

Silverdale School

Langdale Gardens, Howdon, Wallsend, Tyne and Wear, NE28 0HG

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		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Many pupils join the school partway through their primary or secondary school education with previous difficulties in attendance, conduct and attitude. However, staff are united in their work to help them catch up well with their learning and to mature.
- Pupils' achievements are usually good and for some outstanding. In mathematics, reading, art and design pupils' achievements are consistently strong.
- The outstanding curriculum contributes significantly to the achievements made by pupils. There are tremendous opportunities and experiences, which help to improve pupils' behaviour and develop them spiritually, morally, socially and culturally exceptionally well.
- Teaching is usually good and some is outstanding. Staff know pupils very well and use a range of strategies to ensure they learn in the best way for them.
- Parents are delighted with how their children settle and develop well.
- Behaviour has improved significantly since the last inspection. Behaviour and safety are excellent. The school has a very strong commitment to developing the social and behavioural needs of every pupil.
- Despite some instability in staffing, the school has maintained a good standard of education for its pupils. This is because the highly experienced and committed headteacher and equally effective senior leadership team continually improve pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is some inconsistency in teaching across subjects and key stages.
- Progress in writing is not as strong as other subjects, especially in Key Stage 2 and for those pupils who are less-able.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed 12 lessons. Three of these lessons were observed jointly with different members of the senior leadership team. Inspectors also made a number of other short visits to classrooms and other areas of learning.
- Discussions were held with students, a representative of the local authority, the Chair of the Governing Body, the school improvement partner and the leadership team.
- There were insufficient responses from parents to the online questionnaire (Parent View) to provide an analysis from this source. The team considered the school's recent parental survey and additional sources of parents' views held by the school. There were 20 responses to the staff questionnaire which were also considered.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work in lessons and in their work books, together with a range of school documents. These included information on keeping pupils safe, the progress pupils make, school improvement and self-evaluation documentation.

Inspection team

Michele Crichton, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Rosemary Eaton

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Silverdale School is a Foundation Trust Special school within the North Tyneside Learning Trust.
- The school provides for pupils in Key Stages 2, 3 and 4 with emotional, social and behavioural difficulties from across the borough.
- Most pupils have experienced significant disruption in their education prior to joining the school.
- Since the last inspection, there has been a significant increase in the numbers of pupils attending the school.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is significantly above 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.
- Some pupils have additional needs relating to autistic spectrum disorders and specific and global learning needs.
- The vast majority of pupils have a statement of special educational need. Currently there are also seven students placed at Silverdale who are undergoing assessment regarding their emotional, social and behavioural difficulties.
- Norham construction, Palmersville Training and The Barn Joinery Ltd offer alternative provision for students.
- Most pupils are White British.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the quality of teaching is consistently good or better by:
 - ensuring staff have the skills and knowledge to promote at least good learning to meet the range of pupils' abilities within a class
 - sharing the good practice that already exists within the school.
- Improve the quality of writing throughout the school, especially at Key Stage 2 and for less-able pupils by:
 - providing pupils with more opportunities to write at greater length
 - providing a better balance between the amount of writing that students do and how much they are required to read
 - ensuring pupils more regularly practise their writing skills across all subjects.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- On entry to Silverdale, pupils' attainment is frequently low and they are regularly working below national expectations. This is because of much disruption to their education from previous poor behaviour, attendance and attitudes to learning.
- The vast majority of pupils make good progress over time given their differing starting points and additional learning needs. This is because there is a strong focus on addressing their needs from the moment they enter the school.
- The most able pupils are sensitively and continually supported to ensure their abilities are fostered in-line with their own self-confidence and attitudes to learning, which are frequently fragile and take time to strengthen.
- Progress is variable for some pupils in Key Stage 2 and for a small minority of students in Key Stage 3. It can take pupils who join the school at these key stages some time to settle into the consistent behaviour routines and meet the high expectations staff have of learning and behaviour.
- Many pupils have poor literacy and numeracy skills, but the school's focused initiatives are developing well the range of skills pupils need to be numerate and to read, and to a lesser extent to write, fluently. This is very effective for mathematics and reading but improvements in their writing are slower, especially at Key Stage 2 and for the less able pupils.
- By Key Stage 4, and for most in Key Stage 3, students' achievements are consistently good and for some they are outstanding. The longer that pupils are in the school the better their development
- Last year from starting points all Key Stage 4 students gained qualifications at GCSE level at B to G grade or achieved level 1 or 2 in vocational qualifications. All students who have left in the last two years have remained in further education, employment or training.
- The school has a strong commitment to equal opportunities. The progress and achievements of every individual pupil is tracked as well as different pupil groups such as those eligible for the pupil premium. This ensures all achieve equally well.
- All pupils supported by the pupil premium, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, achieve as well as their peers and make at least expected progress in mathematics and English, and increasing numbers are making better progress.
- Students who access any alternative provision are also closely monitored, which confirms they also make at least good progress or better from individual starting points.
- The primary sports funding enables Key Stage 2 pupils to receive expert tuition from specialist sport staff and access a wider variety of sports beyond the school site. For example, there are now more swimming sessions, horse riding, scooters and BMX bike riding. The school checks on the effectiveness in improving the health and well-being of pupils, including their fitness levels, to ensure there are clear benefits.
- The Year 7 'catch up' funding is used to employ extra staff to support pupils' development in reading. This has worked very well. Very recently, support to develop writing has been introduced but there has been insufficient time to see its full impact.

The quality of teaching is good

- Most teaching is good, some is outstanding but some also requires improvement.
- Where pupils make at least consistently good progress, teachers use their good subject knowledge and skilful behaviour management techniques to ensure that pupils are interested and involved in their learning. Mathematics and art and design studies are particularly well taught. Additionally, opportunities are taken to link together subjects, such as reading in a mathematics lesson, which makes learning more meaningful.

- Teachers have high expectations of pupils in lessons for their academic performance and conduct. Excellent progress is made because staff and pupils have known each other overtime, relationships are solid and all appreciate the intense need to catch-up on learning that has been previously lost.
- Pupils relate how well their reading and mathematics skills have developed at the school.
- In the few instances where teaching requires improvement, it is because of a combination of staff and pupils who are both relatively new to the school or teachers who are not teaching their specialist subject. At times, worksheets are used for writing activities, which challenge pupils too little. This hampers their good progress in writing, as does the limited opportunity they have to practise their writing skills in a range of subjects and the imbalance between the time they have for reading and writing.
- The vast majority of additional adults very effectively support pupils' learning and behaviour in various ways throughout the school. They are always consistent in the way in which they manage students' behaviour, which is of the highest quality, but there is sometimes variability in their skills to help to develop students' learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. For example, in an outstanding physical education lesson pupils worked enthusiastically as a team: the class of boys knew precisely what they had to do to be successful, were critical of their own performance and strived to improve the targets they had set themselves even further.
- A wide range of documentary evidence and inspection observations about behaviour and its management overtime, confirm that both pupils' behaviour and safety is outstanding.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Documentation regarding pupils' safety is very clear, simple and systematically followed.
- There is diligence and extensive attention at every staff level and key stage to secure only the best for pupils' well-being and safety. For example, the school has dedicated link workers at each key stage who work with parents, health and social care professionals and pupils. Consequently, staff's understanding and knowledge of information is consistent and everyone works together to the benefit of the pupil.
- At the end of every day, staff meetings are held to discuss every pupil and the next actions that might be needed. This could range from home visits to discuss potential changes to medication levels or phone calls home to recount the successes of the day.
- There are excellent relations between parents and school staff and they work very closely together. For example, parents are happy that CCTV cameras operate in classrooms and corridors. This enables pupil to accurately see the repercussions of their actions on others rather than discuss incidents according to how they remember them. Some parents wait upon a daily phone call at the end of the school day from staff to ensure home rewards and sanctions coordinate.
- Staff log all behaviour incidents, which are then analysed and discussed with pupils. Staff and pupils grade behaviour every day and this gives a picture overtime of how each pupil is developing personally and managing their own conduct.
- Pupils recognise how far they have come in their learning, behaviour and attitudes. As one related, 'Coming here was the best thing that happened to me, I've grown up.' Throughout the inspection pupils were polite, respectful and courteous to visitors.
- Pupils benefit well, for example, from the strong personal, social and health education lessons in school or from daily discussions, which contribute to their outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There are open and frank discussions on topics, such as transgender or homophobic issues and students are fully aware of internet safety and the associated risks of using some websites.
- Parents are very happy with the academic and personal progress their children make at Silverdale. This is very evident in the surveys, responses at annual reviews and records of meetings taken by the school. As one parent comments, 'I was so worried what would happen to him, but look at him now, I'm so proud of him.'

- The school works exceptionally with families and pupils and attendance is high. Although there are sometimes fixed-term exclusions, these are very selectively used.

The leadership and management are good

- The positive view and ambition of the headteacher, ably supported by the senior leadership team, securely drives the school forward. This is acknowledged by the governing body and by staff who completed the inspection staff questionnaire. Comments were added about the strong team spirit and their focus on 'making a difference' to the lives of young people. Parents too are overwhelming in support of the school and the education that their children receive and enjoy
- Staff lead by example and all work effectively as a cohesive team. Staff understand their roles, responsibilities and lines of accountability. Performance management targets are closely related to pupils' achievement, targets set in the school development plan and teachers' pay.
- Senior leaders ensure that the quality of teaching improves, and this has resulted in an increase in the proportion of teaching that is outstanding since the last inspection. This improvement has been achieved through the regular monitoring of pupils' work, lesson observations, monitoring of teachers' planning and effective training.
- Senior leaders and governors recognise there is currently some variability in the quality of teaching brought about by staff teaching subjects in which they are not specialists. Additionally, some newly qualified staff or staff who are early in their teaching career have recently joined the school.
- School leaders are accurate in their knowledge of the school's strengths and priorities for improvement. Attendance and behaviour have improved significantly since the last inspection and there is good capacity for further development.
- Arrangements for safeguarding meet all statutory requirements. Senior leaders have confirmed that procedures for any alternative sites that might be used also meet requirements.
- The curriculum meets pupils' needs exceptionally well, and is a key element in the progress they make both personally and academically. For example, pupils benefit from climbing and mountain biking to develop confidence and team work. Trips to major cities and places of interest develop ideas that are incorporated into course work for art or photography.
- The local authority provides only a 'light-touch' support to this good school and has tremendous confidence in the leadership team and staff. So much so, that from September 2014 additional outreach support, assessment and provision will be managed and run by Silverdale.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are accurate in their knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for further development. Their actions have a positive impact on school improvement. For example, they readily pursue details for the rates of progress for all groups of pupils, including those receiving pupil premium funding and the most able, to ensure there are equal opportunities. Governors hold the school to account for efficient financial management, including the spending of pupil premium funding and the new primary school sport funding. They fulfil their statutory responsibilities appropriately, for example, by setting and monitoring challenging performance management objectives for the headteacher and the arrangements for child protection and pupils' safeguarding. There have been some recent changes to the governing body and the Chair states that some additional training is to take place.

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	133432
Local authority	North Tyneside
Inspection number	431186

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	7–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	63
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andy Bojke
Headteacher	Peter Gannon
Date of previous school inspection	29 March 2011
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