

Cramlington Eastlea Primary School

Durham Road, Northburn Lea, Cramlington, Northumberland NE23 3ST

Inspection dates

16–17 March 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders have not secured consistently good teaching. As a result, pupils' progress in key stages 1 and 2 is too variable, particularly in reading and English grammar, spelling and punctuation.
- Leaders at all levels have an imprecise view of pupils' achievements across the curriculum. Subject leadership lacks rigour. Improvement planning is therefore insufficiently focused on the correct priorities.
- The quality of teaching assistants' contributions is variable. Senior leaders and governors have not meticulously evaluated the effectiveness of this large body of staff.
- Teachers do not check carefully enough to see whether pupils are falling behind or finding work too easy. Pupils' misconceptions are not addressed rapidly and too often pupils have to wait for further direction.
- Teachers do not insist that pupils sustain the quality of their work across subjects. This leads to inconsistencies and poor presentation in pupils' books.
- Pupils' mathematical confidence and fluency varies. Rapid recall of basic number facts and abilities in problem-solving are not sufficiently well developed as pupils move through school.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has successfully created a friendly, positive ethos. Parents speak highly of the care their children receive. Parents value the ready smiles and warm welcome from staff.
- Subject leaders are passionate about their areas of responsibility. They are keen to develop their area of the curriculum and acquire the skills needed to drive improvement.
- There is some good quality teaching in parts of the school. These teachers have the necessary skills to support others to improve.
- Leadership of the early years is effective. Children make particularly rapid progress in the Reception class because teaching is strong and focused on children's needs and interests.
- Pupils have sparkle. Attendance is good and they enjoy school. Pupils are well mannered and behave sensibly in and around the school.
- Most disadvantaged pupils in key stage 2 make at least expected progress from their starting points in writing and mathematics.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management across the curriculum by:
 - eradicating inconsistencies in teaching and learning across key stages 1 and 2
 - equipping leaders at all levels with the skills, knowledge and understanding needed to monitor and plan improvement in their subjects
 - holding subject leaders fully accountable for the progress of all groups of pupils in their area of responsibility
 - sharpening improvement planning, ensuring that the correct priorities are identified and tackled robustly
 - evaluating the effectiveness of the body of teaching assistants in relation to pupils' learning and outcomes.
- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching and learning in key stages 1 and 2, particularly in reading, English grammar, spelling and punctuation and mathematics by:
 - ensuring that teaching assistants are deployed effectively and contribute to pupils' learning and progress in a consistent manner
 - insisting that good-quality work and standards of presentation are sustained by pupils across subjects
 - using time effectively within lessons to address pupils' misconceptions and to move pupils on rapidly in their learning
 - fostering mathematical fluency and confidence by developing pupils' abilities to rapidly recall and apply basic number facts to solve increasingly sophisticated mathematical problems as they move through school.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Senior leaders' actions have not secured consistency in the quality of teaching and learning across the school. Pupils in key stages 1 and 2 do not make rapid enough progress from their starting points, particularly in reading and English grammar, spelling and punctuation.
- Senior leaders have not empowered leaders at all levels to lead and monitor their areas of responsibility effectively. The wider leadership team do not have a clear and accurate oversight of pupils' progress, weaknesses or strengths across the school. Their skills in the analyses and critical evaluation of teaching and learning, over time, lack rigour.
- Subject leaders are passionate about their subjects. They do not, however, have sufficient time or the expertise needed to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning in their area of responsibility, accurately. As a result, key information about pupils' progress, in subjects such as mathematics, is incomplete, missing or lacks accuracy. Improvement plans lack precision and measurability. Too often, planned actions are either not carried out or not evaluated.
- Senior leaders have not measured carefully enough the extent to which teaching assistants are making a positive difference to pupils' learning and progress. This means leaders do not know precisely what is working well and what needs to change in terms of the deployment of additional adults.
- Following weaknesses in the 2016 key stage 2 results, the school welcomed scrutiny and an external review by local authority officers. This support helped to pinpoint some areas of strength and weakness. Leaders have not, however, responded promptly to key areas highlighted as needing improvement such as mathematics in key stage 1, or included these aspects on improvement plans.
- Leaders use the primary school physical education and sport funding well to increase opportunities for pupils to participate in physical activities and challenges. A wide range of sporting events and clubs entice pupils into keeping fit and understanding the benefits of good health. Pupils talked animatedly about 'hula hooping' and learning tennis skills.
- Leaders consider carefully how additional funding for disadvantaged pupils should be spent. In particular, disadvantaged pupils in key stage 2 have benefited from extra resources and experiences that leaders have secured for them. Current initiatives to support pupils' emotional well-being are making a positive difference to pupils' attitudes to school and learning.
- The special educational needs coordinator makes good use of additional funding to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Several interventions and one-to-one additional sessions develop pupils' phonics and social or emotional skills well. Parents and pupils contribute to their individual targets and plans and the coordinator secures external expertise and advice promptly where needed. Leaders' analyses of trends and this group's progress over time, however, are not well executed.

- Leaders and managers have worked diligently to ensure that pupils and parents understand and value the importance of good attendance. Most pupils attend regularly and are punctual to lessons. Leaders' actions to address the regular absence of a small group of pupils are beginning to make a difference.
- The headteacher has successfully established a positive ethos across the school community. She goes out of her way to greet pupils, parents and visitors warmly, on a daily basis. Parents are highly appreciative of the headteacher's ready availability, feeling that their opinions and concerns are listened to. The large majority of staff share the headteacher's vision for the school. Following her example staff make parents and pupils feel welcome and respected. A small proportion of staff would appreciate clearer guidance and increased support from senior leaders.
- Leaders are committed to providing enrichment for pupils with regards to the curriculum. Many and varied indoor and outdoor opportunities exist for pupils. These include a wide range of extra-curricular clubs and experiences such as street dance, skipping, rugby, gardening and instrumental tuition. Pupils also benefit from regular outings and visits to places of interest.

Governance of the school

- Governors are not shy about challenging leaders and managers, especially with regards to pupils' outcomes. They were disappointed with the school's key stage 2 results in 2016 in particular. In response, the chair of the governing body 'keeps asking the questions', has increased the frequency of her visits to the school and holds regular challenge meetings with the headteacher.
- The chair, along with a core group of other governors, bring a wealth of experience to the school's work. They are committed to improving their own expertise and getting beneath the surface of the school's performance. To this end, governors attend training in school with staff and take advantage of governor training events provided by the local authority.
- Governors prioritise the safety and well-being of pupils. They regularly undertake safeguarding and child protection training. As a result, governors are aware of the principles informing the most recent guidance and documentation, such as the Department for Education's 'Keeping children safe in education 2016'.
- Governors fully understand the link between teachers' pay and performance. A tight rein is kept on the school's financial planning and management.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff have read and understood the most recent information and advice about protecting pupils and keeping them safe from harm. Staff training takes place regularly and there are three designated safeguarding leaders in school. Staff have a thorough knowledge of the procedures to adopt if they have any concerns about a child. The school's single central record meets requirements. School leaders are committed to building further upon good practice principles with regards to the frequency of checks made on adults working with children.

- Pupils and parents agree that children feel safe and are safe in Eastlea Primary. Parents appreciate the school's attention to safety and risk management. The good care that staff take of their children is highly valued, particularly the attention given to supporting pupils' emotional and mental health and well-being.
- Pupils talk knowledgeably about how to keep themselves safe online, understanding the rules and potential dangers about internet use. Pupils value the filters and blocks that the school has put in place to protect them from inappropriate sites or materials.
- The school's site is secure and well maintained. Safe entry and exit systems are in place. A large staff presence at the start and end of the school day and break times means that any minor issues or concerns are managed well.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not consistently good across year groups and subjects. As a result, not all pupils achieve well as they move through the school, especially within reading, English grammar, spelling and punctuation. Pupils in key stage 1 are not fully prepared for the challenges of key stage 2 and too few pupils in each key stage reach the standards of which they are capable.
- Teachers and teaching assistants do not insist that pupils maintain good quality handwriting and presentation across subjects. Attention to English grammar, spelling and punctuation is not sustained from one book to the next. Consequently, pupils' work across subjects presents an inconsistent picture of their capabilities and progress.
- In some classes, teaching assistants are deployed effectively to meet the needs of pupils. On these occasions pupils make fitting progress because of the good-quality, carefully targeted additional challenge or support they receive. This strong practice is not embedded. The manner in which additional adults are used and the quality of interactions between pupils and teaching assistants are too variable.
- Pupils' confidence and fluency within mathematics vary. Their knowledge and rapid recall of basic number facts is too often weak and their ability to tackle increasingly rich, sophisticated mathematical problems is not well developed. Teachers do not consistently support and challenge pupils from their different starting points, effectively.
- Some teachers reshape explanations and use questioning skilfully to support pupils to understand new concepts. In these classes, pupils' misconceptions are addressed in a timely manner. No valuable teaching and learning time is lost because pupils who grasp concepts quickly are promptly given further direction or challenge. This is not, however, consistent practice across the school.
- The teaching of phonics is improving over time. Teaching staff articulate the sounds that letters make carefully and encourage pupils to do likewise. This means the majority of Year 1 pupils are increasingly well supported to apply their skills to read and write unfamiliar words. Leaders have recognised that boys' progress in phonics needs closer examination.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities generally make at least expected progress from their different starting points. Working together, the special

educational needs coordinator and teachers ensure that appropriate provision is in place to meet the needs of this group of pupils.

- Teachers and pupils have positive, respectful relationships. They work in partnership to tackle derogatory language and any rare instances of poor behaviour. Pupils are willing and keen to please, responding promptly to adults' requests. Consequently, warm classroom climates are effectively established and pupils behave courteously in lessons.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Leaders take great care to ensure that pupils' emotional and mental health needs are met successfully. Recent initiatives to support families and individual pupils have been well received and the principles of good mental health are promoted effectively by adults in school.
- Pupils understand precisely why regular exercise and healthy eating are important. They are highly appreciative of the opportunities provided by the school. Sports clubs and activities are well attended; the early morning street dance club is a firm favourite.
- Pupils are confident in their ability to keep themselves safe online. They recite the school's e-safety rules with certainty, knowing what to do if they have concerns or worries about pop-ups or content. Pupils who are 'digital leaders' support others in their appropriate use of technology.
- Bullying, pupils feel, is not a problem at their school. While they can talk knowledgeably about the different forms that bullying can take, pupils have complete faith that adults will address any issues that arise.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and their attitudes towards learning are exceptionally good when work is well matched to meet their needs.
- Playtimes are lively, happy affairs. Pupils play well together and revel in each other's company. They are appreciative of the many rewards in place in school that recognise good behaviour; they are especially keen to earn 'golden time' and take part in 'golden days'.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils conduct themselves in and around the school sensibly. They greet visitors and adults politely, holding doors open and saying thank you without prompts.
- Parents feel that the pupils in the school behave well. 'Achievement is celebrated and good behaviour rewarded' is a comment that typifies parents' positive views.
- Pupils say that their learning is not often disrupted by others. Teaching staff are trained and skilled in supporting pupils to manage their behaviour on the rare occasion incidents occur. School rules and expectations of behaviour are well embedded.

- Pupils' overall attendance is good and has remained so over time. The vast majority are not disadvantaged by regular absence. Leaders are taking increasing care to identify patterns of repeated absences. Their actions are beginning to make a positive difference to a group of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities whose regular absence in 2016 was higher than national averages.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- The proportion of pupils who reach expected standards of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics in key stage 1 has remained significantly below national averages over time. Inconsistencies in teaching have meant that progress has not been rapid enough to ensure that pupils catch up with their national peers.
- Historically, pupils in key stage 2 in 2014 and 2015, made good progress from their different starting points to reach broadly average standards in all subjects. Teachers were not well prepared, however, to support and challenge pupils to meet the more demanding national standards expected across subjects in 2016.
- The proportion of pupils in key stage 2 in 2016 who reached expected standards in reading and English grammar, spelling and punctuation was well below national averages. No pupils reached the higher standard in the reading, writing and mathematics combined measure.
- Due to the variable quality of teaching and learning across key stages 1 and 2, progress for current pupils across subjects is inconsistent. This is particularly evident in pupils' work in books and in classes in reading, English grammar, spelling and punctuation.
- Disadvantaged pupils have, over time, made progress that is equal to or better than others from similar starting points in all subjects. In key stage 2 in 2016, this group made at least expected progress in writing and mathematics from their starting points but their progress in reading was comparatively weak.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities generally make expected or better progress from their different starting points. This is especially the case where additional teaching and learning support has been put in place that accurately matches their needs.
- Over time, higher proportions of pupils in Year 1 are successfully acquiring essential phonics skills. In 2016, the overall proportion of pupils meeting the standard expected in the national screening check was in line with averages nationally. Girls in particular did exceptionally well. This improving picture means more and more pupils are equipped with the skills needed to read and write confidently as they move into Year 2.
- Pupils' outcomes in mathematics vary. The proportion of pupils reaching expected standards in key stage 1 in 2016, was well below national averages. No pupils reached a greater depth of learning in mathematics in key stage 1. In key stage 2 in 2016, most pupils made at least expected progress and the proportion reaching the expected standard was slightly above national averages. The overall proportion reaching a deeper understanding of mathematics in key stage 2 was, however, below national averages.

- Science too demonstrates mixed outcomes for pupils. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in key stage 1 was well below national averages in 2016. In key stage 2, it was slightly above national averages. Variability in the quality of teaching and learning across key stages account for the inconsistent picture in terms of pupils' outcomes here.

Early years provision

Good

- The recently appointed early years leader is growing increasingly confident in her leadership and management of the early years. She has been well supported by senior leaders and is now taking more responsibility for overseeing the work in the Nursery class as well as Reception.
- The early years leader has enormous enthusiasm for her role. Her plans for improvement are appropriately aspirational and focused on the correct priorities. She is keenly aware of some aspects of teaching and learning practices that could sharpen even further, as well as strengths. Her knowledge of individual children's and groups' progress is good.
- Teaching and learning is good and it is particularly strong in the Reception class. Children are frequently encouraged to read, write, count and express their ideas, using increasingly sophisticated language. Staff plan to meet the needs of the children effectively.
- The proportion of children reaching a good level of development in the early years is improving over time. Current groups of children, particularly in the Reception class, make good progress from their different starting points. As a result, more children are being effectively readied for the challenges of the Year 1 curriculum.
- Staff have excellent relationships with parents and external partners. Parents are delighted with the care and attention their children receive and say they are kept up-to-date and involved in their child's progress and learning.
- Safety and welfare requirements are met. Children feel safe, are happy and enjoy the broad range of tasks and activities that are provided indoors and outside. Adults listen respectfully to children and model good speech and behaviour to support their development. The majority of children behave very well.
- Most children enter the early years with skills and abilities below those typical of their age. Staff respond promptly to support children. Children's speech and language skills, as well as their social, personal and emotional needs, are developed effectively.
- On occasion, adults in the Nursery class do not maintain the high standards of behaviour expected of children in the Reception class. At these times, progress slows for some nursery children as they become overly boisterous and lack sufficient direction from adults.

School details

Unique reference number	122191
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	10023938

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	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	197
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Diane Oliver
Headteacher	Emma Beeston
Telephone number	01670 732261
Website	www.eastlea.northumberland.sch.uk/
Email address	admin@eastlea.northumberland.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	1–2 May 2012

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- This is a smaller than average primary school.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum requirements for pupils' attainment in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support through the pupil premium is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups or who speak English as an additional language is well below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who receive additional support for special educational needs is well above the national average. The proportion of pupils who have an education,

health and care plan or a statement of special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in the majority of classes across key stages. During day one of the inspection, the lead inspector and the headteacher conducted lesson observations jointly.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and one deputy headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, early years leader, subject leaders, governors, including the chair of the governing body, and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read, scrutinised their work and talked formally and informally with groups of pupils and individuals. No responses were made by pupils to Ofsted's pupil questionnaire.
- A wide range of the school's own information was examined, including policy documentation, the school's self-evaluation, improvement plans and records of the checks made on teaching and learning. Information about performance management and safeguarding arrangements and practice were also studied.
- The opinions of 28 staff were taken into account via their responses to Ofsted's questionnaire and through discussion during meetings.
- The views of 43 parents were considered via their responses to Ofsted's questionnaire, Parent View, and 42 responses via Ofsted's freetext. Inspectors also spoke with parents at the school gate.

Inspection team

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