

Pentland Primary School

Pentland Avenue, Billingham, Cleveland, TS23 2RG

Inspection dates 19–20 September 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher has taken decisive action to improve teaching and, as a result, the quality of teaching and learning is consistently good. Pupils make good progress.
- Behaviour is good because the school uses nurture groups to encourage and support pupils to behave well.
- Relationships are strong and care and support are excellent. Pupils feel safe and keen to learn. Home-school support workers ensure pupils are eager to attend regularly.
- The curriculum promotes pupils' achievement and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. It provides stimulating opportunities that capture their interest.
- The headteacher has a strong presence in school and is well respected by all. She is ably supported by other leaders and governors; together they lead the school effectively so that it has improved rapidly since the previous inspection.
- Partnerships with other schools and the local authority have contributed successfully to the significant improvements in the quality of teaching and pupils' progress.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, including for those in the school's support base. Consequently, they make good progress.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The quality of teaching and learning has some aspects to improve to raise it to being consistently outstanding. Expectations about the quality of handwriting are not always high enough and marking is not consistently effective.
- The governing body is not yet fully effective in using data to check on pupils' progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 22 lessons taught by 14 teachers and analysed the work in pupils' books.
- The headteacher conducted three joint lesson observations with inspectors.
- Meetings were held with members of the school council, the headteacher, senior and subject leaders, the Chair and five members of the Governing Body and one representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the 14 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and 15 responses from staff, in planning and carrying out the inspection.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised a number of documents including the school's checks on how well it is doing and improvement plans, data on pupils' current progress and the school's monitoring of teaching, as well as records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Kevin Dodd, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jane Beckett

Additional Inspector

Jennifer Firth

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportions of pupils supported at school action are well above the national average.
- The proportions of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is high. (The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and children that are looked after by the local authority.)
- The school has a specialised unit which attracts additional funding to address the needs of 10 Key Stage 2 pupils with special educational needs and disabilities within the local authority of Stockton-on-Tees.
- Last year, the school met the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment.
- The school has achieved the Healthy School Status, Activemark Gold and Artsmark Gold awards.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching and learning to outstanding by:
 - sharing the outstanding aspects evident in the school and eradicating the small number of weaker aspects that remain in a few lessons
 - embedding marking so teachers help pupils to understand how to do better next time and allow pupils time to act upon that advice
 - teaching handwriting consistently and having higher expectations of pupils' presentation of their writing.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - developing the expertise of the governing body in using information about pupils' attainment and progress, including the data dashboard, to hold senior leaders and teaching staff better to account.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start school with skills and abilities well below those typically expected for their age and make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. A significant minority of children enter the Nursery with language and communication difficulties and effective guidance enables these children to achieve as well as their peers. Overall, children make a good start that extends their basic skills, ready for Year 1.
- Improved teaching in Key Stage 1 ensures pupils continue to make good progress, so that at the end of Year 2, attainment is below average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In Key Stage 2, progress is good and has accelerated since the previous inspection due to improved teaching. Overall, pupils typically attain broadly average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they leave at the end of Year 6.
- Pupils make good progress in writing and write in a variety of styles. They express their ideas confidently but presentation is not always as neat as it could be. In mathematics, teachers have good subject knowledge and ensure pupils use their mental recall skills to solve number problems.
- Inspection evidence shows that pupils make good progress in reading. This is a result of effective teaching of how to link sounds and letters to help pupils read words they are not familiar with, and a successful drive to help pupils enjoy books and read more in school and at home.
- Greater participation in physical education and sport is increasingly helping pupils develop healthy lifestyles and reach the performance levels they are capable of.
- The school met the floor standard overall at the end of Year 6 in 2012.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, including those who attend the school's specialised unit, attain standards that are in line with those of similar pupils across the country. They make good progress from their individual starting points, especially in their social and emotional development, as a result of work that is very well suited to their abilities and the good support and teaching they receive.
- The progress of pupils supported by the pupil premium, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, is improving. Good teaching ensures that any gaps in their attainment compared to that of other pupils are closing rapidly, and that they make the same good progress as other pupils in the school. Their attainment is now broadly average in English and mathematics. This shows the school's commitment to promoting equal opportunities and tackling discrimination.

The quality of teaching is good

- The overall quality of teaching is good and the school's records show that the proportion of outstanding teaching is rising.
- Teaching and routines in the Early Years Foundation Stage are based on a good understanding of children's needs. Observations of children's achievements are used well to inform activities. Teachers' questioning extends children's skills and understanding well. Teaching assistants guide children's progress effectively. Good resources, including information and communication technology (ICT), support learning well. Good opportunities enable children to take charge of their own learning, including outdoors.
- In the best lessons in Key Stages 1 and 2, teachers plan lessons thoroughly to make sure all pupils have work that gets the best out of them. They explain ideas carefully and use questions skilfully to extend learning. Teaching assistants support and guide successfully the learning of all pupils.
- Activities are interesting and capture pupils' interest. Written feedback is used well to promote

pupils' learning. For instance, in a Year 6 class, pupils were challenged to identify a mythical beast from a verbal description given by another pupil. This enthused pupils and, together with written feedback provided by the teacher from the previous lesson, helped them refine their own written descriptions.

- Where teaching requires improvement, one or more of the strengths outlined above are missing. Teachers' marking does not always make it clear to pupils how to improve their work. They do not have sufficient time for pupils to act upon any advice given so the pace of learning for some pupils is slower. Expectations of pupils' presentation are not always high enough and handwriting is not consistently taught effectively.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs within the school and in the specialised unit are given effective support. Teaching methods are especially well suited to the needs of these pupils and those who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium, helping them to learn quickly.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are keen to learn and are happy in school. Pupils get on with their work eagerly because of the excellent relationships and high expectations of staff. They work and play very well together, respect one another and are polite to adults. Staff and parents are positive about behaviour within school and pupils believe behaviour is good, 'because teachers make learning fun and always try to push us to be the best we can be'.
- The school is a 'learning family' where all staff are excellent role models. Staff succeed in encouraging pupils to behave well through a nurturing and supportive approach. This has helped the school deal effectively with pupils exhibiting challenging behaviour and dramatically reduce exclusions. Consequently, the behaviour of these pupils is managed well, and lessons and pupils' learning are rarely interrupted.
- Instances of misbehaviour are rare and dealt with consistently well by staff. School records show that effective action has been taken to deal with the very few instances of bullying that have occurred. Pupils have a good understanding about different types of bullying, including racism, harassment and cyber bullying. Pupils are very clear about the behaviour expected of them.
- The home-school support workers have improved attendance effectively; pupils attend school regularly and arrive on time.
- Pupils report that they feel safe in school. They understand what constitutes unsafe situations and the basic principles of how to keep themselves safe. Risk assessments are undertaken and the school is rigorous in its procedures for ensuring pupils' safety.
- Break times and lunchtimes are supervised particularly well, which ensures pupils enjoy playing with one another.

The leadership and management are good

- The leadership of the headteacher is strong and she manages others with great determination. She has a very clear view of how successful the school can be. All staff share this view. The leadership team inspires staff and pupils and creates a good team spirit. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive and staff and pupils appreciate the headteacher's encouraging approach.
- The leadership team has successfully improved pupils' progress by strengthening the quality of teaching and through forming effective partnerships. Good progress has been made in tackling the other areas identified for improvement in the previous inspection report. Successful actions, including a curriculum better suited to the needs and interests of pupils, have raised attainment in reading, writing and mathematics for all groups of pupils, including the more able.
- An accurate and robust system checks pupils' progress and is used effectively to identify where help is needed. It ensures good progress and promotes equal opportunities successfully.

- The leadership team monitors teaching and provides astute comments on how to make it better. Training links to these needs. This has improved teaching although, as yet, the special educational needs leader is not consistently involved in this process.
- The headteacher uses this information effectively as part of the strengthened approach to appraise teachers' performance. Discussions about pupils' progress ensure that staff are answerable for the progress of the pupils in their class. The headteacher and governors ensure teachers are only rewarded when they are successful in helping pupils to make at least good progress. More outstanding teaching is emerging, although this is not always shared across the school.
- Procedures for gaining an accurate view of strengths and areas to develop identify effectively the main priorities. Plans and actions tackle these with a clear impact on raising attainment and increasing pupils' progress.
- Links between home and school are good. The school website provides helpful information and parents are involved appropriately in pupils' learning.
- The curriculum meets pupils' needs. It adds interest to learning and pupils say they enjoy the topics, the way that subjects are linked and the visits to places of interest. Several clubs exist to meet the interests of all pupils and are well attended. The new primary school sport funding extends the variety of activities and promotes healthy lifestyles.
- The local authority has a good understanding of the school's needs and has been effective in its support towards rapid improvement.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors know achievement and teaching have improved and are now good. They recognise the quality of teaching and check that teachers' salary progression is linked to their appraisal outcomes and their stage of career development. Under the leadership of the headteacher, governors are playing a more central role in future planning. They understand that the pupil premium funding benefits pupils who are at risk of underachieving and improves their outcomes. Governors are not fully involved in analysing data about pupils' progress, including data dashboard information which provides details about pupils' performance, to help them check priorities for improvement. The governing body ensures safeguarding meets requirements.

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	111642
Local authority	Stockton-on-Tees
Inspection number	425794

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	279
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nick Guy
Headteacher	Hazel Ducker
Date of previous school inspection	17 October 2011
Telephone number	01642 559609
Fax number	01642 360235
Email address	hazel.ducker@sbcschools.org.uk

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