

West Walker Primary School

326 Church Street, Walker, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Tyne and Wear, NE6 3XW

Inspection dates 16–17 September 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
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 achieve well academically, personally, physically and creatively because of the excellent support and care provided by the staff. Pupils thrive in a nurturing environment to become confident young people who want to learn.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get a good start to their education. In Key Stage 1, teachers build on this good start. Teachers in Key Stage 2 capitalise on the good grounding pupils have had in becoming effective learners. By the end of Year 6, most pupils are achieving the levels expected for their age.
- All groups of pupils make good progress, including those who are eligible for additional funding through the pupil premium, those with special educational needs and those who are most able.
- Pupils' progress in writing is a particular strength across the whole school.
- Good teaching ensures that pupils learn effectively. Teachers provide pupils with interesting work to do, which motivates and encourages them to learn.
- Staff have very high expectations and a consistent approach to managing pupils' behaviour, resulting in pupils showing high levels of respect to adults and each other. Pupils feel very safe in school. Their attendance is below average but is improving rapidly. Pupils are very proud of themselves and of their school.
- The headteacher has created an effective team whose members work well together to ensure that the pupils have the best possible chance to become effective learners. Senior and middle leaders carry out their roles effectively. This provides a good basis for reviewing the quality of the school's work, including the quality of teaching and how well pupils achieve.
- The governors challenge the school effectively and provide very good support.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' standards at the end of Year 2 are not high enough, particularly in reading and mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed parts of 18 lessons. They listened to pupils read, and the written work in pupils' books was reviewed.
- Meetings were held with different groups of people involved with the school. These included pupils, members of the governing body, the headteacher, senior leaders, members of the teaching staff and an officer from the local authority.
- There were too few responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) so the school's surveys for parents were examined. The Ofsted questionnaire completed by school staff was also examined. The school's website was reviewed.
- A range of documents were reviewed, including the information on pupils' achievements, school's data on pupils' current progress, documents relating to planning for improvement and procedures for checking the quality of teaching, documents relating to safeguarding and records relating to behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Barbara Hudson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

David Shearsmith

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is an average-sized primary school.
- The school has a specially resourced provision for seven children with emotional and behavioural difficulties.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is well above average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is well above average. These are pupils who are supported by the pupil premium, which is allocated for pupils who are in the care of the local authority or known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. The school works closely with other schools in a learning partnership. The schools are Benfield School, Tyneview Primary School, Walkergate Primary School and Walker Technology College.
- The school has many awards which reflect the breadth of the curriculum, and has recently achieved Artsmark Gold again.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve standards at the end of Key Stage 1, particularly in reading and mathematics, by:
 - building upon the recent significant improvements in standards in pupils' knowledge of letters and sounds
 - provide more opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills in problem-solving situations
 - improve the marking of pupils' mathematics work so that pupils know what they have to do next to improve.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, with the support of the senior leadership team, works tirelessly to ensure that the pupils are given the best chance to succeed at school. They have created an effective whole-school staff team whose members work very productively together. This has resulted in a place where pupils feel very safe, are able to achieve well academically and personally, and are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- School leaders have an accurate view of the school's performance. They very systematically and thoroughly ensure that new initiatives are having a positive impact on pupils' achievements. An excellent example of this is the way in which pupils' writing has improved across the school since the last inspection.
- Senior leaders are currently working on improving pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1; their efforts so far have been rewarded with improved standards in the 2014 assessments in reading, writing and mathematics. They are aware that standards need to improve further, particularly in reading and mathematics.
- Robust procedures to check the quality of teaching and pupils' achievements regularly are in place. Lesson observations, the regular monitoring of teachers' planning and pupils' workbooks, together with pupils' progress meetings, ensure that senior leaders are well placed to tackle any variation in performance. This ensures that every pupil has an equal opportunity to succeed.
- Systems to manage staff performance are used well, both to support and challenge their work. There is much in place to ensure staff are able to develop and improve their practice. Staff highly value the range of training opportunities offered within and beyond the school.
- Teachers, who lead a subject, are very proactive in ensuring pupils make good progress and achieve well in their subject. The way in which the subjects have been put together to make a rich and very interesting curriculum that uses all the resources available, such as the woodland and food technology areas, is contributing to pupils' enjoyment of learning.
- The very wide range of sporting and creative activities, including educational visits as an integral part of the curriculum, ensures provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and emotional development is strongly supported.
- Financial management is of a high standard. The primary school sport funding is very effectively used to provide pupils with an extremely wide range of activities in lessons and through clubs. Pupils also take part in many competitions.
- The school works very effectively with other schools within the learning partnership and beyond. Leaders also work effectively with the local authority and value the advice that they receive.
- The staff work successfully to engage parents in the education of their children, resulting in a very effective partnership between school and parents.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are proactive and have the skills and expertise to challenge and support leaders appropriately. They know the strengths and the areas for improvement well. They make a positive contribution to the way in which the school evaluates itself and sets areas for improvement. They use information about pupils' progress well when they review staff performance and pay progression. They have a clear understanding of school's finances, including the pupil premium and sports funding. Governors have the required skills to hold leaders to account. The school's safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements. Governors are proactive in enabling staff to share expertise and develop skills within the learning partnership and the local authority.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils very quickly learn the appropriate behaviour and attitudes that they need to be successful in school. This is because of the very high standards set by the staff and the way in which they help those pupils who have some difficulty managing their own behaviour. This ensures that the pupils thrive in the caring, nurturing environment created by the staff. They show high levels of respect to each other and adults enhancing their learning experiences.
- Pupils receive exceptionally high levels of support and care. Thorough procedures to safeguard pupils are very effectively implemented throughout the school. Staff liaise very effectively with a wide range of support agencies to ensure that the best for each individual child is provided.

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils say they feel very safe. They are aware of the different types of bullying and if any should occur, they are confident that the staff would quickly resolve the problem. They are very knowledgeable about how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations. This is because the curriculum covers a wide range of aspects about staying safe, including those relating to the use of computers.
- Pupils' attendance is below average but is rising very quickly. This is due to the work the staff does to ensure pupils attend school regularly. The introduction of a school attendance bus and the vigilance of the staff who go out on the bus in ensuring other agencies are aware if they cannot collect a child from their home, have significantly contributed to pupils' better overall attendance.
- Parents are very positive about pupils' behaviour, indicating that children feel particularly safe in school and that they are very well cared for.

The quality of teaching is good

- Pupils enjoy their learning in lessons and also in the large number of wide-ranging activities that occur beyond the school day. They are eager to do their best. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted very effectively, resulting in very positive relationships between teachers, teaching assistants and pupils, which helps them to learn even better.
- Teachers use their good subject knowledge to plan lessons that build on pupils' skills and extend their learning. Lessons are planned well to meet the needs of different groups of pupils so that their work is not too hard nor too easy.
- Pupils listen attentively in lessons and engage well with the tasks set. They enjoy opportunities to discuss their work and are particularly enthusiastic when tackling challenging activities and questions. This was very evident in a Year 6 science lesson where pupils were asked to classify animals and plants.
- Teachers are providing pupils with many opportunities to improve their reading, writing and mathematics skills in other subjects. This has had a profound impact on the standards pupils achieve in writing.
- Marking of pupils' work is regular. Teachers' comments are supportive and helpful. Pupils respond well to these comments and most apply the learning points to their next piece of work. The feedback pupils receive in their writing books is better than in their mathematics books.
- Pupils are very aware of what they need to do to improve academically and personally. The regular review of their targets ensures that pupils are making good progress.
- Senior leaders robustly evaluate the quality of teaching in the school. Staff value the feedback that they receive and very willingly put into place actions to make their teaching even better.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils achieve well because the staff are very adept at helping them to become successful learners, the curriculum is very interesting and the quality of teaching is good.
- Children generally join the Nursery class with skills and abilities that are significantly below those typical for their age. They get an excellent start in the Nursery class and they continue to make good progress in the Reception classes. Most children start Year 1 with skills that are well below the expected level for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. This is because of the need to help children to become effective learners and socially adept.
- In Key Stage 1, the standards pupils attain have been below average over time, particularly in reading and mathematics. In writing, they have become closer to the expected level. The school is addressing the lower standards in reading and mathematics and, as a result, there were significant improvements in pupils' performance last year. An excellent example of this is the improvement in the Year 1 letters and sounds screening test, where most pupils are now attaining the expected level. Even though standards have been below average overall, pupils have made good progress from their individual starting points.
- Pupils' progress in Key Stage 2 is good in reading and mathematics and outstanding in writing. As a result, their attainment in national tests at the end of Year 6 is around the national average and is rising.
- Pupils in the Resource Base make good progress from their starting points because of the support that they receive from the staff to manage their behaviour and learning, and the work they are given to do is well matched to their ability.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are carefully monitored and receive well-tailored support, which enables them to make good progress.
- The most able pupils make similar good progress from their starting points. This is because the staff

ensure that they are given work and support that are well matched to their needs. An excellent example of this was seen in a Year 4 lesson about plants, where the most able pupils investigated questions and provided information for the whole class.

- Extra provision provided by the pupil premium funding includes focused one-to-one support in literacy and numeracy for disadvantaged pupils and enhanced pastoral intervention for those pupils and families with particular social and personal needs. As a result, disadvantaged pupils supported by the funding make good progress. In the 2013 Year 6 national tests, these pupils attained as well as the other pupils in their class and close to the overall achievement of non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.
- In subjects other than English and mathematics, pupils make good progress. The quality of the curriculum, including the additional activities before, during and after school, enables pupils to make links between subjects and develop their literacy and numeracy skills.

The early years provision

is good

- Children have a good start to their education. Most children enter the Nursery class with skills and abilities that are significantly below those expected for their age. All children make outstanding progress in their personal development as they learn to cooperate with each other and become effective learners. This prepares them well for the next stage of their education.
- In other aspects, the children make good progress even though most start Year 1 with skills that are much below those expected for their age, particularly in reading, writing and number.
- Children who need additional support because they have special educational needs are very quickly identified and appropriate activities and support are quickly provided.
- Children for whom the school receives additional funding make similar progress to the other children.
- The most able children make outstanding progress because they capitalise on the wide range of activities and the input from the staff. This means that this group of children start Year 1 with the expected level for their age.
- Teaching is consistently good and is often inspirational in the Nursery class. An example of this is the way in which the Humpty Dumpty theme involved the children in building a wall with real bricks and investigating the contents of a real egg.
- Improvements in the outdoor play area and the effective way in which it has been used is making a significant contribution to the children's physical development.
- The very effective leadership in the Early Years Foundation Stage has ensured that the activities provided for the children contribute significantly to children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It has also ensured that teaching is at least consistently good and the children are making good progress. Children's overall progress continues to improve because of the focused approach to ensuring children get the best quality education.

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	108485
Local authority	Newcastle Upon Tyne
Inspection number	448354

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	209
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ann Charlton
Headteacher	Nichola Draper
Date of previous school inspection	17 November 2009
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