

Highcliffe Primary School

Hutton Lane, Guisborough, North Yorkshire TS14 8AA

Inspection dates	20–21 April 2016
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

- The headteacher and other leaders, including governors, have high expectations. Their leadership has been effective in improving the school since the previous inspection.
- Leaders and managers have brought about improvements in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, which is now good.
- Teaching in the early years is good. As a result, children make good progress and are well prepared for their learning in Year 1.
- Current pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics across Years 1 to 6.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability achieve well.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. The vast majority enjoy coming to school, attend regularly and are keen to learn.
- The school's provision for pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils are respectful of one another and adults. They are proud of their school and readily welcome visitors.
- Pupils feel well cared for and safe, and have a good understanding of how to keep safe and healthy beyond school.
- Leaders develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding well. Staff help pupils to value people from different backgrounds, and their different beliefs and opinions.
- The good range of extra-curricular clubs and visits help to prepare pupils for the next stage in their education, and future lives.
- Governors are regular visitors to the school, and hold school leaders to account for how well the school is doing.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' overall writing skills are not as strong as their reading and mathematical skills.
- Some teachers do not check pupils' learning carefully enough in lessons, and do not adjust their work accordingly, especially for the most able.
- Some teachers do not follow the school's policy on marking and assessing pupils' work consistently.
- Middle and senior leaders do not assess with similar rigour the impact of the teaching on pupils' learning and progress over time.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that:
 - teachers check pupils' learning fully in lessons and adjust the work accordingly to keep pupils interested and challenged, especially the most able
 - teachers follow consistently the school's policy on marking and assessing pupils' work
 - middle and senior leaders assess with similar rigour the impact of the teaching on pupils' learning and progress and determine whether it is good enough.

- Enhance pupils' outcomes in Years 3 to 6 in writing, by:
 - providing pupils with more opportunities to practise their writing skills sooner and to write at length
 - ensuring that teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to write in depth across the full range of subjects.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher has high aspirations for all pupils and staff. She has ensured that all the areas for improvement from the previous inspection have been addressed.
- Governors have effectively supported the headteacher in overcoming previous weaknesses in teaching, in appointing new staff, in introducing new assessment and behaviour procedures, and in establishing successful learning partnerships with Newcomen, Skelton and Hummersea primary schools.
- The redeveloped senior leadership team is equally ambitious for the school. Senior leaders work cohesively to bring about continuous improvement, and have been successful in heightening staff expectations of what pupils can achieve and do.
- Staff indicate that they are proud to work in the school. Morale is high. Staff feel involved in collectively meeting the school's priorities.
- Senior leaders provide teachers and other staff with targeted professional development, both in-house and especially across the East Cleveland Co-operative Learning Trust. Work with other Guisborough schools, and with the local authority, has also contributed well to improvements made in teaching, learning, assessment and governance.
- The headteacher has strengthened appraisal systems, and has linked teachers' pay progression rigorously to their performance, measured closely against the national teachers' standards.
- Middle leaders, including phase and subject leaders, increasingly check on the quality of teaching. Where they find that teaching is not good enough, they introduce a programme of support and development so that teachers make improvements in a timely manner.
- Not all middle and senior leaders are fully confident, or rigorous, in holding colleagues sufficiently to account for good-quality teaching, learning and assessment over time. As a consequence, there are still some inconsistencies in teaching across the school.
- Leaders and managers ensure that they track pupils' progress carefully. Regular checks on pupils' progress ensure that staff identify pupils who are not doing as well as they should. They give these pupils additional support to help them make better progress. As a result, different groups of pupils, including those who have special educational needs or disability, make good progress. This shows leaders' commitment to promoting equality of opportunity for pupils.
- All adults tackle the rare instances of discriminatory or prejudiced behaviour successfully. These actions underpin the school's strong sense of community.
- The curriculum is effective in developing pupils' basic reading, writing and mathematical skills. However, some teachers do not advance pupils' writing soon enough, or provide opportunities for pupils to apply their writing skills in depth in different subjects.
- Interesting topics make increasingly good links between subjects. For example, the topic on the Australian outback and Aboriginal lifestyles has encouraged thoughtful writing through exploring artefacts and images, and enabled pupils to produce inspiring art work.
- Visitors to the school enrich pupils' experiences further. They help to bring learning alive. Pupils say how much they enjoy learning about wildlife and their habitats, dressing up as book characters, and taking part in enterprise fairs. Pupils enthusiastically participate in a wide array of sporting teams and competitions that encourage teamwork. They enjoy learning to swim from Year 3 onwards, and talk enthusiastically about singing in French across Years 3 to 6.
- Staff develop well pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. Pupils learn about the different cultures and faiths represented in modern Britain. Pupils learn about British values through, for example, their involvement in the democratic process of electing members of the school council and house captains. They also develop their own class charters. They learn about the Holocaust and the importance of remembrance as part of their work on the Second World War. As a result, the school prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- The school's use of the primary physical education and sports premium has increased the range of sporting opportunities available to pupils, and has resulted in greater pupil participation in sports and more competitions against other schools. School leaders have not yet fully investigated the extent to which it has helped to develop staff confidence in teaching physical education.

- Leaders, including governors, ensure that they spend the pupil premium effectively. Disadvantaged pupils now make similar progress to all other pupils across the school. They benefit from one-to-one and small-group support in reading, writing and mathematics, both in and beyond the classroom, together with extra resources to support individual pupils' self-esteem and emotional development.
- A large majority of the parents and carers responding to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, indicate that the school is well led and managed. All staff responding to the staff questionnaire agreed with them.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors have improved their working arrangements since the previous inspection. Membership of the governing body has been reorganised, and committees re-formed. These changes, together with good information received on a regular basis from school leaders, and sourced by governors from their regular visits to school, mean that governors have a good understanding of the school's work. They are confident in holding senior leaders to account for the school's performance and its safeguarding arrangements.
 - Governors keep a close watch on how leaders spend additional funding, such as the pupil premium, to meet priorities, and whether this is having its desired impact.
 - Governors have a clear appreciation of the quality of teaching and its impact on outcomes for pupils.
 - Governors know about the management of teachers' performance and the links between this and teachers' pay progression. They have adopted similarly rigorous arrangements for evaluating the headteacher's annual performance.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders, governors and staff work closely with a range of external agencies and individual families to ensure that they keep pupils safe. All staff receive regular training on safeguarding. They know how to identify whether pupils are at risk and how to report any concerns. Safeguarding arrangements in the early years, and for the breakfast club, are secure. Almost all parents responding to Parent View indicate that their children feel safe at school. Staff and pupils agree.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Leaders and managers have been successful in dealing with weak teaching since the previous inspection. As a result, the quality of teaching is good and ensures that pupils make increasingly good progress.
- A strong feature of teaching is the calm and purposeful atmosphere for learning, with teachers and teaching assistants establishing positive working relationships with the pupils.
- Most adults expect much of pupils and the vast majority of pupils show good attitudes towards their learning.
- In most classes pupils strive to do their best, readily sharing views and ideas, and listening to each other's points of view. For example, Year 4 pupils persevered well to decide which scales and intervals would best suit the bar charts that they were going to draw to represent different problems they were solving. Similarly, in a Year 6 history lesson on Mayan civilisation, pupils concentrated very well on a short film extract, making thoughtful notes to support their subsequent talks about Mayan lifestyles and beliefs.
- The vast majority of teachers engage pupils because they make learning interesting and appropriately demanding. Teachers are knowledgeable about what they teach and generate interest in learning and a desire to succeed on the part of most pupils, from whatever their starting points.
- Most teachers use assessment information effectively to plan lessons that are appropriate to the needs of the different groups of pupils, particularly those who have special educational needs or disability. Pupils who fall behind are spotted quickly, and teachers provide additional work and time to meet their needs.
- Teaching assistants work well with pupils, particularly those at risk of underachievement. They provide them with effective support. As a result, disadvantaged pupils make increasingly good progress.
- Pupils enjoy reading. Staff plan for highly effective daily reading sessions in which adults listen to pupils read, discuss their reading with them and teach them techniques to make sense of unfamiliar words and phrases. Phonics (the sounds that letters represent) is taught very effectively across the school, and helps pupils to read fluently and with good understanding.
- The teaching of mathematics is good. Teachers equip pupils with a good range of calculation skills and mathematical vocabulary. Most pupils enjoy regular opportunities to test their knowledge and skills in solving mathematical problems and many can justify the answers and solutions they find.

- The teaching of writing is improving. The handwriting of most pupils is of a good quality. They generally present their written work with care. Most teachers pay good attention to showing pupils how to develop ideas and spell accurately. In some classes, especially across Years 3 to 6, pupils do not have frequent enough opportunities to write at length and hone their new skills. Pupils sometimes do not have the chance to write sufficiently at depth across different subjects.
- Many teachers provide pupils with regular guidance on how to improve their work. However, some teachers do not consistently follow the school's policy on marking. As a result, some pupils are not sufficiently challenged. This is especially the case in some mathematics books in Years 3 to 6.
- Most teachers know their pupils well and plan effectively to meet their needs. On occasions, some teachers do not adapt activities sufficiently. As a result, the most able sometimes find the work too easy and are not adequately stretched.

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 are proud of their school. They are respectful and caring of each other and of all the adults.
- Pupils work and play happily together. They are keen to welcome visitors to the school, and help new pupils who join the school to settle quickly in their new surroundings.
- The vast majority of pupils show positive attitudes to learning and are keen to do their best. They value the rewards they receive for their good work, and openly celebrate the achievements of their peers in the 'good-work assemblies', and at the 'star dining table' at lunchtimes. They interact well with each other in lessons, for example when working with a partner or in small groups.
- Pupils enjoy the different responsibilities they are given, including being members of the school council, house captains, play and sport leaders, helping in assemblies, and in the many out-of-school clubs and activities.
- Pupils have a good awareness of different types of bullying, including racist and homophobic bullying and cyber bullying. Pupils say that bullying is rare in school. This is confirmed by the school's behaviour records.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and can approach a member of staff easily if they have any concerns about their safety. They are confident that staff will not tolerate any language or actions that may be offensive.
- Staff teach pupils well how to keep themselves safe. They know, for example, about road and fire safety, and how to keep safe when using the internet and mobile phones.
- The many sporting opportunities, 'change for life', 'book and breakfast' and 'football and food' clubs enrich pupils' understanding about the importance of hygiene, diet and exercise, and living a healthy lifestyle.
- The many visits and visitors to school build well pupils' all-round spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. As a consequence, they are supported for their future learning in secondary school and for their roles as members of the local community.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The school makes clear its expectations of how everyone should behave in each classroom charter, and pupils understand these.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. They appreciate the rewards they get for positive behaviour, and understand that there are consequences for unacceptable behaviour.
- The school's leaders work hard to encourage pupils to attend school regularly. As a result, attendance is rising and is just above the national average, and fewer pupils frequently miss school.
- Pupils are polite and friendly, and conduct themselves well. In the playground and dining room, pupils are helpful and considerate.
- In lessons, the vast majority of pupils are eager to learn and concentrate well. Occasionally, some pupils are inattentive and do not persevere with their work, especially if they are not sufficiently challenged. As a result, their progress slows.
- Most parents and staff responding to the Ofsted online questionnaire, and most pupils responding to the school's own questionnaires, agree that pupils' behaviour is good.

Outcomes for pupils are good

- Pupils' achievement has risen since the previous inspection and is now good. Improvements in teaching are resulting in sustained good overall rates of progress by current pupils across all year groups. This is confirmed by the good progress seen in pupils' books, and in visits to classes across the different year groups.
- Pupils' overall attainment at the end of key stage 1 in 2015 was in line with the national averages for reading, writing and mathematics. These outcomes represented good progress, given that the starting points of some of these pupils were below average at the beginning of Year 1.
- Pupils make increasingly good progress across key stage 2. In 2015, end of Year 6 outcomes were above national averages, although higher in reading and mathematics than in writing.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability, as well as those who have fallen behind and need to catch up in their learning, make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This is because teachers track their progress carefully and they receive effective care and support from staff.
- Disadvantaged pupils make increasingly good progress, and the gaps in attainment with their classmates are closing in most subjects in most year groups. In 2015, the end of Year 6 gap in reading had closed almost entirely, and gaps in writing and mathematics were approximately eight months when compared with other pupils nationally.
- The most-able pupils are largely well challenged in lessons, and the school's information confirms that the vast majority make increasingly good progress across the year groups. Work in Year 2 and Year 6 books indicates that many have already reached their age-related expectations in writing and mathematics.
- Pupils' reading outcomes are a strength of the school. By the end of key stage 1, the proportion of pupils who achieve the expected level in phonics is above the national average. The vast majority of pupils read fluently and with good understanding. Pupils' reading skills are improving highly effectively because they receive daily reading opportunities, together with strong encouragement to read at home.
- Pupils make good progress in mathematics, and leaders have addressed weaknesses highlighted in the previous inspection well. This is due to teachers' secure subject knowledge and insistence on pupils practising daily their basic mathematical skills. Pupils have frequent opportunities to use important skills in a range of problem-solving activities. Teachers increasingly expect them to explain their approaches to individual calculations and to justify their findings.
- Outcomes in writing are improving, because teachers encourage pupils to consider carefully how they form individual sentences, to vary the language they use, and to spell accurately common and specialist words. Outcomes are still not strong enough for some pupils, in some classes, across key stage 2, because some teachers do not challenge them to write at length soon enough in all subjects.
- Pupils achieve well across many subjects of the curriculum. Overall, the school prepares pupils well for secondary school. They develop particularly good all-round knowledge and skills in art and music.

Early years provision is good

- Due to the good teaching and effective care and support, an increasing proportion of children make good progress from their different starting points. Children are well prepared for transition to Year 1.
- In 2015, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development by the end of the Reception year rose significantly and was just above the national figure. Girls' outcomes were much higher than boys, especially in reading and writing. Staff have already made improvements in these areas to close the gap in attainment between girls and boys.
- Disadvantaged children make good progress with their learning, and the early years pupil premium is used successfully to support their particular needs.
- The quality of teaching, learning and day-to-day assessment is good. Staff use the information they gather effectively to plan for the needs and abilities of the children. They provide stimulating and thought-provoking indoor and outdoor experiences for them. Staff are constantly changing the themes to meet the interests and needs of the children.
- Children have opportunities to make their own decisions about what they would like to do and these build their confidence. For example, during the inspection some children were engrossed in creating mud meals in the mud kitchen, while others worked in a small group to build a track with houses, and others drew pictures to tell the story of 'The ugly duckling'. All children showed high levels of interest, perseverance and a readiness to share resources and take turns in activities.

- Well-presented learning journals, that record children’s achievements, have detailed comments that describe what children understand and can do. These provide a good record of the progress of each individual child, including the next stage in their learning, for parents and staff as well as for the children themselves.
- Staff regularly inform parents about their child’s progress. They have established good relationships with families. There is strong parental involvement with the school when children start in the Nursery year, through visits to homes by early years practitioners, and through welcome and ‘catch-up’ events in school.
- Early years staff give children’s welfare and safety a high priority. As a result, children are happy, safe and increasingly confident, independent learners.
- The leadership of the early years provision is good. Leaders understand the strengths and areas for development and ensure that adults plan carefully together to make improvements.

School details

Unique reference number	131457
Local authority	Redcar and Cleveland
Inspection number	10012006

This inspection 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	435
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Howard Bean
Headteacher	Jackie Woodhead
Telephone number	01287 632293
Website	www.highcliffeprimary.org
Email address	office@highcliffe.rac.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	23–24 January 2014

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage, with very few pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are supported through the pupil premium is above the national average. The pupil premium is additional government funding to support those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Since the previous inspection there have been staffing changes, including changes in senior and middle leaders and managers. Membership of the governing body has also changed.
- The school receives support from Newcomen Primary School, (Redcar); Skelton Primary School, (East Cleveland); Hummersea Primary School, (Loftus); and the local authority. The school is also a member of the East Cleveland Co-operative Learning Trust and collaborates with four other primary schools and the local secondary school, as part of Guisborough Extended Learning.
- There is a 'book and breakfast' club, managed by the school.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in a range of different classes, of which two classes were visited jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Pupils' work was sampled informally in classes in a range of subjects. In addition, mathematics and writing from Years 5 and 6, and work in other subjects from Years 4, 5 and 6, were sampled separately.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including the school's own information on current pupils' progress, planning and monitoring documentation, minutes of the governing body's meetings, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents pertaining to safeguarding.
- Inspectors held meetings with pupils in Years 3 to 6, with governors and with school staff, including those with management responsibilities. In addition, telephone conversations were held with a representative from the local authority and the headteacher of a local primary school supporting the school.
- Inspectors evaluated the 125 responses of parents to the Ofsted online questionnaire (Parent View), and also took into account the views of 18 members of the school's staff who completed the Ofsted online questionnaire. No pupils completed the Ofsted online questionnaire, but inspectors evaluated pupils' views in response to a recent school questionnaire.

Inspection team

Andy Swallow, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Frances Gowland	Ofsted Inspector
Janet Satchwell	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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