' progress. Praise is used to encourage pupils and guidance given as to how the work could be improved but this is not consistent and pupils are not often involved in reviewing and assessing their own work.

Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good with a strong focus on the basic skills; staff also provide a stimulating environment to promote children's independent learning. The outdoor area ensures children experience a range of practical activities; however, more needs to be done to ensure more open access and a greater level of challenge.

The school's curriculum is satisfactory and improving as it meets the needs of most pupils. Whole school themes such as the rainforest stimulate and inspire pupils to learn, contributing to pupils' understanding of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues. The school has a strong focus in this area and, as a result, parents and carers feel that pupils are well cared for and that they are provided with a range of experiences that help them to learn both in and out of school.

## **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupils enjoy school and have good attitudes to learning. They have a good understanding of right and wrong as well as a natural curiosity about the world around them and bring this to bear as they learn and play. They are enthusiastic learners and have benefited from the different cultural experiences and opportunities provided by the school. They are well cared for and pupils' well-being is a high priority. Pupils are confident that any incidents of bullying or misbehaviour by one or two individuals that do arise are resolved successfully. Parents and carers also feel that behaviour is generally good as the school has good systems in place to support behaviour. Behaviour was observed both in and out of lessons and any concerns were explored. Inspection evidence indicates that behaviour is typically good and is well managed by the school's effective systems. Attendance is satisfactory and improving due to the school's drive to ensure all pupils attend well, through a range of positive strategies to promote attendance and punctuality. Teamwork and collaborative working are

encouraged throughout the school, which has helped pupils develop useful life skills. Pupils often work and play together well, showing consideration and compassion for each other. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe in a range of contexts and parents and carers feel that the school is safe and secure.

## **Leadership and management**

The headteacher is working closely with the new deputy headteacher and other leaders to raise standards and improve the quality of teaching and learning. The headteacher has accurately identified the school's strengths and areas needing improvement. The developments that have already taken place are encouraging further effort and creating a momentum for driving change, through pupil-progress meetings and rigorous monitoring and evaluation. There has not always been a sufficient focus on assessing progress during lesson observations or analysing pupils' work. There is a consensus that the quality of teaching needs to improve and appropriate professional development is having a positive effect. Actions already taken are showing signs of making a positive difference and delivering better pupil outcomes through the school's tracking system. The careful monitoring of pupils' progress and attainment are helping to promote equal opportunities. This is because the school is now better informed about the performance of different groups and is well placed to address any gaps in attainment that are identified. These improvements show that the school's current capacity to improve is satisfactory.

The senior leadership team is relatively new and responsibilities have been delegated to support the school's drive for improvement. Similarly, the role of subject leaders has been distributed to enable staff to work more effectively in teams. This has not had sufficient time to have an impact on raising standards. The school's curriculum meets most pupils' needs and is satisfactory overall; however, it promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well, although further work needs to take place to develop pupils' understanding of Britain as a diverse society. The governing body is taking an increasingly active role in the school's development. They are provided with comprehensive information, via the headteacher's reports, about the changes taking place. As yet, they are not fully demonstrating that they challenge the school's leaders by holding them to account. Safeguarding procedures are good as they meet all the current government requirements and are well implemented by staff and the governing body.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

| Grade   | Judgement    | Description  |
|---------|--------------|--|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding  | These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.  |
| Grade 2 | Good         | These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.  |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory | These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.  |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate   | These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves. |

### Overall effectiveness of schools

| Type of school       | Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools) |      |              |            |
|----------------------|---|------|--------------|------------|
|                      | Outstanding   | Good | Satisfactory | Inadequate |
| Nursery schools      | 46  | 46   | 8            | 0          |
| Primary schools      | 8   | 47   | 40           | 5          |
| Secondary schools    | 14  | 38   | 40           | 8          |
| Special schools      | 28  | 48   | 20           | 4          |
| Pupil referral units | 15  | 50   | 29           | 5          |
| All schools          | 11  | 46   | 38           | 6          |

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

---

## Common terminology used by inspectors

|                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| Achievement:               | the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.   |
| Attainment:                | the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.  |
| Behaviour                  | how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.   |
| Capacity to improve:       | the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.                    |
| Leadership and management: | the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.                            |
| Learning:                  | how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.  |
| Overall effectiveness:     | inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.  |
| Progress:                  | the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started. |
| Safety                     | how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.             |

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



20 January 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Seghill First School, Cramlington, NE23 7SB**

You may remember that I recently inspected your school, to see how well you are being helped to learn. I am writing to thank you for being so friendly and helpful. I thought you would like to know what I found out. You go to a satisfactory school that is doing a number of things well.

- Most of you enjoy going to school and learning new things.
- Teaching is satisfactory and some is good.
- Most of you say that behaviour is good and that the school deals well with any incidents of bullying.
- You get good support with learning to read.
- The headteacher and staff take good care of you and are doing well at improving the school.

Your teachers know that you can make even more progress and attain higher standards. Therefore, I have asked them to help you to make good progress in every class and to make sure that you are busier and more active when you are learning in lessons. I have asked your teachers to think how the teaching assistants can help you even more than they do now. You also need to be more involved in assessing your own learning to improve your own progress. In addition, I have asked them to challenge you to work harder and to expect more of you, including improving your handwriting. I have also asked the school's leaders and the governing body to plan even more carefully how your school can be even better. Remember, you can help to play a part by working hard and always doing your best. I wish you the very best for your future at Seghill First School.

Yours sincerely

David Shearsmith  
Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone **0300 123 4234**, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).