

Toner Avenue Primary School

Johnston Avenue, Hebburn, Tyne and Wear NE31 2LJ

Inspection dates

8–9 March 2016

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Require improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Pupils do not make consistently good progress because the quality of teaching is variable across all classes.
- Teachers are not consistently effective in setting tasks that meet the range of needs in the class.
- Disadvantaged pupils do not make enough progress when compared with other pupils in the school.
- The teaching of grammar, spelling and punctuation is too variable in quality to ensure pupils' writing improves consistently well in different classes.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to deepen their knowledge and skills in mathematics.
- Teachers' expectations about what the pupils can achieve are sometimes too low. This means that more-able pupils are not challenged sufficiently.
- The checks made by senior leaders have not been rigorous enough to tackle inconsistencies in teaching throughout the school.
- Strategies to improve teaching and learning by middle leaders are not yet fully embedded across all classes. Therefore, the impact of these initiatives is variable.
- The implementation of the school's marking policy is not effective enough in helping pupils to improve their work.

The school has the following strengths

- The executive headteacher has a clear vision of how to improve the school and has won the confidence of staff.
- Children make good progress in the early years and are well prepared to start Year 1.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. They feel safe and their behaviour is good.
- The school's curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral and social education effectively.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the impact and effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - developing the role of the wider leadership team to ensure that checks on the quality of teaching and learning are thorough and lead to improvements in teaching over time
 - ensuring senior leaders regularly evaluate the effectiveness of monitoring so that any weaknesses in teaching and learning are addressed quickly
 - making sure assessment is accurately based on pupils' work in order to inform improvement planning
 - ensuring the marking policy is effective in helping pupils make faster progress.

- Improve the quality of teaching by:
 - making sure that teachers plan tasks suited to the needs and interests of all pupils, including those supported by pupil premium funding, so that they make at least good progress in lessons
 - developing the quality of pupils' writing through a consistent approach to the teaching of spelling, punctuation and grammar
 - making sure the most-able pupils are given opportunities to think deeply in order to extend their learning and understanding
 - ensuring that pupils are provided with activities to develop their enquiry, reasoning, and justification skills in mathematics.

- An external review of the school's use of pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management are not good because the quality of teaching is inconsistent across the school and pupils' progress varies too much between year groups and subjects. Monitoring by senior leaders has not been rigorous enough in tackling these inconsistencies.
- The use of assessment information about pupils' progress has not been used effectively enough to inform action plans to tackle weaker aspects of teaching and learning.
- Leaders for mathematics and English have developed plans to improve their subjects. They monitor the quality of teaching through work scrutiny and data analysis regularly. However, their actions have not had the consistently strong impact needed, and therefore weaker aspects of teaching persist in some classes. Professional development and performance management have not been effective enough in addressing weaknesses in teaching.
- The executive headteacher has a clear vision for the school and has won the confidence of staff. She has introduced a new monitoring system but the evaluation of strengths and weaknesses in teaching currently lacks the detail and rigour needed to bring about improvements quickly.
- Pupil premium funding is used partly to enable the head of school to monitor the progress of disadvantaged pupils. Staff are now more aware of the needs of disadvantaged pupils in their class and resources have been put in place to support their learning. However, gaps remain in the attainment and progress of these pupils.
- Leaders have revised the curriculum, which now offers more opportunities for writing in other subjects. The school has improved the reading scheme, developed new reading records and arranged visits to the local library. The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively. Visitors to the school, such as the police and the local vicar, enhance this area of the curriculum. Pupils' writing celebrating British values is displayed throughout the school, for example in a display about British sovereigns. A wide range of additional activities is provided for pupils, such as Aikido, chess, yoga and choir.
- The PE and sport premium funding is used effectively to bring in coaching staff to work with teachers and develop their skills. Teachers now feel more confident in delivering quality PE lessons. The school has strong links with the local secondary school and this provides good opportunities for pupils to compete alongside other local schools, developing competitiveness and cooperation.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors challenge the executive headteacher by comparing school assessments with local authority reports, link visits and work scrutinies.
 - The chair of governors is relatively new to the role but brings a wide range of relevant experience. She is a frequent visitor to the school and regularly attends leadership and staff meetings.
 - Governors are provided with detailed assessment information by the executive headteacher. They have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and its priorities.
 - Governors know how sport premium funding and pupil premium funding have been spent. They are aware of the performance management system and how teachers' pay is linked to this. They are very proactive in the recruitment of staff. They know where the best teaching is in the school and where support has been provided to improve it.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The school's safeguarding procedures are robust. Staff have received appropriate training and the executive headteacher has established clear procedures to deal with any concerns. For example, 'Operation Encompass' is a helpful initiative to support pupils who may have been affected by domestic abuse. There is a safe culture in the school and an openness in communication between parents, carers and other agencies.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is inconsistent across the school and has not led to good pupil progress over time.
- Tasks are not always matched well to the needs of pupils of different abilities, particularly in mathematics and writing. Work can be too challenging for some pupils or too easy for others, which hinders progress.
- The presentation of pupils' work in books reflects variability in teachers' expectations. Teachers do not ensure that the better quality of pupils' handwriting in their English books is applied to their topic and subject work.
- The standard of pupils' grammar, punctuation and spelling varies across year groups; for example, the incorrect use of apostrophes is common among Year 6 pupils.
- Activities are planned for pupils to practise their number, shape and data-handling skills in mathematics.

However, there are not enough opportunities for their understanding to be deepened. Problem-solving is limited to word problems in some classes, with a limited focus on developing reasoning and justification skills.

- The implementation of the school's marking policy is having a limited impact.
- Leaders and teachers have an over-generous view on the amount of progress pupils are making. Judgements about the standards pupils have reached do not always match the evidence of progress seen in pupils' books.
- Relationships between pupils and adults are generally good, engendering positive attitudes to learning. On some occasions, when the task was not matched to the needs of pupils, attitudes to learning deteriorated, which resulted in low-level disruption. This contributed to an ineffective use of learning time.
- Good questioning skills by some teaching assistants moved the pupils' learning forward. However, on other occasions teaching assistants spent too much time supporting pupils' behaviour rather than learning.
- Technical vocabulary used by teachers demonstrates their strong subject knowledge, and supports pupils to acquire and use language accurately, particularly in mathematics and English.
- In lessons where teaching has the greatest impact on learning, resources and subject matter were stimulating and children were keenly engaged in their work. For example, in one lesson children enthusiastically wrote about an eerie atmosphere linked to work on *Macbeth*. They discussed words associated with different types of stories, such as fairy tales and comedies.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Older pupils are encouraged to take on responsibilities to help others around the school. For example, the Year 6 pupils are enthusiastic about their roles as Play Pals, take responsibility for play equipment and help younger children play well together.
- Pupils feel safe and understand what they have to do if they have a problem. Many pupils said they could talk to any adult in the school and their issue would be dealt with quickly.
- The majority of parents have no concerns about their children's safety. This is reflected in responses to the school's own survey, Parent View, and discussions with parents.
- The school keeps accurate records of any incidents of poor behaviour or bullying. These are rare. Pupils comment that bullying is rare. They have a good awareness of types of bullying, such as name-calling or cyber bullying.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves healthy and safe. They have a good knowledge of e-safety and how to eat healthily. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about choosing healthy food for a Brazilian restaurant activity.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are fully aware of the school's Calm School code. Pupils move calmly round the school site, and are generally polite and courteous to adults and each other.
- Pupils usually show good attitudes to learning in lessons. They are keen to answer questions, contribute well and help each other learn. On a few occasions, attitudes are not as good when the task does not stimulate the interest of the pupils. 'Star of the Week', house points and 'Writer of the Week' celebrate efforts and value pupils' contributions.
- The majority of parents feel that the behaviour of pupils is good, and that if they had concerns they would be dealt with promptly by the senior leaders in the school.
- Attendance rates are improving and are now broadly average. Attendance is lower for disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs or disability. The school has identified this and is working to close the gap. Good attendance is celebrated in assembly time.

Outcomes for pupils require improvement

- Progress is still not consistently good in all classes and across all subjects, therefore outcomes for pupils require improvement. Recent improvements in addressing the quality of teaching have ensured that progress in some classes has improved, particularly in Year 2 and in upper key stage 2. However, these actions have been variable in their impact in the other classes.
- The most-able pupils are not making enough progress throughout key stage 2 because learning activities often do not offer sufficient challenge. This is hindering the rapid progress needed to reach the higher levels.

- The school's own assessment records show that gaps remain between the progress of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils in the school. The gaps are variable – in some classes gaps remain for all three subjects: reading, writing and mathematics. In others, gaps remain in just one or two areas. In Year 2 and Year 5, gaps are closing in writing for disadvantaged pupils.
- By the end of Year 6, the gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers who are not disadvantaged is steadily narrowing, particularly in mathematics and grammar, spelling and punctuation. Fewer disadvantaged pupils made more than expected progress in comparison to their peers and compared to others nationally.
- Tasks given in other subjects such as geography, history and science, do not always give pupils opportunities to deepen their understanding and learning, and to practise their writing skills. This is limiting the progress they are making.
- By the end of Year 6, some pupils are not making the progress which is expected of them in reading, writing and mathematics. This is highlighted in reading, where some lower-attaining pupils did not make expected progress, and not enough pupils made more than expected progress when compared to national averages.
- Over the last two years, pupils with disability and those with special educational needs have not made as much progress as other children in the school in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Attainment at the end of Year 2 is broadly in line with national averages. However, boys are not attaining as well as the girls, particularly in reading and writing. In reading they are over half a year behind the girls, and in writing they are more than one year behind.
- Attainment by the end of Year 6 is improving over time, although it is still slightly below the national average in mathematics and reading. Attainment is in line with the national average in writing and English grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- The proportion of pupils attaining the national phonics check has improved over the last three years and is now well above the national average.

Early years provision

is good

- Children enter Nursery with skills and knowledge that are generally below those typical for their age. They make good progress because of good teaching and, as a result, children are well prepared for Year 1.
- Leaders are effective in managing children's learning and development in a context where a large proportion of children leave Nursery for other schools and a large number enter Reception from other nurseries. As a result, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year increased considerably in 2015 and is now close to the national average.
- Teaching is good in the early years and is based on the interests of the children. For example, one child had drawn a treasure map and was able to talk about how his symbols would lead to the treasure. Additional funding is used well so that disadvantaged children make the same progress as other groups.
- Activities in the early years are carefully planned and full use is made of the well-organised learning environment. For example, a topic on the theme of eggs provided a good stimulus for writing. Displays around early years celebrate early writing skills well. More-able children do not develop their writing skills as fast as they could; for example, not improving their writing with the use of capital letters and full stops.
- Children are safe in the early years. They know their routines and follow these calmly and sensibly. Robust safeguarding procedures are followed by all staff.
- Parents speak positively about the early years. Many opportunities are provided for parents to be involved in the education of their children. Parents are encouraged to visit classrooms and contribute to the children's learning journals.

School details

Unique reference number	108704
Local authority	South Tyneside
Inspection number	10002040

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	288
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Elizabeth Luke
Executive headteacher	Michelle Collinson
Telephone number	0191 420 2588
Website	http://toneravenue.uk/
Email address	head@toneravenue.s-tyneside.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	20–21 November 2013

Information about this school

- Toner Avenue is an average-sized primary school.
- The great majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for support from the pupil premium is higher than average. (The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, or who are looked after by the local authority.)
- Children attend part-time in Nursery and full-time in Reception.
- The proportion of pupils with disability and those who have special educational needs is higher than average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.
- There has been a change in leadership since the last inspection. An executive headteacher works two and a half days per week, supported by a full-time head of school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in a range of lessons. The executive headteacher jointly observed the quality of teaching of three lessons with the lead inspector. Inspectors also visited a number of other activities including an assembly.
- Meetings were held with the executive headteacher; school leaders, including teachers in charge of subjects and other areas of the school's work; governors; representatives from the local authority, and groups of pupils.
- Inspectors listened to a range of pupils read and evaluated samples of pupils' work from across different subjects and year groups.
- Inspectors checked a wide range of documentation, including the school's evaluation of its own performance; school improvement planning; documents relating to behaviour and safety; information on pupils' progress and attainment, and leaders' evaluations of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at breaktimes and lunchtimes. Inspectors also spoke informally to pupils at various times during the inspection.
- The views of 41 parents and carers who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View) were taken into consideration. The inspectors also gathered the views of parents in the school playground at the start of the day.
- The responses to questionnaires from staff were also examined. There were no responses to pupil questionnaires.
- On 15 April 2016, an additional visit was made to the school by Suzanne Lithgow, one of Her Majesty's inspectors, to gather evidence due to an incomplete inspection. The visit focused on pupils' outcomes.

Inspection team

James Hannah, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Fiona Manuel	Her Majesty's Inspector
Ian Clennan	Ofsted Inspector
Suzanne Lithgow	Her Majesty's Inspector

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