

Silver Tree Primary School

Durham Road, Ushaw Moor, Durham DH7 7LF

Inspection dates

26–27 June 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher has provided committed leadership that has transformed the learning culture at the school. She has established an ethos of high expectations among staff, pupils and parents.
- The headteacher has acted decisively to improve standards of teaching, learning and assessment through an effective mixture of challenge and support.
- Senior leaders have introduced convincing systems to check pupils' progress, the accuracy of assessment and the quality of teaching.
- Teachers are securing improvements in pupils' progress across key stages and the early years. Pupils are making consistently good progress from their starting points.
- Teachers have created a collective focus on reading across the school. Pupils read with fluency, insight and enthusiasm. Pupils made outstanding progress in reading at the end of key stage 2 in 2017.
- Governors are passionate in their commitment to the school. They have worked closely with the headteacher to develop highly effective systems to check key aspects of performance.
- The arrangements for safeguarding pupils are extremely effective. The actions of leaders and teachers significantly enhance the well-being of children and families.
- School leaders, effectively supported by the pupil welfare officer, have secured extremely high rates of attendance. Pupils and their parents value the supportive ethos of the school.
- Teachers do much to enhance pupils' wider understanding of the world. They promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding in meaningful ways.
- Although pupils make very good progress, in some year groups the proportions of pupils working at greater depths of understanding remain variable.
- Middle leaders are purposefully involved in developing initiatives to enhance the quality of teaching. Strategies to accelerate pupils' progress in mathematics and to strengthen the wider curriculum are less well developed.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further strengthen the quality of teaching by:
 - embedding opportunities for pupils to work at greater depths of understanding across all year groups
 - enabling pupils to apply their reasoning and problem-solving skills in mathematics.
- Further enhance the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - refining the curriculum to deepen pupils' learning across a wide range of subjects
 - accelerating opportunities for subject leaders to share good practice so that the success in raising standards in reading is replicated across the wider curriculum.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Since her arrival, the headteacher has worked with optimism and drive to improve the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. Her actions have established an ethos of high expectations that runs through all aspects of the school's work.
- The headteacher has provided convincing support and challenge to build leadership capacity and to improve teaching across her team. Staff morale is high, as teachers are encouraged to initiate improvement strategies, but they are also held accountable for the effect of those strategies.
- The headteacher and her deputy headteacher have established strong systems to check pupils' progress, standards of behaviour, the effectiveness of teaching and the quality of the curriculum. Leaders at all levels check pupils' progress at regular intervals and measure the effect of additional support. This enables teachers to alter teaching and plan support more deftly to ensure that pupils can make strong progress.
- Senior leaders and middle leaders have worked with local authority partners to check the accuracy of assessment. As a result of assiduous monitoring and clear accountability systems, leaders and governors have a clear picture of school strengths and areas for improvement.
- Leaders have worked with local authority partners to build leadership capacity and enhance teaching. Middle leaders have developed their subject expertise and their role in leading change. This has contributed to significant improvements in pupils' progress in reading. Initiatives to enable pupils' ability to apply their reasoning skills in mathematics are less well developed.
- Leaders have established a coherent curriculum that balances a focus upon literacy and numeracy with stimulating access to a wider range of subjects. Pupils have regular opportunities to work scientifically, as reflected in the recent award of the Primary Science Quality Mark. In addition, there is evidence that pupils develop subject-specific skills in some depth in geography and history. Other subjects, such as art, religious education (RE) and physical education (PE), are less developed. Leaders are currently engaged in a curriculum review to deepen learning so that high standards are consistent across all subjects.
- Teachers at all levels are committed to promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils develop insights into a range of equality issues through participation in developments such as the 'Educate and Celebrate' programme. Leaders are further exploring pupils' awareness of democracy through their developments of the school as a 'Rights Respecting School'.
- The headteacher has developed thorough performance management arrangements that she has used to support individual teacher and whole-school improvement effectively.
- The deputy headteacher has developed focused systems to check the effect of additional funding for pupils eligible for the pupil premium. Tracking of assessment information over time confirms that these pupils make very good progress from their

starting points.

- The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) has developed her role effectively. She has put detailed systems in place to diagnose pupils' needs and has put appropriate support in place. The vast majority of parents attend the regular review meetings to assess the effect of this support. The SENCo knows her pupils well and has clear evidence of how support has improved their progress over time. Additional funding is used effectively.
- Leaders have secured much better support and engagement from parents. The vast majority now attend parents' evenings. Parents praised the 'enthusiasm and passion' of the headteacher, who they believed was 'transforming the school', and felt that the improvements were 'evident for all to see'.
- Funding from the government to promote sport and increase physical activity is being used successfully. Pupils have increasing opportunities to take part in competitions and to represent the school at flagship events, such as dance festivals and the mini-Olympics. Funding has also supported access to specific sports and activities, including judo and skipping.

Governance of the school

- Governors have shown a commitment to improving their practice. After commissioning a review of governance, they have reviewed committee structures and recruited new governors with additional expertise to provide further support and challenge. As a result, governance is highly effective.
- Governors have developed thorough systems to check the effects of leaders' actions. They receive regular updates on pupils' progress from the headteacher and they visit the school frequently to see for themselves what this progress looks like on the ground. Governors use local authority reviews of school assessment to further verify the accuracy of the information they receive.
- Governors ensure that their visits to school are focused upon specific issues, and this enables them to develop a close awareness of the effect of improvement strategies. They work with senior leaders and subject leaders to check the pace of progress against clear milestones in the school development plan.
- Governors hold leaders to account for additional funding, including the use of the pupil premium and funding for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. They track the impact of support and school improvement strategies at regular meetings.
- Governors share the headteacher's commitment and sense of moral purpose. They have worked thoroughly to provide the support and challenge that have contributed to the school's accelerated improvement journey in recent years.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are highly effective. Leaders carry out regular audits of safeguarding policies and practice with the local authority to ensure that arrangements are fit for purpose. A governor with safeguarding expertise provides further scrutiny and support.

- Leaders carry out extremely rigorous checks to ensure the suitability of adults working on site. They ensure that staff and governors receive up-to-date training on a range of safeguarding issues.
- Leaders and teachers at all levels are committed to pupils' welfare. The actions they take enhance the well-being of children and families. They work closely with other agencies to support pupils. The support they provide for the most vulnerable pupils is extremely effective.
- Leaders, supported by the pupil welfare officer, have secured high rates of attendance. This enhances pupils' safety and well-being.
- Children feel safe in school and value the support of teachers and other adults. They have worked on initiatives developed by the NSPCC to increase their awareness of personal safety and the actions they can take to keep themselves safe from inappropriate behaviour or abuse. Pupils have a good awareness of the actions they can take to stay safe online.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers plan lessons well and pitch work appropriately to meet the needs of pupils. In the majority of lessons, teachers use time productively to enable pupils to make good progress in their learning.
- Teachers use their secure subject knowledge to consolidate and deepen pupils' knowledge and skills. Pupils are given regular opportunities to learn from their mistakes and take actions to improve the quality of their work.
- Teachers have used a range of approaches to develop pupils' reading skills across phases. Teachers and teaching assistants have successfully enabled the majority of pupils to reach the expected standard in the phonics screening check. In both key stages 1 and 2, pupils read to inspectors with clarity and understanding. In addition, teachers have developed pupils' inference and deduction skills to considerable effect, enabling pupils to make outstanding progress at the end of key stage 2 in 2017.
- Teachers give pupils access to different models of writing and support them in building up their writing stamina. There are frequent opportunities for pupils to use their grammatical knowledge to enhance the structure of their writing. This is supporting pupils in becoming better writers, although differences persist between boys and girls.
- In mathematics, teachers enable pupils to develop a fluent understanding of core operations of number. However, teachers do not provide pupils with sufficiently regular opportunities to develop their reasoning skills and work at greater depths of understanding across all classes.
- Teachers use questioning and regular assessment to gauge pupils' progress and to enable them to plan and address any gaps in learning. Through regular moderation with local authority partners and neighbouring schools, teachers have developed an accurate view of standards.
- In the majority of lessons, teachers manage learning well. They establish respectful relationships and cultivate positive attitudes to learning. On occasion, a minority of pupils can become distracted when work is not sufficiently challenging or engaging.

- The provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is effective. The SENCo knows her pupils well and works with teachers and teaching assistants to coordinate support that helps these pupils to make good progress.
- Planning and teaching in the early years is improving. Teachers and teaching assistants do much to develop children's emergent reading and writing skills, along with their understanding of number. They are becoming more adept in devising approaches that support pupils' individual interests and aptitudes.
- Teachers typically work effectively with teaching assistants to plan and provide well-targeted support. Teaching assistants have good relationships with pupils and are increasingly effective in checking the effect of their support.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is extremely good. Teachers, teaching assistants and lunchtime staff are continually mindful of pupils' welfare in lessons and at breaktimes.
- Pupils show high levels of respect towards each other and adults, and treat everyone equally. Leaders have done much to raise pupils' awareness of equalities through carefully planned programmes, such as their work to 'Educate and Celebrate' and their work towards becoming a 'Rights Respecting School.' Year 6 pupils talked about protected characteristics with maturity and understanding. As one child said: 'It's OK to be unique.'
- Pupils are given positions of responsibility as sports buddies, anti-bullying leaders and as head boy and head girl. These positions help them to develop their social skills and their self-confidence.
- Pupils feel that bullying is rare and are confident that adults would address any unacceptable behaviour. They have a good understanding of different types of bullying. They know the importance of being an 'upstander', who reports any incidents of unacceptable behaviour so that other pupils do not suffer.
- Leaders help pupils to develop healthy lifestyles. They encourage all pupils to take part in a daily mile. A wide variety of sporting and dance activities are available to pupils during breaktimes.
- Leaders work with pupils to develop an awareness of personal safety. This includes the actions that pupils can take to protect themselves from harm or abuse and the actions that they can take to stay safe online.
- The vast majority of parents who met with inspectors, or who responded via the Parent View questionnaire, were extremely appreciative of the work of the school and the contribution teachers make towards the welfare of their children.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Teachers establish clear routines and set high expectations across the school. Pupils work well together to discuss their learning and

share ideas. On occasions, a minority of pupils become distracted when work does not fully engage their interests or abilities.

- Pupils demonstrate a pride in their school and their community. They value opportunities to engage with visitors and with different groups on trips and visits.
- Leaders have secured excellent and improving rates of attendance. School leaders, including the pupil welfare officer, work extremely well with pupils and their families to secure excellent attendance. They know when to challenge parents when attendance slips and when to provide gentler, more supportive approaches.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Teachers have supported pupils effectively in responding to the increasing demands of the new national curriculum. In 2017, the proportion of pupils achieving expected standards at the end of key stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics combined was in line with that seen nationally. In addition, the proportion of pupils working at higher levels was also in line with the national picture. This represented good progress from pupils' starting points.
- Pupils make outstanding progress in reading. In 2017, their progress was in the top 10% of schools nationally. This strong picture of reading confidence was reinforced when inspectors listened to pupils read and discussed their reading with them. Teachers have successfully enabled pupils to read with understanding and perception, and are establishing a strong reading culture.
- Through a thorough review of work in books across all year groups, and by studying school pupil progress information, it is evident that current pupils are making consistently strong progress from their starting points. The proportions of pupils achieving expected standards have shown a significant increase. Increasing proportions of pupils are working at greater depths of understanding, although this is not consistent across all classes.
- The quality of writing is improving across the school. Pupils are building their vocabulary and using a range of grammatical structures with increasing effect. In a review of work in pupils' books, many girls demonstrated highly accomplished writing skills, although on occasion a minority of boys were less secure. However, overall progress remains good.
- Pupils make good progress in mathematics. They are developing a secure knowledge of key operations and are confident in core mathematical processes. Although the proportion of pupils working at a greater depth of understanding is increasing at the end of key stage 2, this is not evident across all year groups.
- Outcomes are improving at key stage 1. In 2018, well over 80% of pupils are on course to meet the required standard in the phonics screening check. Current pupils are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics, with increasing proportions on course to reach expected standards and to reach a greater depth of understanding. However, there is still variance in the proportions of pupils achieving higher standards in some year groups.
- Children are making increasingly good progress in the early years, and this is improving their readiness for key stage 1. Outcomes have been formally moderated by the local

authority for the past two years and standards found to be accurate. In 2018, 70% of pupils are anticipated to reach a good level of development.

- Pupils make very good progress in science, history and geography, acquiring knowledge, skills and understanding that are preparing them for the increasing depth required at key stage 3. On occasions, these skills are not consistently developed across all foundation subjects, such as art, RE and PE.
- The most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, are making increasingly good progress from their starting points. Teachers are providing additional sessions to equip these pupils with the skills to respond to further stretch and challenge.
- The deputy headteacher tracks the progress of disadvantaged pupils closely. In 2017, disadvantaged pupils made extremely good progress from their starting points at the end of key stage 2, a picture that is repeated across year groups for current disadvantaged pupils.
- The SENCo has worked effectively with teachers, teaching assistants and parents to develop teaching and wider support for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. These pupils make good progress from their starting points.

Early years provision

Good

- Over the past two years, the early years leader has developed provision effectively. Through more analytical assessment to signpost the next teaching and learning steps, children are now making good progress from their starting points. Increasing proportions of children are both reaching and exceeding good levels of development.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have an increasingly sharp picture of children's starting points in key skills. They help pupils to develop their awareness of sounds and letters, and are developing their emerging writing skills effectively. In addition, teachers are creating new activities to enhance children's understanding of space, shape and number.
- Leaders have worked with local authority partners to develop provision indoors and outdoors. They have enriched the outdoor learning environment, providing cues and prompts that encourage children to think imaginatively and interact purposefully with their environment.
- Leaders are improving transition to the early years by developing stronger links with the on-site nursery and with other early years providers. Although this work is not completed, leaders do now have a much stronger awareness of children's needs on entry and are therefore more adept at addressing barriers to learning earlier.
- Leaders have worked with local authority partners to accurately assess the quality of children's work in the early years. Teachers and teaching assistants now have an accurate view of standards.
- Children across the early years are happy and confident in their play and learning. They show confidence in their reading and in their letter formation. Children particularly enjoy the imaginative opportunities to learn and play in the outdoor learning spaces. On some occasions, teachers and teaching assistants do not always use open questions

to develop children's imaginations or their abilities to explain their choices.

- The high standards of planning and strong systems to check progress and quality that characterise much of the school's work are equally apparent in the early years.
- Safeguarding practices in the early years are highly effective. The robust safeguarding culture that characterises the school's work is similarly evident in the early years. Arrangements to meet all statutory welfare requirements are securely in place. The children are safe and well supported.

School details

Unique reference number	123350
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	10042172

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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	176
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jimmy Jamieson
Headteacher	Natalie Maughan
Telephone number	0191 3730622
Website	www.silvertreeprimary.co.uk
Email address	silvertree@durhamlearning.net
Date of previous inspection	26–27 January 2016

Information about this school

- Silver Tree Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above average.
- The majority of pupils come from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils whose first language is not English is well below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has recently acquired a silver Primary School Science Quality Award.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a wide range of lessons taught by teachers and teaching assistants, covering all classes in school. They observed pupils at breaks and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders, middle leaders, the pupil welfare officer and a wider group of teachers and teaching assistants. Inspectors also met members of the governing body, including the chair.
- Inspectors met the educational development partner from the local authority.
- Inspectors met groups of pupils and talked to pupils about their learning and experiences at the school in lessons and at breaktimes. They also listened to pupils read in different year groups.
- Inspectors talked to parents as they dropped their children off at school on day one of the inspection.
- Inspectors carried out an extensive review of pupils' books and folders.
- Inspectors looked at the school's development plans, information on pupils' progress and arrangements for managing pay and performance. They also considered arrangements for safeguarding and scrutinised records and policies relating to attendance and behaviour. Inspectors looked at leaders' records evaluating the curriculum and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Inspectors considered 36 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and 20 free-text responses. They also took into account 14 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Malcolm Kirtley, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Melanie Maitland	Ofsted Inspector
Gillian Nimer	Ofsted Inspector

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