

Byker Primary School

Commercial Road, Byker, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Tyne and Wear NE6 2AT

Inspection dates

13–14 July 2017

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- Pupils' outcomes from all ability groups are excellent. They make substantial progress from starting points that are typically below those which would be expected. Standards by Year 6 are above average.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are exemplary. They are eager to learn and keen to share their knowledge. Pupils are rightly proud of their achievements and proud of their school.
- Pupils' superb spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is nurtured from the outset. Pupils develop a strong sense of pride in their community and a strong sense of social responsibility, tolerance and respect.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. They value the support given to their children and to them and know that their children are safe, cared for well and achieve highly.
- Subject leaders have excellent subject knowledge. They inspire colleagues to try new ways of working and demonstrate the skills needed to ensure that there is continuous improvement in pupils' learning and progress.
- Leaders ensure that pupils are provided with excellent opportunities to develop their literacy and numeracy skills at a rapid rate. Leaders are now working to ensure that pupils develop their skills in other curriculum subjects equally well.
- Highly effective teaching, and accurate assessment information, ensures that disadvantaged pupils make exceptionally strong progress from their varied starting points into school. The high standard of teaching, learning and assessment ensures that no pupil is left behind.
- The headteacher is relentless in her drive to ensure that all pupils achieve their best. She has created a staff team who share, and deliver successfully, her ambition for all pupils to thrive academically and emotionally.
- Governors ensure that school funding is spent wisely to reduce the gaps in attainment that exist when pupils start school.
- Leaders have a very accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They know that attendance could be even better. Action is being taken to address this.
- Support for pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding and extends to their wider families. It prepares pupils well for the lives they will lead in modern Britain.
- The early years leader has taken effective action to improve the quality of teaching and outcomes for children. They are well prepared for Year 1, whatever their starting points.
- Arrangements to safeguard pupils are highly effective.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the development of pupils' subject-specific skills for all foundation subjects matches the same excellence as those of literacy and numeracy.
- Continue to improve pupils' attendance.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The headteacher has been pivotal to the success of the school. She is uncompromising in her determination to instil in all pupils the belief that they can, and will, achieve their best. Although the proportion of disadvantaged pupils within the school is well above average, there is a 'no excuse' culture and the expectations for pupils' achievement are highly ambitious. As a result, pupils, and their parents, are hugely positive and aspirational about their future.
- The deputy headteacher has skilfully developed a detailed and accurate approach to assessment. It identifies the exact needs of pupils and ensures that even the smallest of measures will be achieved. This rigorous approach informs leaders' monitoring activities throughout the year. It enables leaders to have an accurate view of how well pupils are doing in relation to their ambitious personal targets and to the expectations of the national curriculum. Such is the attention to detail that pupils make exceptional progress, particularly in English and mathematics.
- Subject leadership is of equally high quality. Leaders have a strong and well-established role in checking the work of teachers and they are ambitious to improve practice further. The hallmark of their leadership is their excellent subject knowledge and incisive plans for improvement. As a result, action plans give teachers very clear guidance on what needs to be done to improve further. This strengthens leadership to secure continuous improvement.
- The staff team are a cohesive unit. They are wholly committed to the school's values and ethos and are exceptionally motivated to provide the very best for all pupils. This is evident from the positive and productive atmosphere within the school. Judicious appointments and carefully planned training have resulted in a highly skilled group of teachers and a team of support staff. Their impact is evident in the achievement of all groups of pupils.
- The school makes excellent use of the additional funding it receives. Pupils who are disadvantaged receive highly effective additional support to ensure that they make strong and sustained progress and receive the same opportunities to learn as others. This means that outcomes for this group of pupils are often higher than those of other pupils nationally.
- Additional physical education (PE) and sports funding has broadened the range of opportunities that pupils have, both during core curriculum activities and playtimes. A dedicated specialist PE teacher ensures that pupils receive a high-quality PE programme. This equips pupils with the necessary age-appropriate skills to understand their own level of fitness and the knowledge to know how to keep themselves healthy. The older pupils form a dedicated team of play leaders who organise a raft of pupil-led activities, designed to keep pupils of all ages engaged in physical activities. For example, at lunchtime, a group of pupils were leading a dance session, with routines that even the youngest pupils could join in. Such is the degree of pupil participation that playtimes are harmonious and highly active occasions and pupils' outcomes are excellent.

- Funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is equally well spent. The level of challenge for pupils to achieve is high. Pupils benefit from a variety of teaching strategies that support their basic skills and personal development. Consequently, pupils' achievement from their often very low starting points is outstanding.
- The curriculum offers a wide range of rich learning experiences that includes visiting many of the local heritage sites and experiencing residential trips both in England and France. It covers all aspects of the primary curriculum and there is an appropriate balance between subjects. A raft of extra-curricular activities and clubs supplements this and extends pupils' learning experiences between the hours of 8am and 6pm.
- The curriculum is highly tuned to develop pupils' personal and social skills, as well as their academic performance, in order that pupils will be ready to leave school as well-rounded citizens. Central to this is to engender within pupils a deep understanding of the fundamental values of tolerance and respect that lie at the heart of the values of modern Britain.
- Pupils develop strong subject-specific skills in several subjects, beyond English and mathematics. However, senior leaders, including governors, recognise that pupils' achievements are not consistently as high as they want them to be in all subjects. Consequently, an assistant headteacher has been appointed to coordinate the wider curriculum. This is to ensure that the fantastic experiences pupils receive have a more consistent impact upon securing the same outstanding achievement in all subjects. A topic-based approach is used to link subjects and to provide a context for pupils' learning. Planning then indicates the key subject-specific skills that underpin pupils' learning. It exemplifies the thought that leaders place on priorities for improvement. These are planned carefully and trialled in a proportion of subjects in order to maximise the impact. This approach was trialled in some foundation subjects such as French, PE, computing and geography and is hugely successful. It needs now to be extended to all foundation subjects.
- Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. They feel that the same level of care provided for their children is extended to them. Parents repeatedly told inspectors, 'It's more than a school.' They value the work of all staff and said being welcomed every day with a smile helped their wider well-being.

Governance of the school

- Governors are well informed and highly skilled. They have a secure grasp of the school's performance, which, coupled with their secure programme of visits and extensive knowledge of the community, enables them to ask questions of leaders and make highly effective contributions to improvement planning.
- Governors seek assurance that pupil premium funding has a positive impact on improving the experiences of disadvantaged pupils and reducing any differences that may exist between their progress and that of others.
- Governors are fully committed to the drive for excellence. They are hugely supportive of the school's work in encouraging all pupils to be the best they can be and to doing all they can to remove any barriers that may prevent them from achieving well.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff and governors receive well-planned, regular training to ensure that they are up to date with current legislative changes.
- The appointment process is robust and ensures that all newly appointed staff receive a thorough induction that makes clear their responsibilities for keeping pupils safe.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe. They understand how to look after themselves in a variety of situations. Older pupils particularly feel they have been well prepared for their transition to secondary school and to deal with the pressures of using social media.
- Leaders go above and beyond that which would be expected of them to do all they can to keep pupils safe. Highly effective relationships with external agencies and strong ties with extended families ensure that leaders at all levels are doing their utmost to ensure that pupils are kept safe. Any concerns are responded to in a timely way and are recorded. Issues surrounding the rigour with which leaders organise their recording were resolved during the inspection.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Excellent subject knowledge combined with an incisive understanding of child development typifies teaching. This means that in all year groups, teachers use all available strategies to make learning as easy as they can for pupils. Consequently, pupils with wide-ranging abilities make exceptional progress from their starting points.
- Teachers provide pupils with a rich diet of active learning experiences that makes learning interesting and fun. This leads to high levels of engagement and strong productivity in lessons. Pupils know the expectations set for them and rise to the challenge. Pupils love their learning.
- Expectations of what pupils can achieve are high. No stone is left unturned to secure pupils' basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics and then challenge them to achieve highly. Pupils' assessment information is reviewed diagnostically and a programme of detailed support follows. As a result, pupils' achievement is outstanding.
- Teachers adapt curriculum activities well to accommodate the very wide range of abilities within their classes. Teachers use sharply focused questions to gauge the pupils' understanding. They then skilfully amend tasks to ensure that learning is accessible and pupils retain their hugely positive attitudes that are supporting them to be successful.
- Learning support assistants work well with teachers and are deployed effectively. They make a strong contribution to pupils' achievement. Assistants deliver a raft of intervention programmes, developed by teachers at all times of the school day, to help all groups of pupils to catch up to where they need to be and to then make additional excellent gains in their learning.
- High-quality mathematics teaching is evident across the school. All teachers set the very highest expectations of what pupils can achieve. High levels of challenge are

evident in pupils' books. Teachers' approach to planning is consistent and builds pupils' skills progressively. All teachers prioritise securing pupils' arithmetic fluency, which then moves sharply into developing pupils' problem-solving and reasoning skills. As a result, pupils are confident mathematicians whose progress in the subject is outstanding.

- The teaching of reading is also strong across the school. Phonics is taught exceptionally well from an early age. This means that the very youngest pupils have a strong skill set to 'have a go' at new books and to read unfamiliar words. The very youngest pupils were able to explain to inspectors: 'I know it says "was" but it's tricky because it really should be spelt "woz".'
- Leaders encourage a widespread love of reading. Pupils receive six books each year to begin their own 'library at home'. The stories are studied in class and are chosen well, with pupils' interests in mind. This means that no pupil is disadvantaged and they enjoy life with a richness in print. This initiative instils in pupils a love of reading and, over time, pupils are encouraged to develop preference.
- There is a close link between the teaching of reading and writing. Teachers use quality texts to demonstrate the skill of writing for different purposes and for different audiences. It is consistent practice that all teachers are writing models. Every consideration is made of pupils' prior experiences and every opportunity is explored to give pupils a reason to write and an experience to draw from. Explicit reinforcement of grammatical structure and compositional effect is ever-present. This means that pupils quickly develop into confident writers.
- Teachers' feedback is astute and highly effective in supporting pupils to make improvements to their work. 'Check our work' (cow) time is a feature of all lessons and a well-established routine that pupils appreciate and enjoy.
- The teaching of subjects beyond reading, writing and mathematics is effective in providing pupils with memorable experiences and secure knowledge and understanding. However, some key subject-specific skills are not as well embedded as those of literacy and numeracy. Leaders are already improving this and the trial undertaken in geography, PE, computing and French will be extended to all subjects in the new academic year.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- There is a strong commitment to supporting pupils' emotional well-being. A dedicated member of staff ensures that some of the most vulnerable pupils receive sensitive and carefully targeted care, support and guidance. Staff are trained to identify any overt signs of pupils' stress and act intuitively to support pupils' needs.
- Pupils demonstrate great pride in their school and in their own and other pupils' achievements.
- Pupils demonstrate exemplary attitudes to learning and to each other. Pupils show high levels of concentration, productivity and high levels of engagement. They enjoy working hard and trying their best.

- Pupils are friendly and welcoming. They thrive on the diversity of the school community and are welcoming of those new to the school. They learn to appreciate others' views and beliefs. This leads to a harmonious school, where everyone is valued for who they are. Pupils say that they feel safe and know there is a trusted adult on whom they can rely. This leads to a calm and purposeful atmosphere in which pupils thrive.
- Pupils are given effective guidance and information to help them make healthy choices. There is a strong focus upon pupils' personal safety, particularly how to keep safe on the internet. Older pupils say they feel well prepared for their transfer to secondary school and the pressures from social media.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils are intrinsically motivated to behave well. This is because of the implicit expectation from all adults that pupils will respect each other and celebrate the achievements of others. As a result, pupils play safely together and show consideration for the views of others.
- Incidents of poor behaviour requiring exclusion are very rare. Behaviour logs show that the number of recorded incidents were in single figures and had reduced by half in the current academic year. Pupils say that 'bullying doesn't really happen' but they are confident that should it occur there would be a trusted adult who would sort it out.
- The appointment of a full-time attendance officer has greatly improved pupils' overall attendance, which is broadly in line with national averages. Leaders ensure that pupils from all groups attend well and are continuing to take action to improve attendance further.
- In 2016, an above-average proportion of pupils were regularly absent. For pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities this was in the highest 10% of schools nationally. Leaders have worked relentlessly to improve this and current figures show that the rate has halved. A raft of actions and a daily collection service for pupils have contributed greatly towards the significant improvement that current figures indicate.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- In 2016, pupils' outcomes in the statutory tests, at both key stage 1 and 2, were in the top 10% of schools nationally, for all subjects and for all groups of pupils. The school's own internal assessment information for all other year groups demonstrates an equally impressive trajectory of performance and reflects leaders' high aspirations and expectations for all pupils. From starting points that are below those to be typically expected, this represents outstanding achievement.
- Achievement of pupils currently in the school would strongly indicate that outstanding progress is sustained. It is the product of years of hard work and determination on behalf of leaders to demand the very best of all pupils to secure exceptional progress. Indeed, several former pupils successfully passed the Royal Grammar School and Dame Allan's entrance examination and a former pupil was awarded a bursary to attend Eton College.
- Outcomes for pupils who speak English as an additional language are excellent. Work is

carefully adapted to meet their needs. Specialist language support is of high quality and teaching assistants understand their role well. Teachers ensure that all pupils participate well. As a result, these pupils make substantial progress in their learning.

- Disadvantaged pupils often make progress that is better than other pupils nationally. This is a testament to leaders' unyielding commitment to remove any barriers that may inhibit pupils' achievements. Leaders' careful analysis of pupils' academic and wider emotional and social needs ensures that pupils receive the most appropriate level of support.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well and make exceptional progress. This is because pupils receive high levels of additional and bespoke support to ensure that their basic skills and personal development needs are well met. It is the case that the longer the pupils remain at the school, the stronger their progress becomes. Such is the quality and effectiveness of the support that some pupils are able to overcome their difficulties and are removed from the school's special educational needs register of provision.
- The starting points of pupils are such that few are recognised as high prior attainers. Having said that, aspirational target-setting, excellent attitudes to learning and exceptional teaching mean that some pupils are able to make the faster progress needed to reach the high standards. In 2016, the most able pupils and disadvantaged most-able pupils reached standards broadly in line with other pupils nationally.
- Pupils read well and make strong progress in their reading. Pupils are able to read confidently, make predictions and talk about authors' intent. Older pupils explained how reading provides ideas for their own writing and supports their developing skills of composition. Younger pupils achieve consistently well in the phonic screening check at the end of Year 1.
- Pupils' achievement in other subjects is good and is improving to be in line with that of English and mathematics. It is particularly strong in PE, where specialist teaching enables pupils to make outstanding progress.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- The leader of early years demonstrates the same determination, expertise and skills as her colleagues elsewhere in the school, to sustain the highly effective provision. She has an accurate picture of strengths and weaknesses across early years provision, because assessment procedures are robust.
- Careful analysis of assessment information is ensuring that children receive targeted support and a growing proportion of children are able to achieve a good level of development by the time they leave the Reception class. This has improved year on year and is now broadly in line with national averages. This represents outstanding progress from children's starting points, which are below those typically expected. A minority of children are also now exceeding the good level of development. Progress for all ability groups is substantial and sustained and children are well prepared for Year 1.
- Children's progress has accelerated in recent years as a result of the development of the two-year-old provision. Here staff help children to express themselves and develop

their thinking. There is a strong emphasis upon developing children's personal, social and emotional well-being and developing children's early language skills. As a result, children in this area of the provision thrive, are confident and are able to cooperate and negotiate with their peers.

- The learning environments across the early years classrooms are highly stimulating and provide a good range of activities. Both indoors and outdoors, children benefit from a wide range of opportunities to explore and investigate.
- Staff are skilful in extending children's interests into learning opportunities. For example, children in the Nursery were mesmerised by the glitter, which represented the pirate's treasure, and which had been hidden around the outdoor space. Children eagerly used maps and made telescopes to help them discover more. Such high levels of children's engagement are commonplace throughout the early years and reflect the high quality of teaching which exists.
- Children behave superbly because they are well supervised, routines are well established and teachers' expectations are high. This means that children sustain their interests and maintain their attention for long periods of time.

School details

Unique reference number	108458
Local authority	Newcastle upon Tyne
Inspection number	10032134

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	496
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mary Briggs
Headteacher	Linda Bradley
Telephone number	0191 2656906
Website	www.byker.newcastle.sch.uk
Email address	office@bykerprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	26–27 September 2012

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school and has almost doubled in size since the previous inspection.
- Almost a third of the school's population are from minority ethnic backgrounds and speak English as an additional language. This is above the national average. The largest minority ethnic groups are of African heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged is well above the national average and accounts for almost two thirds of the pupils in the school.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is also above the national average.

- The school meets the government's floor standards, which sets the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.
- The school provides both before- and after-school care.
- The school has extended its age range and now offers part-time provision for children from the age of two.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in each class. Several of the observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- A wide range of pupils' books, school assessment information, leaders' evaluation of teaching and learning and a range of school documents were looked at during the inspection.
- Meetings were held with representative of the local authority, eight members of the governing body (including the chair of governors) and subject leaders.
- Pupils were spoken with informally in class and during playtime and lunchtime. A number of pupils were heard to read from key stages 1 and 2.
- The school's website, minutes of the governing body meetings and safeguarding documents were scrutinised.
- The responses from 26 parents who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, were taken into account.

Inspection team

Diane Buckle, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Chris Smith	Her Majesty's Inspector
Phil Scott	Ofsted Inspector
Cathy Lee	Ofsted Inspector
Julie McDowell	Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2017