

Pelton Community Primary School

Ouston Lane, Pelton, Co Durham, DH2 1EZ

Inspection dates 20–21 January 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.

- Pupils enjoy coming to school and are happy here. They feel safe and secure because of their good behaviour and their positive relationships with all adults.
- Children entering early years quickly settle and become confident learners. The effective provision helps children to make good progress, although entry levels to Year 1 are lower than expected for this age.
- Progress across the school is good. By the end of Year 6 standards in reading, writing and mathematics are average.
- Teaching is good. Pupils engage well in learning, they persevere and show a strong work ethic.
- Teachers regularly check on pupils' work and the progress they make. Support for pupils who need to catch up with others meets their individual needs very well. The progress of these pupils is good and is sometimes outstanding.
- A variety of experiences, including outdoor learning, widens pupils' experiences and engages their interest. There are increasing opportunities for pupils to use their skills in mathematics and English across other subjects.
- Leaders and managers support the headteacher's vision very well because there is a shared understanding of the school. Together they are driving improvement which is shown in pupils' rising achievement and in improved teaching.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although attainment in mathematics is average, it is not as high as that found in reading and writing. This is because pupils do not have enough opportunities to apply their mathematical understanding in tasks which challenge them to be creative when they investigate and solve problems.
- Most-able pupils are not always challenged well enough to attain at higher levels.
- Opportunities for pupils to learn through correcting mistakes and improving their work are not always provided.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors saw teaching in all classes, made a number of short visits to learning sessions for small groups and individuals, and listened to pupils reading. The headteacher and deputy headteacher each took part in a joint observation with an inspector.
- Separate discussions were held with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, staff, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority. The opinions of 24 members of staff were considered from their responses to the questionnaire.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work, looked at children’s learning journals, staff planning, data on pupils’ progress, planning and monitoring documentation and information relating to the welfare of pupils and safeguarding.
- Inspectors took account of the 16 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), the results of the school’s own questionnaire to parents, written information and discussions with parents during the inspection.
- Inspectors observed pupils during morning playtime and lunchtime, and attended two assemblies.

Inspection team

Kate Pringle, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Frank Cain	Additional Inspector
Julie McGrane	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, who are supported through the pupil premium funding, is above average. This additional funding is allocated to those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and pupils looked after by the local authority.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British background.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- Children attend part time in the early years. All nursery children are able to attend for 15 hours a week. There is opportunity for parents to buy additional hours if they wish.
- Pupil mobility, other than at the usual times, is average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school is part of a hard federation with Beamish Primary School.
- A breakfast club and after-school care is provided by a private provider on the school site. The quality of this provision was not considered by this inspection because it is inspected and reported upon separately.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and accelerate progress in mathematics by:
 - developing strategies to make sure that pupils are set work which is based upon what they already know and can do, and so ensure a better match of task to their learning need
 - giving more opportunities for pupils to use their new skills in mathematics to investigate and solve problems.
- Raise the quality of teaching further by:
 - providing more challenging activities for the most-able pupils so they attain at the highest levels
 - giving pupils time to return to past work and make improvements or correct errors so that they learn from their previous mistakes.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Morale is high in this school. The headteacher shares her vision and inspires managers, staff and pupils to aspire ever higher. A considerable team spirit has developed due to close working relationships and the respect individuals have for each other.
- Senior and middle leaders are effective because they are strongly focused upon improving pupils' outcomes through regular and rigorous monitoring of teaching. Where individual staff need support or there are identified school needs, focused training enables all staff to learn and improve skills.
- The exceptionally close working relationship between Pelton and its federated school, Beamish Primary, extends provision with shared staffing, resources and training. The differing strengths in the two schools provide good opportunities for staff to extend their professional development.
- Leaders and managers have a good understanding of how well the school is performing. They correctly identify strengths and develop actions that successfully address areas where improvement is needed. This is enhancing the quality of teaching and improving pupils' progress.
- Clear, rigorous links between teaching, pupils' achievements and pay progression are firmly embedded. All staff have individual targets to work towards and these are regularly reviewed.
- Leaders check on pupils' progress regularly. Teachers quickly identify pupils who are not progressing as well as they should be and put in place focused support to address their individual needs. This has worked successfully to improve achievement in reading and writing. Progress in mathematics is improving, but not as fast as in English because teachers do not always challenge pupils sufficiently well. Leaders have taken steps to remedy this and present developments in the teaching of mathematics, in particular the rapid mental recall of number facts, are having a positive impact on teaching and progress.
- The use of pupil premium funding is supporting reading and writing for disadvantaged pupils effectively. Recent spending has focused on the development of mathematics to achieve similar success as in English. There is clear impact of improvement and gaps between these pupils and others are narrowing by the end of key stages. The amount of progress made is masked by the rising progress of other pupils in the school.
- The primary school sport fund has been used to engage specialist staff, train teachers and to extend the range of sports on offer. More pupils are engaged in physical activities and there are wider opportunities to compete with local schools. Teachers are increasing their skills in identified areas of physical education in dance and gymnastics.
- All pupils are included in all aspects of school life, whatever their need or disability. The school shows a clear commitment to equal opportunities. Every effort is made to ensure that relationships are good and there is no discrimination. Pupils are happy in school and learn to accept each other's differences. This underpins the positive friendships formed by pupils and their good behaviour.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are encouraged to consider others, to reflect upon similarities and differences and work together harmoniously. A range of visits and visitors to the school, additional activities during and after school and pupils' involvement in a range of environmental projects prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- A number of awards held by the school celebrate the breadth of the school curriculum. Learning through topics helps pupils to understand the links across subjects.
- There are well-established links with other schools in the locality, for example in the shared moderation of pupils' work. There are equally strong relationships with the local authority. Support is effective with a clear focus upon securing high levels of teaching, outcomes for pupils and supporting governors, leaders and staff.
- Safeguarding requirements are met fully.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors understand the strengths of the school well. They work closely with the headteacher and senior leaders to evaluate performance and drive improvement. Recognising the concerns of recent years, they have monitored actions carefully to raise the quality of teaching and improve standards. Governors regularly access training in order to keep abreast of changes and make sure they are able to challenge the school when needed.
 - Governors review data and are clear about the impact of the spending of the pupil premium. They talk knowledgeably of the improvement in reading and writing and how money is now supporting improvements in mathematics. They oversee the allocation of sport funding and receive updates from leaders about the level of pupils' involvement, their fitness levels and improvements to teaching physical education.

- Governors monitor the performance management system in the school and hold the headteacher to account. They ensure that they have a good understanding of the quality of teaching and how underperformance in being tackled.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are polite and well mannered in lessons and around school. They listen to what others have to say and respect their views.
- Pupils develop responsibility for their actions and understand the consequences. Good use is made of a range of strategies to reward good behaviour and pupils are well aware that poor behaviour will result in a loss of rewards or sanctions.
- Playground buddies support pupils at lunchtime successfully as they take on the task of caring for those younger than themselves.
- Pupils recognise that misbehaviour and bullying does occur sometimes, but they are certain that the school addresses these situations quickly and successfully. They are aware of the different forms that bullying and poor behaviour can take and are taught useful strategies to cope with these.
- Parents agree that behaviour is good and that bullying is addressed effectively. The appointment of a parent support adviser has increased parental contact with the school and families.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. All staff are aware of the needs of pupils and quickly pick up any concerns that could affect their well-being or learning. They ensure that the best support is made available to help pupils and their families.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school and parents agree with them. High expectations of behaviour and understanding of the school rules help to keep pupils safe from harm. Well-considered opportunities throughout the curriculum encourage pupils to recognise dangers and make sensible choices, for example using the Internet safely or finding safe places to play.
- Attendance is rising and getting closer to average. In response to more rigorous strategies, the level of pupils who are persistently absent is reducing, as is the number of pupil exclusions. The school is unafraid to tackle absence and the work of the parent adviser is contributing to the rising attendance. The drive to reduce the proportions of late arrival in the mornings is beginning to show success.

The quality of teaching is good

- Pupils enjoy coming to school. They respect their teachers and other adults with whom they have very good relationships. Settling to work quickly, the vast majority show perseverance as they respond to the challenge of tasks. Many show resilience as they learn new strategies.
- Teachers expect the best work from pupils and they try hard to achieve this. Pupils listen carefully and are motivated to learn. Parents believe that their children are taught well, progress well and are happy in school.
- Subject knowledge is good. Teachers use assessment of pupils' work effectively to identify who is falling behind, putting in place appropriate support which enables them to catch up and increase progress.
- Teaching assistants are very well trained and provide high levels of support for teachers in the classroom and when teaching specialist groups or individuals. This helps to accelerate learning.
- The teaching of reading and writing is effective. Changes to how phonics (letters and their sounds) are taught show good impact and more pupils are able to blend sounds and letters to read and spell new words. Standards are rising.
- In mathematics, the teaching of basic skills, particularly in mental calculation is greatly improved. Although overall teaching is effective, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to use their developing skills to investigate problems.
- The curriculum is interesting and engages pupils' interests. It provides good opportunities for pupils to learn new skills and widen their understanding. One class successfully programmed their plastic models to carry out a sequence of actions.
- Teachers set targets based on what they know pupils can do. Older pupils are becoming increasingly adept at considering the quality of their progress and what they need to learn next.

- In some classes teachers do not match tasks well enough to the needs of the most-able pupils. There can be too much repetition of past work and too few opportunities for pupils to show the depth of their understanding and use their new skills to be creative and carry out investigations.
- Pupils take pride in their work and books are neat and tidy. They have increasing opportunities to use their English and mathematical skills in other subjects. The quality of pupils' work in other subjects varies and is not always as high as that found in English and mathematics books.
- Marking is regular and teachers praise successes in learning. They identify mistakes providing opportunities for pupils to return to work to make corrections or improvements. However, in some classes there are fewer opportunities for pupils to return to past work, learn from their mistakes and understand how to improve their progress.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Over time, entry levels to Year 1 are lower than expected for this age in reading, writing and mathematics. Over Key Stages 1 and 2 progress is good from pupils' individual starting points, with pupils leaving Year 6 with standards which are now average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In Key Stage 1, there has been steady improvement over recent years and progress in reading, writing and mathematics is good. Most recent assessments indicate that present Year 2 pupils are already achieving at levels expected for their age in reading and writing. Levels in mathematics are not yet as high, because progress in this area has not been as rapid over time due to the past focus upon reading and writing.
- The results of national tests for Year 6 in 2014 showed marked improvements from the previous year and work in school has continued to build upon this success. Progress is now good. 2014 standards were average in reading and writing, but below in mathematics. Current attainment is average in all subjects with overall progress good, although in mathematics few are making more than expected progress.
- Assessments across the school are secure and moderated well. At the end of the autumn term, the current Year 6 were already reaching expected levels in reading and writing, and slightly below in mathematics. Pupils are well placed to build on these standards before the national tests and achieve levels typical for their age.
- Disadvantaged pupils across the school achieve well. At Key Stage 1 the gap narrowed between this group and others in the year group. Present data indicate there is little or no gap in all subjects.
- In Year 6 in 2014, the gap between disadvantaged pupils and others in the school and others nationally narrowed. The school's autumn data for the present Year 6 indicate a further narrowing of the gaps in all subjects. Presently, compared to others in school, disadvantaged pupils are one term behind in reading and mathematics, and two terms behind in writing.
- Compared to others nationally in 2014, disadvantaged pupils were one term behind in reading and mathematics and two terms behind in writing. The gap between the two groups had narrowed considerably from 2013.
- The additional support received by pupils identified as working below expected levels in reading and writing has had significant impact on raising standards across the school. In mathematics, identified changes to teaching practice and a range of support strategies for pupils who are underachieving are showing impact and accelerating progress.
- Present data indicate that progress in reading is good to outstanding and progress in writing is also good. Mathematical progress is not as good because, too often pupils repeat tasks at similar levels, rather than being challenged appropriately to progress more quickly. For some pupils the work can be too easy. The focus upon basic skills is ensuring that pupils have good mental agility. However, there are fewer opportunities to use these skills creatively to investigate and solve problems.
- Overall the most-able pupils make good progress and more pupils achieved Level 5 in all subjects in 2014. However, this number remains below average, because the challenge for these pupils is not yet consistent throughout the school.
- Pupils who are disabled or with special educational needs are supported successfully through a range of strategies to address their individual needs. They are identified early and the vast majority make good progress in reading and writing, with less than good progress in mathematics similar to other pupils.
- The phonics standards check at the end of Year 1 rose in 2014; however, pupils' attainment remains below average. Changes to the teaching of phonics are accelerating progress. Year 1 pupils show understanding of how letters blend together and confidently sound out words that are new to them. Because they focus closely upon the reading of words, some pupils sometimes do not grasp the 'story' that they are reading and need opportunities to talk through what they have read. Reading is improving

across Key Stage 1.

- By the end of Year 6 the majority of pupils are confident readers. They use their phonic skills well to decode new words and the more-able pupils read fluently, their voices reflecting the different characters, or situations. They understand what they read and are able to predict what may happen next. Lower-ability pupils can make better progress than others because of the well-focused support to address their needs.

The early years provision

is good

- Children enter Nursery with skills below those typical for their age. For a significant proportion of children, entry levels are low, particularly in speaking and listening and in personal and social development. There has been a rise in the proportion of children reaching a good level of development by the end of Reception Year, although as yet not all children are fully prepared for Year 1.
- Staff understand what children need to learn and capture their interest. There is highly successful work to improve communication and language and promote personal and social development. Overall progress is good and, for some children, can be outstanding from their individual starting points.
- Teaching is good. Children are encouraged to make choices from activities which teachers prepare using their knowledge of what children need to learn next and what will fire their interest indoors and outdoors. Exciting opportunities exist for children to access a range of learning outside, including the wooded area.
- Staff are adept at using topics which captivate children and motivate them to learn. For example, in one class children used a well-known cartoon as a starting point. They investigated and photographed simple shapes found outdoors, in the classroom and at home and used these to make cards, biscuits, necklaces and crowns. Together they considered why the ice cube had melted and happily used the pretend ice cubes to count to eight. Children were completely engrossed, showing high levels of perseverance.
- There is early identification of those children who have specific needs. High quality support addresses the needs of those who are vulnerable, are disabled or who have special educational needs. These children progress at a similar rate to that of other children.
- Children quickly become confident and enquiring learners because they feel safe. They understand the daily routines and the expectations of adults as they listen carefully and respond well. As they play together with their friends, they learn to share and take turns. Children's behaviour is good.
- Leadership and management of the early years are good. High quality records of learning show what children have achieved and the progress they make. Parents are pleased to play a part in this journey from the outset and feel part of the learning process. What children can do is used to feed future planning and what they need to learn next.
- The early years leader works closely with her team and recognises the strengths of the provision and where areas of improvement are needed. High quality training addresses the needs of the early years and of individuals, including teaching assistants. This is having a strong impact upon the quality of teaching in the early years.

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	134078
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	456129

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	356
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Hayley Openshaw
Headteacher	Wendy Edwards
Date of previous school inspection	1 February 2012
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