

Simmondley Primary School

Pennine Road, Simmondley, Glossop, Derbyshire SK11 6NN

Inspection dates 15–16 December 2015

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	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- This is a school which is well led and managed by a highly organised senior leadership team that knows exactly what to do to raise standards.
- Together with a fully involved and well-informed governing body, senior leaders have ensured that teaching and learning have rapidly improved since the previous inspection.
- The quality of teaching across the school, including in the early years, is good. Teachers and teaching assistants work together well to plan activities that pupils find stimulating and engaging.
- Pupils' skills in phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) are good. The proportion of pupils secure in their phonics skills and knowledge at the national screening check in 2015 was well above average.
- Pupils' attendance is well above average. They are courteous, conscientious, and enjoy coming to school to learn with their friends.
- The school's work to promote British values is good. Pupils are well aware of their citizenship rights, as well as their responsibilities.
- In 2015 almost all pupils in Year 6, including those eligible for support through the pupil premium, made good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Year 2 pupils also made good progress and attained above expected standards in all subjects at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2015. Their attainment in writing was outstanding.
- Parents are highly complimentary about all aspects of the school. They feel well informed, and are of the view that their children are happy, safe, and progressing well.
- The leadership and management of all aspects of the early years provision are good. As a result, almost all pupils make good progress and attain well.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The most-able pupils are not always challenged to achieve to the very best of their ability. The best teaching practice is yet to be fully shared across the school.
- The role of subject leaders in improving the quality of teaching is not yet fully developed.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is outstanding, and in doing so raise standards across the school by:
 - ensuring that the most-able pupils are challenged to achieve to the very best of their ability
 - making sure that the best practice in teaching is shared across the school.

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that subject leaders play a fuller role in improving the quality of teaching.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The school is well led and managed by a highly organised headteacher and deputy headteacher. Together with the support of a fully informed governing body, they have systematically tackled weaknesses identified at the previous inspection.
- Inspection evidence, including discussions with pupils and parents, school assessment information and work in pupils' books, indicates that most pupils make at least good progress, and that the quality of teaching is good and rapidly improving.
- Subject leaders are well trained. They regularly brief their colleagues on the latest developments in their respective subject areas, and meet with pupils to discuss their learning and assess the quality of their work. The 'themed weeks' that subject specialists organise in, for example, science and history, help to develop pupils' subject knowledge. However, their role in improving the quality of teaching is less clearly defined, and is yet to be fully developed.
- Senior leaders' use of the pupil premium in raising standards for disadvantaged pupils is highly effective. The performance of all pupils is closely checked to ensure that none fall behind, and that support is provided when it is needed. This helps sustain disadvantaged pupils' rapid progress, which is as good as their peers.
- The performance of teachers and teaching assistants is regularly monitored. They are set challenging targets, all of which are linked to improving their teaching practice, and raising pupils' levels of achievement.
- Pupils benefit from an exciting curriculum which engages their interest and supports their good, and sometimes outstanding, progress in reading, writing and mathematics across all classes. Pupils enjoy learning about the First World War, explorers and inventors, and Mayan culture. They regularly visit museums and theatres and local places of interest. Key Stage 2 pupils enjoy carrying out their own research, and learning about Tudor technology and Victorian art.
- The school develops pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils celebrate various cultural and religious festivals, visit different places of worship, and learn about the major world faiths. Pupils have opportunities to play a variety of string and brass instruments and many are members of the school choir. Pupils raise money for different charities, and enjoy writing to pupils in their partner school in Ghana.
- Pupils have an exceptionally good understanding of British values. They like to exercise their rights, enjoy making decisions and 'having their say', and know how to be responsible citizens. Pupils demonstrate mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and have a good understanding of the culturally diverse nature of British society. This prepares pupils very well for life in modern Britain.
- Senior leaders and governors ensure that the primary school sports fund is well spent to improve pupils' health and well-being through exercise and dance, and to increase their participation in competitive sports, including athletics. Funding is also used to develop teachers' coaching skills in various physical education activities.
- The school's work to foster good relations with parents is highly effective. The overwhelming majority of parents who spoke to inspectors were highly positive about all aspects of the school. They stated that they could not fault the school in any way, and applauded its improvements.
- The school has a highly productive relationship with its school improvement partner. This has helped to ensure that assessments of children's performance in the early years are accurate, and that they attain exceptionally well.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors are highly effective. They know the school very well and are fully aware of its strengths, and what it needs to do to improve further. They know that the attainment of pupils at the end of Year 6 in 2015 was below average, even though the support they received ensured that most made good progress. Governors understand data and assessment information. They check on pupils' performance, and challenge senior leaders if they have any concerns.
 - Governors know that the quality of teaching is good, because they come into school regularly and have first-hand experience. They talk to pupils and children in the early years, and look at the quality of their work. Governors are happy to reward teachers for their good work, but only if they reach their targets.

- Governors know that pupil premium funding is making a difference to the lives of the pupils that it supports, ensuring that they can, for example, participate in educational visits. They know that one-to-one support, and support with spelling and handwriting, is boosting pupils' progress, and ensuring that they attain well.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Senior leaders engage with parents, carers and other stakeholders exceptionally well to make sure that all pupils are supported and safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- The quality of teaching is good, and has improved since the previous inspection. Teachers are trained well and have good subject knowledge. They meet regularly to assess how well pupils are learning, and use information on pupils' performance to plan different engaging and stimulating activities.
- Pupils learn in well-resourced classrooms which are thoughtfully organised to enable pupils to find information to help them with their problem-solving and calculation activities, and their reading, writing, grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- Teachers follow the school's marking and feedback policy consistently. As result, they regularly check pupils' work. The feedback that they provide is of good quality, and always indicates to pupils how they can improve their work. Teachers are careful to check that pupils follow their advice, and improve their work as a result of it. Almost all pupils who spoke to inspectors could talk about what they were doing well, and what they needed to do to improve their reading, writing and mathematics further.
- Teachers consistently check on the quality of pupils' grammar, punctuation and spelling in English and other subjects. Work in pupils' books reveals that they are highly skilled at expressing their ideas in both their creative and factual writing.
- Teachers make learning interesting, and encourage pupils to think deeply and debate topical issues. This was the case in a Key Stage 2 English class where pupils were eager to share their views on space travel. All hands were up when the teacher asked pupils how the astronauts, about to be blasted off into space, might be feeling about their impending mission. All agreed that they would be 'tense', 'nervous' and 'excited' about the prospect of orbiting the earth.
- Teachers afford pupils many opportunities to read in class, and develop their comprehension skills well. Pupils are skilled at scanning texts for information, picking out the most important information, and discussing this with their classmates. This was evident in a lower Key Stage 2 class where pupils read through a story about Christmas, and correctly answered questions about the festive season.
- Phonics is taught consistently well by skilled teachers and teaching assistants. This was shown in a Key Stage 1 class where pupils were practising the 'sh' and 'ch' sounds, and using these to make short words. The teacher demonstrated these sounds clearly as pupils used well-rehearsed hand gestures to represent different sounds.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to ensure that pupils with different abilities are well supported in class. This was exemplified in an upper Key Stage 2 mathematics class where pupils were learning about perimeter. The teacher was careful to ensure that all pupils appreciated the importance of being able to measure various shapes accurately, such as rectangular rooms, before giving them different problems to solve. However, teaching is not always as effective as this, and such good practice is yet to be fully shared across the school.
- Most teachers ensure that pupils are fully engaged in their learning. They set pupils different targets in English and mathematics, and make sure that they understand them. However, discussions with pupils and work in their books reveal that, occasionally, teachers' expectations of what the most-able pupils are capable of achieving are not quite high enough, and that these pupils are not always fully challenged to achieve to the very best of their ability.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils, including children in the early years, are polite, welcoming, and respectful towards each other and adults. They ensure that their school is well looked after, wear their uniforms with pride, and usually make sure that their work is well presented.

- Pupils enjoy coming together for assemblies, and sharing a sense of occasion. This was the case when pupils gathered to watch the live broadcast of the historic moment that Tim Peake and fellow astronauts blasted off from Kazakhstan to join the International Space Station orbiting the earth.
- Pupils enjoy celebrating each other's achievements because of their good personal, social and emotional development. This was exemplified during a Christmas school concert where pupils enthusiastically applauded the performance of the choir, and the brass and string quartet.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and well looked after at all times. Regular visitors from the fire, police and ambulance services help develop pupils' understanding of safe and unsafe situations. Older pupils learn how to ride their bikes safely and have a good understanding of the potential dangers of being on the road.
- Pupils have a good understanding of cyber bullying, and know how to stay safe while using the internet. They know never to share personal information with strangers, including phone numbers and email addresses, and never to text, or talk to, strangers.
- Pupils have a good understanding of racism, which they say is when someone makes fun of someone else because of their skin colour or the way they look, and other forms of discrimination and prejudice, such as homophobic bullying. They are adamant that no discrimination or prejudice of any kind happens in school.
- The before- and after-school clubs promote pupils' good attendance and punctuation, and good achievement.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are of the view that behaviour is good most of the time. Governors, parents and teachers are also of this view. Inspection evidence, including a check on the school's behaviour logs, confirms that behaviour is typically good.
- Pupils move around the school considerately, and behave sensibly during lunch and playtimes. This was demonstrated during separate Key Stage 1 and 2 Christmas parties. Even though pupils thoroughly enjoyed themselves and were very excited, they followed the school rules and gave due consideration to those not engaged in the festivities.
- Pupils' behaviour in class is never less than good. They listen carefully, follow instructions well and are eager to answer questions.
- Pupils' attendance is above average. They are punctual, conscientious, enjoy coming to school, and are becoming increasingly self-assured in their learning.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Historic data show that in 2014, at the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment in reading, writing, mathematics, grammar, punctuation and spelling was high. They made outstanding progress in writing and mathematics, and good progress in reading. At this time, their overall achievement had been well above average for four of the last five years.
- At the end of Year 6 in 2015, pupils' achievement was not as good as in 2014. Senior leaders and governors were well aware that this was likely to be the case, and responded by checking on the progress of this group, and providing tailored support where it was needed. As a result, almost all pupils made good progress in all subjects from their below average starting points on entry to Key Stage 2.
- Pupils' overall attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 has been well above average for the last four years. Pupils progressed well in 2015. Their attainment was above average in all subjects, and high in writing.
- Inspection evidence reveals that in 2015 almost all pupils made good and sometimes outstanding progress in all subjects, and across all classes. This year pupils have got off to a flying start, and are making accelerated progress across the school.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard at the national phonics screening check in 2015 was well above average. Pupils love to read, and read regularly. Older pupils read confidently and fluently and enjoy poetry, plays, and fiction and non-fiction books. Younger pupils use their phonics skills exceptionally well to sound out and read unfamiliar words. All pupils know that their reading helps them to learn new words, and improve their writing.
- The vast majority of pupils progress well in mathematics and have well-developed problem-solving and

calculation skills. This is because of teachers' good subject knowledge and their focus on helping pupils to apply their skills, and develop a full appreciation of the importance of mathematics in everyday life.

- Pupils progress well in writing and attain highly. Work in pupils' books reveals that they have many opportunities to write at length about their many educational visits and field trips, and develop their skills at writing in a range of different styles.
- Historic data show that very few pupils in Year 6 in 2015 were disadvantaged. So it is not possible to make any meaningful comparisons between their performance and that of their peers in school, or other pupils nationally. The progress of disadvantaged pupils currently in school is at least good in all subjects across all classes.
- Comparisons between the performance of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and all pupils nationally have to be treated with caution, due to the small size of the cohort in Year 6 in 2015. However the good care and support that these pupils received ensured that they made good progress in all subjects, often from very low starting points.
- Fewer pupils in Year 6 in 2015 attained the exceptionally high standards in reading, writing and mathematics that were secured by their predecessors in the previous year. However, they progressed well from low starting points on entry to Key Stage 2.
- Work in pupils' books shows that the most-able pupils are often making good progress because they are given harder work. However, these pupils are not always challenged to achieve to the very best of their ability.

Early years provision

is good

- The leadership and management of all aspects of the early years provision are good. Early years staff have exceptionally high expectations of what children are capable of achieving. They work well to develop children's sense of wonder and curiosity about the world around them, and ensure that they learn and develop in a caring and stimulating environment.
- Accurate assessment information indicates that children enter the Reception class with skills and abilities which are at least in line with those expected for their age in all areas of learning. Good teaching and an engaging curriculum develop these skills even further as they move through the Reception class.
- Historic data show that in 2015 children progressed exceptionally well in the Reception class, with a much larger-than-average proportion attaining a good level of development. Almost all were very well equipped with the skills and abilities for the next stage of their learning in Year 1. Current data show that children continue to flourish, and progress well.
- The quality of teaching is good. Early years staff are trained well, and know children well. They keep detailed records on the children's performance, and tailor activities to ensure that they fully develop their creative, reading, writing, and mathematical skills.
- Children behave safely and are well supervised at all times. They move around their indoor and outside learning and playing areas sensibly and enjoy taking turns. This was exemplified during 'Wellies Wednesday', where children put on their wellingtons, hats and coats and lined up outside. They listened carefully to their teacher's instructions before pursuing their various interests which included playing in the mud kitchen, experimenting with water, siphoning liquids through a tube and mixing coloured paints in puddles.
- Indoor provision is well organised, with attractive displays of children's work. There are areas for children to measure and explore different shapes and textures, opportunities for them to engage in role play activities, and quiet places for them to read.
- Parents are kept informed about their children's progress, and often come into the Reception class to participate in their learning. Parents are happy that their children are safe, cared for, and developing well.
- Senior leaders know exactly what to do to move the early years provision from good to outstanding. They have made it a priority to improve outdoor provision further, and strengthen children's mathematical and technology skills.
- Staff ensure children's safety by applying the same good safeguarding procedures in operation in Key Stages 1 and 2 in the early years provision.

School details

Unique reference number	112706
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10001846

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	246
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Julian Gordon
Headteacher	Deborah Greaves
Telephone number	01457 852721
Website	www.rainbow-web-design.co.uk/simmondley
Email address	enquiries@simmondley.derbyshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13–14 September 2013

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by pupil premium funding is well below average. (The pupil premium is additional government funding to support those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.)
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- Children in the early years provision attend the Reception class on a full-time basis.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Since the previous inspection the governing body has been reorganised to include a new Chair of the Governing Body, and a new vice-chair.
- A before- and after-school club is based on the site. These are managed by the governing body.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of lessons in all year groups, as well as the teaching of small groups of pupils and sessions aimed at helping pupils to learn to read. Lessons were jointly observed with the headteacher.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and held discussions with pupils from across the school. Pupils' work in books was scrutinised with senior leaders.
- Inspectors considered 84 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). Informal meetings were held with parents at the beginning of the school day. Separate meetings were held with two parents. Responses to the inspection questionnaire completed by 22 members of staff were considered.
- Meetings were held with six governors, including the vice-chair of the governing body. Meetings were also held with school leaders, including those responsible for mathematics, provision for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, and children in the early years.
- A meeting took place with the school's improvement partner.
- A range of documents were examined. These included information about pupils' progress, the school's reviews of its own performance and checks on the quality of teaching, development plans, safeguarding documentation and various records of pupils' attendance and behaviour.

Inspection team

Lenford White, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Tracey Ydlibi	Ofsted Inspector
Janis Warren	Ofsted Inspector

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