

Leadgate Primary School

Alder Grove, Leadgate, Consett, County Durham DH8 7RH

Inspection dates

14–15 March 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	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher and deputy headteachers have established a 'no excuses' culture with a strong, dynamic vision for the school based on improving outcomes for all pupils.
- Pupils enjoy their learning and find lessons interesting, enjoyable and engaging. They are clear about how they need to improve their work.
- Between Years 2 and 6, teaching is consistently good, especially in key stage 2. Pupils make strong progress in most classes. Outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics in key stage 2 were substantially above that seen nationally in 2017.
- Subject leadership in mathematics and English is a strength in the school. In some subjects, leaders have an incomplete picture of the strengths and weaknesses in classroom practice and the level of care pupils take in presenting their work.
- Teaching assistants know their subjects well and are skilled at providing support to a range of learners. They work seamlessly with teachers in classrooms to ensure continuity in pupils' learning.
- Pupils' behaviour is a credit to the school. Pupils are polite and considerate. They are aware of their responsibilities to each other and adults.
- Early years outcomes are improving. Most children make a steady start to their schooling. However, opportunities to develop children's communication skills are often missed and children do not engage well with unsupervised activities. School leaders do not always evaluate the impact of recent changes in the early years accurately.
- The provision for the welfare, personal development and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is strong. It helps pupils explore, understand and be aware of their own and others' uniqueness and needs. In addition, safeguarding is a strength of the school and pupils say they feel safe.
- Governors are playing an increasingly active part in the day-to-day life of the school and have a secure insight into what is required to improve the school further. Some of the information provided to governors lacks sufficient detail to enable them to fully hold school leaders to account.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve provision and outcomes in the early years, especially for those children who need to catch up quickly, by:
 - ensuring that staff are rigorous in developing and extending communication, speaking and listening skills in all aspects of learning
 - raising expectations of what children can be expected to do when initiating their own learning and working independently, including when applying their reading and writing skills
 - further developing the role of early years leadership to ensure that leaders have an accurate view of the quality of the provision.
- Build on effective practice already established in the school to ensure that all leaders at all levels:
 - contribute more effectively in identifying strengths and weaknesses in classroom practice across all subjects
 - review pupils' work rigorously to identify inconsistencies in classroom practice and ensure that expectations of presentation in pupils' work are consistently met
 - ensure that pupils have more opportunities to explore all subjects, beyond mathematics and English, at greater depth.
- Further develop the effectiveness of governors by ensuring that the information provided to them about the rates of progress key groups of pupils are making over time is more accessible and easily understood.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management **Good**

- The ambition and drive of the headteacher, skilfully and enthusiastically supported by his two deputies, have ensured that the incorporation of a nearby infant school has been managed successfully. They have created a committed team of staff who work well together. The 'can do' and 'no excuses' culture is evident across both sites and ensures that high expectations for what pupils can achieve are being delivered.
- School senior leaders have a strong commitment to improving teaching and learning that includes a focus on performance management, individualised professional development opportunities and whole-school training. This ensures that teachers develop the necessary skills to improve outcomes for pupils so that standards rise.
- Senior leaders are adept at recognising effective practice and tackling poor practice when it arises. Staff are held accountable and engaged in taking responsibility for ensuring that school priorities are met in and beyond their own classrooms.
- Leaders know how well individual pupils are progressing and use this information well to provide additional support where necessary. Systems ensure the accuracy of assessment information by checking work in books and external testing. Analysis of this information enables school leaders and teachers to recognise gaps in pupils' learning and identify and address emerging issues quickly.
- Exemplary subject leadership in mathematics and English ensures that the rates of progress and outcomes for pupils have improved in both these areas in key stage 1 and key stage 2. Additionally, a recent dip in phonics outcomes has been addressed and rectified. New systems have been put in place to identify emerging issues quickly. However, some other subject leaders do not have access to sufficient information to ensure that they have a comprehensive picture of the strengths and weaknesses in their subject area. This prevents a fully informed view on classroom practices and the level of care pupils take in the presentation of their work.
- Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities make good progress. This is because the leader of SEN provision is well informed and ensures that pupils have their needs met. She collects and analyses information to ensure that these pupils are identified correctly and are beginning to catch up. Consequently, funding to support these pupils is used well.
- Additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is used effectively. Pupils' performance is tracked and the progress they make over time is monitored closely. Provision is adjusted to take account of emerging barriers to pupils accessing learning. As a result, these pupils make rapid progress, especially in key stage 2.
- The school's curriculum is broad and balanced, and provides pupils with opportunities to develop skills and explore key concepts and ideas. Planning ensures that all subjects are covered and leaders check this is adhered to. A wide and varied range of curriculum and extra-curricular opportunities are provided by a wide range of staff. Homework is used to support the development of pupils' basic skills and occasional projects support the wider curriculum. Consequently, pupils achieve well across the

curriculum. However, opportunities to explore some subjects in greater depth are missed.

- The pupils' understanding of British values, and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are covered well in the school and ensure that pupils have a basic understanding of the variety of lifestyles and cultures within wider society. Displays in the school and work in pupils' books show that the curriculum provides opportunities to explore the value of diversity in society and the importance of British values, including the rule of law. For example, work with the local police on a project has led to a 'mini-police' group in school that attends and gets involved with events such as royal visits in the county.
- Parents and carers and staff have confidence in the leadership of the school. The vast majority say that school leaders listen to their concerns and act on them swiftly and fairly. Those spoken with during the inspection say the school has continued to improve since it expanded to become a full primary school and is a happy place.

Governance of the school

- Governors are highly committed to the school and are knowledgeable about the day-to-day life within. Governors have recently worked hard to reform and refocus their own practice and increasingly hold school leaders to account. Some members of the governing body visit the school to check that what is being reported is happening. They receive regular reports from the headteacher, senior leaders and subject leaders which keep them informed about the actions undertaken to improve the school. Some information they receive lacks clarity on pupils' progress over time for some key groups of pupils. This limits governors' ability to fully evaluate the impact of the work done by school leaders.
- Governors have a secure overview of the use of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils and have evaluated the difference it has made to these pupils. They track how the funding is spent and check that planned actions are put into place. Additional sports funding is also used effectively to promote a wide range of sporting and competitive activities. Consequently, pupils have a good understanding of fitness and healthy eating.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The culture of safeguarding is a strength of the school and underpins the work of all staff. Pupils and staff have a clear understanding of what to do and what to be aware of in ensuring that adults and children are kept safe. Regular updates and reminders, supported by reflective training programmes, ensure that staff are vigilant and aware of current and emerging issues.
- Pupils are well informed and talk lucidly about the dangers of social media and the internet. They know how to keep themselves and others safe in school, at home and outside school in the wider community. Programmes of work are underpinned in personal, social and health education and increasingly reflect the school's focus on supporting and understanding mental health approaches and therapies.

- All records, including for children looked after, are reviewed and checked regularly. They are of a high quality and capture the timeline of events systematically. The school works closely with a range of other agencies. Additional support and assistance are provided to children looked after and monitored closely by the coordinator responsible.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good overall and sometimes outstanding, especially in key stage 2. High expectations from staff ensure consistently good and sometimes exemplary teaching across most classes in key stage 1 and key stage 2.
- The work of teaching assistants is a strength of the school. They have good subject knowledge and are skilled at identifying when pupils have grasped a concept and are ready to move on. They provide support to a range of learners, including the most able. They work alongside teachers and ensure that pupils are clear about what they need to do next in lessons. Consequently, pupils make at least good progress across key stage 1 and key stage 2.
- Staff's positive relationships with pupils ensure that teachers have a good understanding of the challenges pupils face and plan sharply focused learning activities accordingly. As a result, pupils have a positive attitude to their learning because they recognise their own progress and achievements.
- Teachers and teaching assistants provide support for pupils' next steps assiduously, in line with the school marking policy. Pupils get time and support in lessons to respond to challenges and feedback.
- Pupils enjoy developing their reading skills and applying these to increasingly complex texts. Key stage 1 pupils are given opportunities to read to adults frequently and they develop their vocabulary quickly as they grow in confidence with their spoken English. In key stage 2, pupils use their understanding of punctuation well to aid their expression when reading aloud.
- The teaching of mathematics is a strength of the school. Teachers and teaching assistants use targeted and challenging questions and directly teach key concepts well. They ensure that pupils use and apply their understanding to explain and solve problems. Where pupils get stuck, this is picked up quickly and support is given. Pupils are enthusiastic about the subject and enjoy being challenged in their thinking. Consequently, in 2017 more pupils achieved at the national standard than seen nationally and the progress they made was in the top 20%.
- The teaching of writing is improving. Pupils take care in the accuracy of their work in English lessons. They apply their writing skills in a range of genres and subjects but do not always take as much care in the presentation of their work. They have opportunities to write at length, review and then improve their own work. They use their basic skills in grammar, punctuation and spelling to aid lively and engaging writing. In the early years, children are not always engaged in writing as much as they could be.
- Teachers increasingly ensure that phonics strategies are taught and applied consistently in pupils' reading and writing. Skills are taught systematically on a daily

basis from the early years and across key stage 1. Recent issues with the teaching of phonics have been addressed and those pupils who needed to catch up have largely done so.

- The planned curriculum builds on teachers' detailed understanding of pupils' prior learning to ensure that their lessons meet the needs of all pupils, regardless of their starting points. Pupils develop their skills in mathematics and English in a logical order that builds on what has gone before. Interventions and support are well planned and help address any gaps in pupils' understanding.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. It is a strength of the school. It helps pupils explore, understand and be aware of their own emotional and physical needs and those of others.
- The curriculum provides pupils with a secure understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe in a range of situations. Consequently, pupils say they feel safe in school and enjoy coming to school. School 'buddies' at playtimes are effective in supporting other pupils to be involved and in dealing with their concerns.
- Strong and positive relationships between staff and pupils ensure that pupils are confident in sharing their concerns with adults. Pupils say concerns are dealt with fairly and sensitively by staff.
- Staff know the pupils well. Staff work closely with families to provide support and the vast majority of parents value this aspect of school provision.
- Pupils talk maturely about tolerance, respect and cultural diversity in society. They are less confident in discussing homophobic issues but understand about challenging derogatory language.
- Pupils are well aware of healthy lifestyles, and of behaviours that could be harmful to their physical and mental health.
- Parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and who spoke with the inspector are confident that the school keeps their children safe.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' behaviour is a credit to the school. Pupils are polite, courteous and considerate towards each other and staff. They are aware of the impact their behaviours have on others, including in lessons.
- Pupils move around school quickly and quietly. They are punctual to the start of lessons after lunchtime and breaktime. They settle quickly to their learning. Consequently, little learning time is lost. Pupils say on some rare occasions pupils get distracted in lessons, especially when instructions or next steps are not clear. If this does occur, teachers react well to address any issues.

- Pupils' positive attitudes to learning are reflected in the way they apply themselves well to tasks and work with high levels of concentration. They show determination in tackling difficult tasks and enjoy rising to, and completing, challenges.
- Pupils and the vast majority of parents are confident that issues with bullying will be taken seriously and resolved effectively by staff. Pupils say that bullying rarely happens, and they have a sound understanding of the impact bullying has.
- Pupils' attendance, although below average, is improving, including those who have difficulty attending frequently. This is because school leaders have raised expectations of attendance with parents and implemented a series of robust interventions and support with families to address any issues.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils leave the school very well equipped to thrive in their secondary school. In 2017, the proportion of pupils who left Year 6 with the skills required in reading, writing and mathematics was well above that seen nationally. These pupils made significantly better progress than that seen nationally in reading and mathematics.
- Disadvantaged pupils achieve well. In the 2017 key stage 2 tests, disadvantaged pupils made faster progress than other pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils achieving expected standards is continuing to improve and now matches that seen nationally by the time pupils leave the school at the end of key stage 2.
- Current evidence seen by inspectors confirms the view of school leaders that pupils continue to make strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics across most classes, especially in key stage 2. In addition, more pupils are now working beyond age-related expectations. The proportions of pupils achieving age-related expectations have been maintained in other subjects. However, in some subjects evidence is scant for those working beyond expectations.
- Outcomes continue to improve in key stage 1. Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, make good progress. In 2017, by the end of Year 2 the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard and reaching greater depth was above average. This shows good progress from pupils' low starting points at the beginning of Year 1. Inspection evidence shows that pupils currently in key stage 1 are also making good progress.
- Pupils use their skills in phonics well to support their reading and writing and to help them to go on and achieve above age-related expectations, especially in their writing by the end of key stage 1.
- A significant dip in the Year 1 phonics screening check outcomes in 2017 has been rectified. Pupils in that cohort have made rapid progress and most of those who needed to catch up have done so. New systems and additional support in Year 1 are ensuring that current Year 1 pupils are now increasingly secure in using their phonic skills.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Children start in the Nursery class with a range of abilities, skills and pre-school experiences. Many children come in with some gaps in their skills and understanding, especially in their communication skills. While many children make the progress expected of them, children who need to catch up do not always do so quickly enough.
- Outcomes have seen a big improvement since joining with the junior school. The proportions of children who develop the skills they require to access learning in key stage 1 now match those seen nationally. Disadvantaged children outcomes have also improved in line with those of their peers and are now closer to those seen for all children nationally.
- Direct teaching and effective questioning skills applied by staff in small-group work ensure that most children develop their basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics. Phonics skills are taught systematically. However, staff do not ensure sufficient opportunities for children to apply their reading and writing skills independently.
- Adults' expectations of what children can be expected to achieve when working independently are too low and often lack a clear purpose and effective routines. Consequently, children cannot make best use of the stimulating and engaging activities provided by staff. As a result, the impact on learning is diminished and activities are sometimes chaotic.
- Opportunities to encourage children to listen and respond to each other and staff are missed. Some effective practice seen by inspectors is not used systematically by all adults. Consequently, not all children make the progress they could.
- Early years leaders ensure that children are safe. Adults are skilled at ensuring that children's social and emotional needs are met and that planned activities reflect their interests and cover all aspects of learning. They work conscientiously to ensure that children develop secure attachments with adults and establish good relationships with other children. Staff know the children well and they work with parents to ensure that individual needs are taken into account. Consequently, welfare requirements are met.
- The partnership with parents is positive and has recently improved. Parents feel they are listened to and they contribute to the assessments made by staff. As a result, they have a positive view of the quality of learning and the support their children get.
- New leadership arrangements for the early years provision are improving and knowledgeable. Leaders have an increasing awareness of the quality of provision. However, this evaluation is not always precise. Consequently, leaders are not sharp enough in recognising the priorities that will promote better progress, especially for those children who need to catch up quickly.

School details

Unique reference number	114039
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	10042134

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	207
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Neil Jackson
Headteacher	Mark Watson
Telephone number	01207 610361
Website	www.leadgate.durham.sch.uk/
Email address	p2259.admin@durhamlearning.net
Date of previous inspection	1–2 May 2013

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, the school has extended its age range to incorporate a local infant school. The school operates across two split sites.
- Leadgate Primary is smaller than an average-sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for support through the pupil premium is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment in English and mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors held discussions with governors, the headteacher, senior leaders, the local authority and some subject leaders, including modern foreign languages.
- The inspectors observed learning in all classrooms. Joint observations were carried out with the headteacher.
- The inspectors looked at pupils' work, held discussions with pupils and listened to some pupils read.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around the school, at playtimes and in lessons.
- The inspectors looked at the responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, and considered some written comments from parents. They met with some parents at the start of the school day and at an early years parents' meeting.
- The inspectors examined a wide range of documentation, including evidence of the school's self-evaluation, information about the performance of teachers and pupils, reports to the governing body, and information on the curriculum, safeguarding and other key policies.

Inspection team

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