

Stanhope Barrington CofE Primary School

Westcroft, Stanhope, Bishop Auckland, County Durham, DL13 2NU

Inspection dates 30 April – 1 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Pupils make outstanding progress from their individual starting points in literacy and mathematics. Attainment is above average.
- Attainment is exceptionally high in mathematics.
- The school's results in national tests places them in the top 10% of all schools for mathematics and in the top 20% for English.
- Pupils read and write very well. This helps them to make rapid progress.
- Teaching is outstanding in every class. Tasks challenge pupils to think for themselves.
- The methodical teaching of mental and oral mathematics across the school is very effective at sustaining high standards.
- The teaching of elements of spelling, punctuation and grammar is less systematic.
- Behaviour is outstanding. Pupils work very hard and clearly enjoy doing so. They say, 'The best things about schools are the work and everyone is really friendly.'
- Pupils feel extremely safe because they are taught how to respect and help each other.
- Leadership and management are excellent. They ensure that pupils are ambitious to improve their personal best. As a result, their achievement improves each year.
- The leadership of teaching is outstanding. Senior leaders teach extensively so that every child has first-rate teaching.
- Governors give outstanding support to the school. They help it to improve further.
- The lively curriculum enables pupils to use and apply their literacy and mathematical skills extensively. It makes learning fun.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 13 lessons or parts of lessons taught by six teachers including the headteacher.
- The inspector held meetings with staff, the Chair of the Governing Body, a Foundation Governor, a group of pupils from Year 6 and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspection took into account the 10 responses in the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and the parental views on the school's website.

Inspection team

Lesley Clark, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children that are looked after by the local authority.
- An above-average proportion of pupils join the school at times other than the usual.
- The before- and after-school club is privately run and inspected separately. The report can be found on the Ofsted website.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Adopt a similarly methodical approach to that used at the start of mathematics lessons to teach elements of spelling, punctuation and grammar in order to sustain high attainment in writing.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Pupils achieve exceptionally well. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make rapid progress from starting points that are below those typically expected for their age. They learn early literacy and number skills quickly because they use these every day in a wide range of purposeful indoor and outdoor activities that develop their physical skills at the same time.
- Standards of attainment in literacy are above average across the school. Two thirds of Year 6 pupils read at the level expected of 14-year-olds. Pupils read voraciously, commenting 'There's about a million books to borrow here!' They read accurately and fluently, testing themselves regularly, using a computer programme, so they reach their reading targets.
- Pupils' excellent reading skills enable them to learn with a great deal of independence. They read a very wide range of reading materials, from the chemical periodic table to comic books. They skim read and scan for information almost without realising it because they use these skills extensively in all subjects.
- Pupils write very well. Their handwriting is neat and legible and reflects the pride pupils take in their work. Pupils use punctuation correctly and relish using words for effect as in this arresting opening, 'Sharp shards of glass falling into the water, make it ripple...'
- Standards of attainment in mathematics are exceptionally high. By the end of Year 6, two-thirds of pupils are three years ahead of the average for this age group. For example, pupils understand how to use a protractor and compass to calculate different angles. They use formulae, tackle algebraic equations confidently, and begin to understand trigonometry.
- Disabled pupils and those supported by school action, school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs make outstanding progress. Almost all reach nationally expected standards in literacy and mathematics by the end of Year 6 and a few exceed these. They do much better than similar groups nationally.
- Pupils who are new to the school make double the expected progress in a year as a result of extra help. Their achievement is outstanding.
- Pupils who are supported through the pupil premium, including those known to be eligible for free school meals make outstanding progress. Their attainment is as good as that of others in the school. Typically, they are two to three points ahead of similar groups nationally. The school clearly promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination successfully.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- It is plain from looking at pupils' work that teachers in all classes expect high standards of presentation. This minimises pupils making mistakes, especially in mathematics, and encourages pupils to set themselves high standards too.
- Teachers mark pupils' work constructively. Target setting is systematic and effective. Pupils know exactly what to do to reach the next level.
- Mental and oral mathematics is taught systematically so that pupils revise, consolidate and learn something new each day, swiftly and efficiently. This makes pupils think and apply what they know. Pupils know that they are doing well if each day they get one more correct answer than previously. It works because pupils are competing against themselves, not others. It leads to high levels of success for pupils of all abilities because each small step is achievable.
- The system to teach spelling, punctuation and grammar at the start of literacy lessons is not quite so systematic and so it takes a little longer for pupils to apply skills with similar confidence.
- Teachers expect a great deal from their pupils. For instance, pupils in Years 3 and 4 use the mnemonic ISPACE to help them to write interesting opening sentences. This reminds them to think how to start with an '-ing word', simile, or adverb, for example, but makes them think which one is appropriate rather than giving them a list to choose from.

- Teachers question very well indeed, often using this as a way to challenge more-able pupils and to encourage those who struggle. The impact is seen in the way that pupils mirror this high-quality questioning when they work together. They clearly find learning fun.
- As a result of outstanding teaching, pupils are not afraid of making mistakes because they know that they will be helped to put them right. Parents agree. Pupils explain what they find hard and teachers then know what to do to help them. Teaching assistants are highly skilled at giving just the right amount of help to enable pupils with special educational needs to work independently.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Behaviour in lessons is outstanding. Typically, pupils are completely absorbed in their work. When they work in groups, they discuss animatedly and sensibly, considering, 'How else could you do it?' instead of choosing the easiest option.
- Behaviour at break times and around school is also outstanding. Playground games develop pupils' social as well as their physical skills. The school council recently organised 'a scooter park' with three ramps, for example. Pupils bring an extra pair of shoes so they can use the field all the year round. The result is a happy, sociable learning environment for everyone.
- Pupils behave responsibly. Older pupils play and work with younger ones. Pupils explained, 'Reading buddies help younger ones with words they get stuck on. Sometimes you read your book to them and ask them questions and try to help them to answer.'
- Pupils are proud of their school. Older pupils explained, 'This school encourages you to learn. Everyone has a chance. Even if you are working at Level 4, you have a go at Level 6 and so it gives you confidence because if you don't get it today you might tomorrow.'
- Pupils have a mature understanding of different forms of bullying and are confident that there is no bullying or racism in their school. They know that, 'Bullies go for people who can't stand up for themselves.' They rate behaviour as 'really good but about 0.89% isn't.' The school's records confirm their positive views.
- Pupils feel safe. They respect each other and trust the teachers. The impact is seen in pupils' self-reliance and self-esteem. Newcomers think this is what makes this school special.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- School leaders clearly believe that children come first. The question, 'Why do we do this?' with its answer, 'Because we can,' underpins the school's philosophy. The pupils believe they are good enough to achieve anything and that they will succeed if they work hard. This is why pupils' achievement is outstanding and the school continues to improve.
- The impact of this highly effective leadership team is seen in pupils' rapid progress from their individual starting points, the above-average standards of attainment that improve each year, first-rate teaching and confident pupils who are fully prepared for the next stage in life.
- The leadership of teaching is excellent. School leaders lead by example as outstanding practitioners. They work alongside colleagues, share ideas and suggest improvements. All staff know how effective their teaching is because they keep careful checks on pupils' progress in 'cohort files' which they update several times a term. From these, they can see at a glance the impact of specific measures to improve progress and where they need to adapt their teaching.
- This systematic approach means that pupils who arrive at different points during the year get skilled, targeted support instantly. Staffing is used creatively to ensure that those who have gaps in their learning are taught as well as everyone else, with senior leaders teaching 'catch up' groups, for example.
- The school uses performance management extremely well to encourage and reward outstanding teaching. School leaders use it scrupulously to ensure that all teaching is of high quality, giving extra training and support as required before teachers are allowed to progress up the pay scale.

They take effective action when teaching is not good enough. The success is evident in the outstanding teaching across the school.

- The imaginative curriculum makes excellent provision for pupils to use and apply their literacy and mathematics skills. For example, older pupils researched the Galapagos Islands linked to mathematical problems involving latitude and longitude.
- Pupils and staff feel safe because safeguarding is efficient and meets requirements.
- The local authority gives light-touch support. It uses the mathematical expertise of the school to support other schools.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are closely involved in helping the school to continue to improve. They have helped to maintain the school's high standards. They know how well pupils, including those supported through the pupil premium funding, are progressing and they know the reasons why because they look at pupils' work regularly. They play a large part in the management of staff and make excellent decisions. Governors know that teaching is extremely well led because they check teaching effectiveness regularly. They recognise that staff are highly skilled and are well aware that staff from this school are observed regularly by colleagues in schools and universities because of their expertise.

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	114217
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	403230

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	134
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nigel Cranston
Headteacher	Lynne Bainbridge
Date of previous school inspection	27 November 2007
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