

# Grange View Church of England Voluntary Controlled First School

Grange Road, Widdrington, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 5LZ

**Inspection dates** 24–25 February 2015

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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 make good progress from their starting points, including the most able pupils, those who are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs.
- Standards have improved over time and are above expectations for pupils' age in reading, writing and mathematics by the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 4. Strong leadership, in all areas, places the school in a good position to continue to improve.
- Teachers are skilled in helping pupils to develop their mathematical reasoning skills. Pupils are able to think hard about the best approach to working things out and can then apply their knowledge to help them solve problems.
- Pupils swiftly learn phonics (identifying letters and the sounds they represent) because the teaching of this subject is particularly strong. As a result, standards in reading and writing are improving rapidly in all areas of the school.
- Adults are always fair in applying the school's behaviour policy so that pupils know what is expected of them. There is rarely any disruption to learning in any lessons and most pupils behave sensibly in school.
- Pupils feel safe in school and know that the adults in the school care for them and are there to help when they need it. Relationships are good.
- Leadership is strong, including that of the governing body. Leaders have acted decisively to put systems in place to keep a close check on pupils' progress and make sure that any pupils who need extra help are swiftly identified and supported.
- The school is inclusive and especially welcoming to disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. These pupils are helped to make a full contribution to the life of the school and make good progress.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In a few lessons in Key Stage 1, pupils' progress slows because teachers' expectations of how much they can do without adult direction are too low.
- Teachers' expectations of the way in which pupils present written work are not consistently high. Sometimes work looks untidy and does not do pupils justice for their efforts.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed six lessons or parts of lessons, one of which was a joint observation with the headteacher.
- The inspector spoke to a range of pupils about their work and play in school.
- Meetings were held with four members of the governing body, as well as school leaders and with a local authority representative to discuss support for the school.
- The inspector took account of 31 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and 16 responses to the staff survey.
- The inspector observed the overall work of the school and checked various documents and procedures, including school improvement planning, systems for checking pupils' progress and looked at documents relating to safeguarding and behaviour.
- The inspector looked at a wide range of evidence including the school's records of the quality of teaching over time and pupils' current work in books.

## Inspection team

Janette Corlett, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- There is an average proportion of disadvantaged pupils, those known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium funding. The pupil premium is additional funding for those known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is average.
- Almost all pupils are of White British origin and no pupils currently in the school speak English as an additional language.
- The school provides part-time provision for children in the nursery from the term after their third birthday, and full time provision in the Reception class.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching by:
  - making sure that teachers in Key Stage 1 always have high enough expectations of how much work pupils can do, and provide work that is at the right level to challenge them so that they can make rapid progress in every lesson
  - ensuring that teachers always insist that pupils' work is tidily presented using pupils' very best handwriting so that it reflects the otherwise high quality of their work.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- School leaders are ambitious for all pupils. They have created a safe, warm and welcoming place where pupils are keen to learn and make good progress, including those who are disadvantaged, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- Leaders use the pupil premium funding effectively to ensure that any gaps in the standards between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils are narrowing rapidly. For example, disadvantaged pupils were about a term behind other pupils in the school and other pupils nationally in reading in the 2014 statutory assessments at the end of Year 2. Owing to highly effective support these pupils are catching up quickly with their classmates and thoroughly enjoying becoming good readers.
- Under the strong and determined direction of the headteacher, the school's procedures for gaining an accurate view of its performance are extremely thorough, including those to check on the quality of teaching. Checks on the performance of all staff are rigorous and lead to staff receiving high quality training to help them develop their practice and become even better at helping children to achieve to the very best of their ability. In those very few lessons in Key Stage 1, for example, where teaching still requires improvement, school leaders are giving highly effective support and appropriate professional development opportunities that are already improving practice. As a result, the standards pupils reach at the end of Year 2 are improving steadily.
- Senior and middle leaders demonstrate a positive impact on improving pupils' skills in literacy, mathematical calculations and in the provision for children in the early years. Recent improvements to the teaching of phonics and the way in which pupils learn to solve problems in mathematics are already raising standards in reading, writing and mathematics throughout the school. Similarly, children now make good progress in the early years and this is an improvement since the last inspection.
- This is a highly inclusive school that gives an equally good standard of education for disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and for pupils across the full range of different abilities. There is no racism because the ethos of the school, encapsulated in the 'SPARKLE' statement of vision that pupils helped to create, promotes tolerance and respect and this is helping to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.
- The curriculum supports pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There are frequent opportunities throughout the school day for pupils to take a moment for reflection and think about how they should always be kind to one another and treat everyone with equal courtesy and respect. From their very earliest days in the nursery, children learn good manners, to share toys and to take responsibility for tidying up after themselves.
- Pupils' cultural awareness is developed through celebrating festivals for a range of faiths and cultures, including Diwali and the Chinese New Year. Their understanding of the wider cultural diversity of modern Britain is not quite so strong. However, school leaders and governors are working to improve this, for example, through establishing links with other schools where pupils have a wider range of cultural backgrounds.
- Primary school sport funding has been used to successfully increase the range of sports on offer and to promote healthy lifestyles by increasing the number of pupils taking part in such activities.
- Links with parents and the local community are particularly strong. Members of the community operate a 'Messy Wednesday' afternoon every month where they come into school and work with the children on a range of crafts and activities. Also, pupils visit the local library every week to change their books and are proud to see that some of their own writing is on display there for other people in the community to share. Parents enjoy taking part in theme days, such as a recent mathematics 'Problem-Solving' day, where they worked alongside their children and also learned about how they can help them continue to learn at home.
- Partnership working with other local schools means that there are strong links with the middle school. This helps pupils develop familiarity with their next school and, as a result, they are confident in moving there at the end of Year 4. Equally, the partnership supports improvements in the quality of teaching through sharing good practice and developing, for example, a consistent approach to assessing pupils' progress under the new national curriculum.
- The local authority provides effective support for the school through the school improvement partner who has helped the headteacher to improve the systems for checking pupils' progress and for the performance management of teachers.
- **The governance of the school:**

- Governors bring a wide range of experience and professional expertise to the school. They are given regular and valuable updates on outcomes for pupils as they move through the school. They ask leaders to explain where there are any weaker areas of performance and then make sure that the actions taken are effective. Governors know how pupil premium funding is spent and give effective challenge to school leaders about the impact of this on the progress of disadvantaged pupils.
- Governors are very well informed about the quality of teaching and the actions school leaders are taking to improve it. They are aware of the school's arrangements for staff pay and progression, including that of the headteacher, and ensure that these are used effectively to tackle any identified weaknesses in teaching.
- Governors ensure that the school meets the statutory safeguarding requirements and the school's financial arrangements are secure.

## The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Most pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and work hard in lessons. They respond well to teachers' instructions and listen to one another attentively in class discussions. Disruptions to learning through poor behaviour are extremely rare.
- Pupils say that staff are friendly and always fair. They say that they trust their teachers and know that they will always help them if necessary. They also comment that there is very little bullying of any kind, including racist and homophobic bullying. Children occasionally fall out with one another, but soon make friends again.
- A group of older pupils recently trained as play leaders. These pupils now look out for children at playtimes who may be feeling a bit sad because they do not have someone to play with and make sure that they are included in a game or are introduced to a new friend.
- Attendance has improved over time and is currently close to the national average for primary schools. This is because most pupils enjoy coming to school and are keen to compete for the attendance awards celebrated each week in an assembly to which parents are invited.

### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The school site is very secure and staff have appropriate levels of training in safeguarding and child protection. Procedures for the safe recruitment of staff meet requirements.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe from harm both inside and outside the school. They recently had training in how to keep themselves safe on the internet and can explain the routines and guidance they follow whenever they use computers and mobile technology.

## The quality of teaching

is good

- Teachers know their pupils well and plan activities in lessons that help pupils across a wide range of abilities to make good progress. Teachers are particularly good at teaching phonics and this helps pupils learn to read swiftly and with fluency. In turn, this is also having a very positive impact on pupils' progress in writing, particularly for boys. This is because boys now read from a wide range of books that extend their vocabulary range and confidence with language. As a result, they find it easier and much more enjoyable to write stories and explanations.
- Teachers' new approaches to helping pupils solve problems in mathematics are proving effective in developing pupils' skills in reasoning about the way in which they apply their knowledge of mathematical calculations. In one lesson, for example, the teacher encouraged pupils to explore a range of different options to match up different coloured shorts and T-shirts using their skills in logic rather than just trying out every possible combination. This led to a much more efficient method of calculation.
- Teachers frequently use opportunities within the wider curriculum to help pupils develop their skills in literacy and numeracy. For example, in one lesson the teacher used the stimulus of a visitor to the school explaining the traditions involved in the Chinese New Year to encourage a group of less able pupils to develop their writing skills. The same stimulus was used very effectively to help children develop their coordination skills by using chopsticks to pick up grains of rice as they organised an afternoon tea party in

the Reception class.

- Teachers have very good relationships with pupils and manage pupils' behaviour really well so that lessons run smoothly. In Key Stage 1, teachers' expectations of how much work pupils, of all levels of ability, can complete are not always high enough. Sometimes work given is too easy. Consequently, it is sometimes completed quickly and once finished pupils do not move on to a greater challenge, with the result that their progress slows. When this happens pupils can become a little restless.
- Teachers' expectations of the way that pupils present their work and the quality of their handwriting are not always high enough. As a result, although the content of pupils' writing and their grammar and punctuation across a range of subjects show good progress, their presentation is messy and does not do justice to their work.
- Marking has improved and now gives pupils good guidance on how to improve their work. Sometimes pupils are not given time to respond to teachers' comments. School leaders are aware of this and have plans in place to make correcting and editing work a routine occurrence in every class.

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- At the end of Key Stage 1, standards in reading, writing and mathematics show steady improvement over time and are now broadly average. This represents good progress from pupils' generally low starting points when they enter the school. Good progress continues through Years 3 and 4 so that, by the time they are ready to move into middle school, pupils reach standards that are above those expected for pupils of similar age.
- An increasing proportion of the most able pupils reach the higher standard in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2. By the end of Year 4, an even greater proportion achieve a level higher than expected because the teaching in Years 3 and 4 is particularly successful in offering a high degree of challenge to these learners and pupils respond to this with enthusiasm.
- The proportion of Year 1 pupils who reach the expected standard in the national check on phonics (understanding letters and the sounds they make) is above average. Reading skills are developed from an early age. Those who do not reach the expected standard by the end of Year 1 are supported well to catch up by the end of Year 2. Reading skills then develop rapidly in Years 3 and 4 where frequent opportunities for independent or supported reading allow pupils to accelerate at their own best rate.
- The school's recent actions to improve boys' writing have been successful and standards are improving. The most rapid improvement has been in the early years where, in the current Reception class, boys are outperforming girls because they enjoy writing so much and are keen to practise their skills as often as they can.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make just as much good progress from their starting points as other pupils in the school because they receive very good support for their personal and academic needs and feel very much part of the life of the school.
- Equally, disadvantaged pupils make good progress because teachers are aware of any gaps in their learning and act swiftly to make sure that they catch up. As a result, there are currently no significant gaps in the standards they reach compared with other pupils nationally, or with other pupils in any year group in the school.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics is increasing rapidly. In all classes, pupils are focused very well on understanding the links between different elements in their calculations so that they work accurately and use the most efficient methods. Pupils who sometimes find it difficult to grasp mathematical concepts receive good support through a range of practical activities that help them to understand and to become more confident in applying their learning.

### The early years provision

is good

- Children generally enter the nursery with levels of skills and development below those typically expected, particularly in relation to their language and communication. By the end of the Reception Year, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development in their learning is not far short of the national average and the majority of them are well equipped to access the Year 1 curriculum. This shows that their achievement is good.
- Provision for youngsters in the early years is a real strength of the school owing to the strong direction and leadership from the assistant headteacher. Children receive lots of praise and encouragement as they

learn and play together in a safe and nurturing environment. This sets them off to a flying start in school and contributes well to their physical and emotional health, safety and well-being.

- Good teaching based on careful planning and assessment helps children, including those with special educational needs and the most able children, to make rapid progress. The enthusiasm of all the adults in the unit is infectious and children respond by being keen learners after only a very short time in school.
- The indoor learning environment is vibrant and stimulating for young learners. Children also enjoy their weekly trip to the 'forest school' at the bottom of the school field where they can build dens and develop their imaginative play. Opportunities for learning in the large outdoor play area immediately adjoining the classroom are not yet developed as well as indoors but the leadership has good plans to tackle this.
- Children behave very well with one another and treat the adults with respect. They listen well to instructions and hygiene routines, such as washing hands, are well established. This contributes well to their personal and social development. Children say they enjoy coming to school and the sound of laughter is a constant and delightful feature throughout the classrooms.
- There are strong links with parents who are made to feel very welcome in school and receive good information on what their children are doing each week when the children take their learning journals home to share.

## 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	135634
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	449781

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

Type of school	First
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	120
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	George Laidler
Headteacher	Louise Laskey
Date of previous school inspection	15 June 2010
Telephone number	01670 790686
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