

Cramlington Village Primary School

Bowmont Drive, Cramlington, Northumberland, NE32 2SN

Inspection dates 8–9 July 2014

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|----------|
| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Not previously inspected | |
| | 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 excellent vision, passion and drive of the headteacher have ensured that the school made an assured start and is constantly improving.
- All staff are ambitious for their pupils.
- Good and sometimes inspiring teaching is making certain that pupils make good progress and achieve well.
- Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 is broadly in line with national standards and rising from their below typical starting points.
- Children make rapid progress in the Reception class, because the wide range of stimulating experiences encourages them to pursue their curiosity and learn new things.
- Pupils with disabilities, special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language achieve as well as their classmates.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and their high attendance reflects their great love of school.
- The rich, varied range of first-hand practical experiences, including those in the woodland area, meets the wide range of pupils' abilities and needs well.
- High quality care and support ensures that all pupils feel safe, are happy and can thrive.
- The school enjoys exceptional relationships with parents.
- Leaders and governors have established rigorous systems to check performance and ensure that the school can move from strength to strength.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The inspiring and exciting teaching that exists in school is not always shared widely enough with others to improve teaching further.
- Progress in writing is not quite as fast as in reading and mathematics.
- Now and then opportunities are missed for pupils to practise essential skills in a range of subjects.
- Teachers do not always enable pupils to respond to and learn from their marking comments.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons, including five paired observations with the headteacher and paired work scrutiny with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. In addition, the inspector made a number of short visits to lessons and learning walks around the school to check the quality of what is provided for pupils.
- The inspector spoke with children and had discussions with the headteacher, staff, three parents, three governors, a member of the local authority special educational needs monitoring and assessment team and the attached government adviser.
- The inspector examined a range of documents including those related to safeguarding, self-review, the monitoring of staff performance, the school's improvement plan and records relating to pupils' progress and behaviour.
- The inspector took account of 54 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), a letter and a telephone call from parents and 17 staff questionnaire responses.

Inspection team

Clive Petts, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school opened in September 2012 with 25 pupils across the Reception Year and Year 1. It is located in a former purpose built school building. The school experienced a disrupted first year as a result of building refurbishment delays and unsettled staffing.
- It is a much smaller-than-average sized primary school. In the past year it has added a Year 2 class with a planned year-on-year increase to take pupils across the primary age range by September 2017.
- Almost all of the pupils are of White British backgrounds. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- A higher than average proportion of pupils join the school at times other than the start of the school year.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is above average. The proportions supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are well above that usually found in primary schools.
- Currently, an above average proportion of pupils are eligible for pupil premium funding. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- Little Angels is a privately run day nursery located on the site, but is not managed by the governing body. It is subject to a separate inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all teaching is inspiring and exciting and as good as the very best in the school in order to accelerate pupils' progress and boost their achievement to be outstanding by:
 - sharing the innovative and thought-provoking practice more widely amongst staff to raise expectations of what all pupils can achieve even further, especially in their writing
 - further extending the practical, first-hand learning experiences for pupils to practise their literacy, numeracy, scientific and problem solving skills across different subjects
 - making certain that time is allowed for pupils of all ages to respond to teachers' marking comments and learn from their mistakes.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children join the Reception class from a broad range of backgrounds with skills typically below those expected for their age. Their speech, language and numeracy skills are sometimes not well developed. Children settle very quickly and make swift progress in the happy, friendly and busy classroom atmosphere. A strong emphasis on nurturing reading and writing skills prepares children exceptionally well for Year 1.
- In the recent Year 1 phonics check, the number of pupils exceeding the national standard is higher than the average. This is the result of the effective teaching of letter and sound relationships (phonics) to make sense of words. Consequently, progress in reading accelerates quickly.
- Attainment at the end of the current Year 2 is broadly average overall and rising. Inspection evidence, school information and the work in books confirms pupils' good progress. Since the school opened, the headteacher has maintained a relentless drive to secure a pattern of at least good progress and achievement. Although improving, pupils' progress in developing their writing skills is not quite as quick as in reading and mathematics.
- An above average proportion of pupils are on track to exceed the levels expected of them. This is because all pupils are benefitting from the rich learning experiences and teaching that encourages thinking. For example, a group of most able pupils were observed totally absorbed in a writing lesson adapting the Roald Dahl account of James and the Giant Peach to incorporate their own ideas.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, including those with complex needs, achieve as well as their classmates. Those pupils who join the school at other than the normal times also make good progress. This is because their abilities and needs are quickly, accurately and precisely identified. School assessment regularly draws upon local authority specialist expertise and support to ensure pupils' needs are fully met. Consequently, support is effective.
- The school promotes enjoyment and a love of reading well. At age six, pupils' skills are average and rising. Pupils grow in confidence and fluency and extend their vocabulary well. They are skilled in reading new words because of the good foundations laid in their understanding of phonics. Those pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding make good progress and achieve well. Although attainment gaps of over two terms are evident in the current Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics, gaps in Year 1 have been eliminated. This is because of the impact of the rich learning experiences which capture pupils' interest and promote good progress, building upon the flying start pupils experience in the Reception class.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is good with examples of inspiring and imaginative practice. The headteacher and staff are ambitious to ensure each pupil does their very best. This is evident in the thoughtful and inventive fashion in which interesting and challenging activities are organised. As a result, achievement is rising as pupils are keen to take full advantage of the opportunities on offer.
- Relationships between pupils and with staff are excellent, because staff present such positive role models. Adults are particularly skilled in identifying the needs of each pupil. This includes those with complex needs or those pupils who are potentially vulnerable. Activities are carefully planned to be thought-provoking, such as when presenting problems in the design of a hen creche for rearing hens from chicks. Pupils are expected to work things out for themselves, share their ideas and explain their thinking.
- When pupils' progress is rapid and achievement highest:
 - planned tasks pose interesting problems and the demands made of pupils are high
 - activities are carefully shaped and adapted to pupils' abilities, needs and interests
 - adults follow pupils' thinking closely and use questions skilfully to check and stretch their

knowledge and understanding

- adults set demanding tasks which spur pupils' imagination, encourage partner debate and foster their analytical thinking skills.

■ When rates of progress are a little variable and achievement uneven:

- expectations made of pupils sometimes fluctuate and methods lack the vitality to hold pupils' interest
- work set is sometimes too easy or too hard and not adapted quickly enough
- questioning does not always follow pupils' thinking closely enough or constantly check pupils' understanding
- opportunities are missed to correct misconceptions and mistakes and practice essential skills.

■ When achievement is at its highest, such as in the Reception class, imaginative teaching adds a wonderful spark and interest to children's learning. For example, a group of children dressed in their chefs' jackets, were observed totally absorbed measuring out ingredients, safely grating cheese before mixing with the flour and butter to make cheese scones. These inspirational methods do not feature in all classes and activities and they are not shared enough amongst all staff to help them to improve their own practice further.

■ Stimulating activities, such as learning in the woodland area and using motivating themes, capture and hold pupils' interest really well. This encourages positive attitudes, develops collaboration and team work and inspires pupils to think analytically and justify their thinking. Nevertheless, opportunities are occasionally missed to apply pupils' communication, mathematical and scientific skills even more when learning outdoors.

■ Teachers mark and assess work carefully and accurately. They make sure that pupils are informed of how well they have done against their targets. Clear guidance is provided for improvement, although time is not always provided for pupils to correct any mistakes and improve their answers.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They settle quickly, confidently and happily in the caring, friendly family school atmosphere. Younger children very speedily learn the school routines and develop excellent self-control and independence.
- Pupils behave well in classrooms and arrive promptly, keen and eager to learn. They are respectful, considerate and caring. Disruption of any kind is infrequent. In discussions with pupils, they report that they have very few worries or concerns. Conversations with parents confirm this. Pupils' high attendance reflects their enjoyment and keenness to learn.
- Discussions with pupils reveal that they have a clear understanding of what constitutes bullying in its various forms. They comment that mean or unkind behaviour is uncommon. Pupils speak confidently about staff always being on hand to deal with any worries or concerns they may have. They add that staff deal with any silliness or inappropriate behaviour quickly. School records demonstrate that there are few incidents of any sort.
- The school's work to ensure that pupils are kept safe and secure is good. All parents who responded to the online questionnaire agreed. In conversations and in correspondence parents speak highly of the willingness of staff to make time, listen and respond to questions and issues they may have.
- Pupils are taught to recognise and manage risk and danger well, such as when playing and learning outdoors. The clear boundaries which are set for conduct are really well understood by pupils. They respond positively to staff guidance to be responsible and sensible. Pupils greatly appreciate the meaningful rewards their unselfish behaviour can bring.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has established high expectations in her crystal clear vision of just how successful the school can be. She is passionate about making certain the needs of each pupil are met, including those of the most vulnerable. Governors and staff share this passion and are totally committed to her ambitions for the school. Parents are right behind the headteacher and as a result, the school enjoys their full confidence and trust.
- Middle leaders are increasingly influential in their subject areas, adding to the school's push to secure a pattern of rapid progress and eliminate any inconsistencies in performance as the school gets bigger. This is evident in the emerging pattern of good achievement across all pupil groups in the current classes.
- Teaching and learning is skilfully led. Training is well thought out and targeted on school priorities. The support for newly qualified teachers is well managed.
- Senior leaders, including governors, have established robust systems to check school performance. Opportunities are however, occasionally missed to set sharper measurable targets and timescales for improvement. Performance management is well embedded with no automatic pay progression. External moderation is rigorous. Consequently, the school's performance is accurately judged.
- The rich and innovative curriculum provides a broad range of interesting activities and experiences. This includes a wide range of very well-attended after-school clubs. Themes linking subjects add to the pupils' enjoyment of learning, although opportunities to be even more imaginative in applying pupils' literacy, numeracy and scientific skills are occasionally missed. Pupils' personal development, underpinned by their well-developed spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness, is a strength evident in the very positive relationships in the school.
- Staff display a determination to ensure that all pupils have an equal opportunity to achieve their full potential, regardless of starting points or background.
- Primary school sport funding is used successfully and pupils' participation rates in sporting activities are high. In addition, the staff's coaching skills are improving and pupils are developing their skills to a higher level.
- Safeguarding and child protection arrangements meet government requirements. Procedures are clearly established with much high quality practice adopted in the day-to-day management of the care and support of pupils.
- Partnership working with parents is strong. In conversations and correspondence, parents report that they believe that the school is making a considerable difference to their children's learning. Parents have a high level of confidence in the school's progress.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governors bring a wide range of expertise and skill to their role. They are shrewdly led and demonstrate an accurate view of current school performance. Members reveal a detailed view of the quality of teaching and learning support over time. They challenge and hold the headteacher and staff to account in positive ways. They have made certain that performance management at all levels is fully in place and is effective. Governors carefully and frequently check the impact of the pupil premium funding. They have a clear-cut view of the priorities of expanding the school. They are acutely aware of what they need to do to establish a pattern of rapid progress and high achievement for pupils of all ages.

What inspection judgements mean

| School | | |
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| 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

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| Unique reference number | 138257 |
| Local authority | Northumberland |
| Inspection number | 425683 |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Academy free school |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 58 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Alison Malcolm |
| Headteacher | Deborah Wylie |
| Date of previous school inspection | Not previously inspected |
| Telephone number | 01670 735177 |
| Fax number | Not applicable |
| Email address | info@villageprimary.org |

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