

# Front Street Community Primary School

North View, Whickham, Newcastle upon Tyne NE16 4AY

## Inspection dates

18–19 January 2017

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school

- The headteacher and other senior leaders provide highly effective leadership. They have created a culture in which staff and pupils excel. All members of staff share a common commitment to improve the school.
- Strong and effective partnerships with the local authority and other schools have helped members of staff to refine and improve their practice. The school is increasingly recognised as a centre with strong practice worthy of wider dissemination.
- Outcomes in all phases of the school have improved since the last inspection. Pupils make significantly better progress than is typical in reading, writing and mathematics. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is well above the national average.
- The wider curriculum provides many stimulating and memorable experiences. However, opportunities for pupils to practise and master the skills that underpin some subjects are underdeveloped.
- The quality of teaching is outstanding. Teachers hold very high expectations and teach with energy and purpose. Lessons move at a brisk pace and challenge pupils to think deeply.
- Pupils' enjoyment of learning is consistently evident across the whole school. Pupils participate enthusiastically and develop as confident, capable learners.
- Pupils are unerringly polite and courteous towards one another and members of staff. Older pupils provide excellent role models for younger children.
- Safeguarding arrangements are rigorous. Pupils feel safe and know how to keep themselves safe.
- Children make an excellent start in the early years. They make rapid progress in reading, writing and number work in both the Nursery and Reception classes. Children are well prepared to begin more formal education in Year 1.
- Attendance is above the national average. Pupils look forward to coming to school and are proud of their new school building. Parents are unanimous in their praise for the school.
- The governors are ambitious and unrelenting in their pursuit of excellence. They provide an effective balance of support and challenge. They know the school well because they make frequent checks on the quality of provision.

## **Full report**

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

Further develop the curriculum by providing more opportunities for pupils to practise and master the particular skills that underpin success in subjects beyond English and mathematics.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Outstanding

- The headteacher's clear vision, high expectations and ability to motivate and inspire colleagues have been a driving force for improvement. She and other senior leaders are determined to ensure that all pupils fulfil their potential. Their relentless focus on the quality of teaching and learning has ensured consistency of purpose and practice. Members of staff are a highly cohesive team who share leaders' commitment. As a result, outcomes for pupils are significantly above the national average, ensuring that pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Leaders set the highest expectations for conduct. They model this through their own actions and emphasise the right of every child to a good education. Consequently, pupils instinctively self-manage their own behaviour because they know it is the right thing to do. They are polite, courteous and respectful to one another without the apparent need for rules.
- Leaders check the quality of teaching and learning regularly. They are skilled in checking books to determine whether teaching strategies are having a positive enough impact. Leaders are not afraid to make changes when they are convinced improvements can be made. For example, they abandoned setting by ability and adopted mixed-ability teaching across the school because they believed it would improve the progress of pupils with different starting points. More recently, they have led changes to the way mathematics is taught, which is helping to accelerate the progress of all pupils, especially the most able.
- Leaders manage the performance of teachers well. They target training for teachers wisely and ensure that key messages from training become embedded into teachers' practice. Almost all teachers that are eligible have been awarded salary progression because their teaching leads to substantial progress.
- The core curriculum centred on English and mathematics is highly effective. More widely, interesting topics skilfully integrate different subjects and help pupils to make connections. For example, the use of interactive technology recently allowed Year 3 pupils to take a virtual expedition to ancient Greece. Pupils acquire new knowledge and understanding rapidly. However pupils' skills that underpin subjects beyond English and mathematics are developed less systematically.
- The curriculum does much to support pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. The school's work to recognise and promote children's rights has been recognised through accreditation. This work makes a significant contribution to pupils' social and moral development. For example, pupils recently organised a performance of song and dance for the local community to promote awareness of the plight of Syrian refugees. In addition, pupils take part in Remembrance Day activities and demonstrate their support for one another through acting as mentors, buddies and peer readers for younger pupils. A wide range of carefully considered activities foster tolerant and responsible attitudes that prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders and governors make good use of the pupil premium to provide extra support for disadvantaged pupils. Funding is used predominantly to employ additional adults who are well trained and carefully deployed. Disadvantaged pupils made more progress

in reading, writing and mathematics than other pupils nationally in 2016, reflecting the positive impact of the school's approach.

- The primary physical education and sports funding is used well to ensure that pupils take part in a wide range of sporting activities and competitions, including dance, netball, football, basketball, gymnastics and karate. External specialist coaches are used to extend pupils' skills and to develop the existing skills of members of staff. All pupils participate in a burst of energetic activity every Friday afternoon.
- All parents that responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, would recommend the school. Parents who inspectors spoke to informally were equally enthusiastic about the quality of education their children receive. One parent said, 'Front Street is an excellent school. The teachers work extremely hard to ensure that every child fulfils their potential. There is a lovely atmosphere in the school and my children love it.'

### **Governance of the school**

- Governors are experienced, ambitious and knowledgeable. They give their time generously to supporting efforts to improve the school. They played a significant role in the successful transition and relocation of the school into its new building.
- Governors regularly invite external scrutiny of the school in order to inform their own evaluation. They are outward looking and encourage members of staff to work in partnership with other schools.
- Members of the governing body thought carefully before agreeing to release the headteacher to support another school last year. They showed great faith in the wider senior leadership team, which proved to be well founded.
- Governors use external reports and performance data effectively to target their monitoring activities. They make frequent visits to check on the impact of planned actions and make astute recommendations for improvement.
- Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities very well. They conscientiously check the rigour of safeguarding arrangements and ensure funding, including funding for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, is well used.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have strong systems in place to check the suitability of all members of staff and other adults that come into the school. They ensure that all members of staff are well trained and understand the duty upon them to act if they have a concern about a child's safety. Leaders maintain detailed records about the actions they take to protect children. They are dogged in their determination to ensure that they secure positive resolutions. Leaders work effectively with parents and external agencies to ensure that children are kept safe.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Outstanding**

- Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and teach with flair and enthusiasm. Over time, this ensures that pupils make substantial and sustained progress.
- Underpinning the excellent teaching is the highly effective use of assessment. Teachers have a detailed grasp of each pupil's strengths and weaknesses and use this to plan lessons that move pupils' learning forward. The effective use of success criteria helps pupils to understand what they need to improve. This, together with sharply focused feedback, ensures that pupils readily improve their work and master new skills.
- All teachers hold high expectations and create a classroom culture in which pupils strive to excel. Lessons move along at a brisk pace. Standards of presentation are high and work is rarely unfinished. Appropriate homework is regularly set and contributes effectively to supporting pupils' progress.
- Good professional development has helped teachers to use questioning skilfully. They are adept at probing pupils' understanding and challenging them to reason and evaluate. Teachers are prepared to wait and give pupils time to consider their answers. As a result, the quality of classroom discussion and debate is of a high order.
- The teaching and promotion of reading is very effective. Children in the early years develop confidence in phonics and quickly progress to become fluent readers across key stage 1. Their reading skills are systematically developed in key stage 2, where they are taught how to explore the author's language and infer deeper meaning from the text. Reading records show that pupils read widely and often. They make very good use of the comfortable and welcoming reading areas in the school at social times.
- The teaching of mathematics has improved considerably since the last inspection. Lessons are particularly pacey and challenging. Teachers now give considerable weight to ensuring that pupils can explain how they are using their knowledge and check their competence through their ability to tackle mathematical problems. The most able mathematicians are awarded 'Maths Ninja' status and are called upon to help others when necessary.
- Teaching assistants work as effective partners to teachers. They are well trained and contribute significantly to pupils' progress. Like teachers, they are skilled in questioning and know when and when not to intervene during lessons. Outside of lessons, their work with individuals or small groups of pupils is sharply focused. Pupils were clear that additional sessions with teaching assistants that pre-teach new topics before they are covered in class are particularly helpful.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Outstanding**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils' positive attitudes and behaviour contribute significantly to their excellent progress. Pupils consistently told inspectors they work hard because they enjoy learning and are proud of their school.

- Crucial to pupils' progress and development is the obvious enjoyment they share together as they learn. They work hard to meet the level of challenge without feeling anxious about their performance.
- From the Nursery class onwards, teachers actively promote positive attitudes, the need to be resilient and to keep trying. Because of this, pupils develop self-confidence and the determination to persevere. The school's motto, 'Believe, achieve, together we succeed', is consistently evident within classroom culture.
- The curriculum is carefully planned to ensure that pupils learn about their personal safety. A strong emphasis is placed on using digital media safely and the website provides useful guidance for families on how to keep their children safe when online. Pupils were adamant there is no bullying because they know it would not be tolerated.
- More widely, the curriculum provides exciting and memorable activities each year that develop pupils' cultural and spiritual development. Many pupils take part in concerts in conjunction with other schools and visit local places of worship to develop their appreciation of different faiths.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- The school's promotion of rights and responsibilities means that pupils understand and respect everyone's entitlement to learn. Relationships between staff and pupils are warm and respectful. Consequently, lessons are very productive and progress without interruption.
- Pupils take part confidently and enthusiastically in lessons, contributing answers to the teacher's questions and working with partners to develop their ideas. They listen attentively to one another and regularly praise one another's contributions. Pupils are adept at explaining to adults exactly where they are having difficulties, which helps teachers to address their concerns quickly. Pupils value and appreciate the enjoyable and engaging lessons their teachers prepare for them.
- At social times pupils play together happily. Many choose to join in organised sports and games activities. Older pupils, who act as buddies, ensure that younger pupils are included and cared for. Pupils are unerringly polite and respectful to one another and are eager to take good care of their new school building. For example, there is no litter around the site and pupils tidy away spotlessly after their lunch.
- Records show that there have been very few incidents of poor behaviour over time.
- Overall attendance is above the national average and has steadily increased over recent years. This reflects the enthusiasm parents and pupils consistently expressed about the school. Leaders take effective action to support or challenge the few families that do not ensure that their children attend well enough.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Outstanding

- Outcomes in all phases of the school have improved since the last inspection because leaders have improved the quality of teaching and created a positive, aspirant culture.

- From their different starting points, pupils make substantial progress across the school and attain standards that are significantly above average by the time they leave Year 6. Pupils are very well prepared for secondary school.
- Children quickly establish their reading skills in the early years and progress confidently in key stage 1. Outcomes in the phonics check have improved steadily over recent years and a high proportion of pupils reached the expected standard by the end of Year 1 last year. Reading is actively promoted across the school. Disadvantaged pupils receive extra support and have many opportunities to read to well-trained adults each week. Informal reading areas around the school are popular with pupils at social times, reflecting their enjoyment in reading.
- Pupils take real pride in their handwriting and presentation. They delight in showing their written work to visitors. Teachers ensure that topics are varied and interesting, stimulating pupils' creativity. Pupils make rapid progress in writing. In 2016, almost all pupils reached the expected standard, with nearly one third of pupils reaching the higher level by the end of Year 6. The rate of progress in writing was in the top 5% of schools nationally.
- Pupils particularly enjoy mathematics and make significantly better progress than seen nationally. Expectations of all pupils are high and the work provided challenges all pupils, including the most able. Pupils are expected to explain their reasoning and have numerous opportunities to apply their mathematical understanding to problems. The school is boldly implementing changes to the way mathematics is taught, in response to the raised expectations of the national curriculum.
- The school's assessment information and the work in books shows that current pupils are making consistently strong progress across the school. Regular assessment means that teachers know which pupils are in need of extra help, and they have excellent arrangements in place to provide this. Pupils benefit considerably from additional sessions designed to address gaps in their knowledge. As a result, few pupils fall behind. In 2016, the proportion of pupils that attained the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6 was 30% above the national average.
- Pupils make strong progress across the wider curriculum. Integrated topics help pupils to explore links across different subjects and provide further rich opportunities for pupils to apply their reading, writing and numeracy skills. Pupils acquire knowledge well, although opportunities for pupils to master the key skills in subjects beyond English and mathematics are less well developed.
- Disadvantaged pupils make consistently strong and sustained progress from their below-average starting points. As a result, their attainment by the time they leave the school is similar to that of other pupils nationally. This is because teachers have consistently high expectations and rigorously plan learning that builds on what pupils already know, understand and can do.
- Other groups of pupils, including pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and the most able, also make strong progress. Teaching assistants make a significant contribution and ensure that pupils with particular needs, including pupils that speak English as an additional language, get first-class support.

## Early years provision

## Outstanding

- Children get off to an excellent start in the early years. On average, children enter Nursery with skills and abilities below those typical of children their age. They settle quickly into well-established classroom routines and are keen to explore the highly stimulating and richly resourced environment. From the start, outstanding teaching encourages children to work together and solve problems. As a result, they quickly develop social and language skills and learn to cooperate with one another.
- Children make rapid progress across Nursery and the Reception Year so that they are well prepared to enter Year 1. Outcomes at the end of the Reception Year have improved steadily since the school was last inspected. From below average starting points, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development has improved to be above that seen nationally. Additional funding for disadvantaged children is used well to ensure that they make as much progress as other children in the school.
- Teachers strike an effective balance, encouraging children's curiosity through play and providing more formal opportunities to develop their grasp of phonics and numbers. As a result of highly focused assessment, adults know each child's needs particularly well and thoughtfully plan activities to support their development. Adults quickly identify children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and draw upon external agencies where necessary to ensure that their needs are met.
- Children quickly develop a degree of independence. For example, on arrival in the morning, they register themselves and make their own meal choice for lunchtime. Together, teachers and children plan the activities they will do. As a result, time is used purposefully and classrooms are a hive of activity. Children behave extremely well and show care and support for one another.
- Children's speaking and listening skills develop well, as adults are skilled at asking questions that stimulate discussion. Children are encouraged to find solutions to tricky problems. For example, in response to a traditional story, children decided the best way to free Rapunzel was to write a letter to the witch who had imprisoned her.
- Children in the Reception class demonstrated a good grasp of how to add and subtract numbers up to 20. They confidently wrote basic calculations on whiteboards and could use a number line to check if their mental arithmetic was correct.
- Since her appointment, the early years leader has skilfully shaped the approach to learning and developed the team's skills. The move to the new building has improved the learning environment and allowed the leader's vision to be fully realised. All adults are skilled and share a commitment to ensure that every child gets off to the best possible start. Parents appreciate the regular communications they receive and are unanimous in their praise for the school.
- The local authority has recognised that the quality of the early years provision is worthy of wider dissemination and uses the school as an example of good practice.

## School details

|                         |           |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| Unique reference number | 108350    |
| Local authority         | Gateshead |
| Inspection number       | 10024021  |

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                     | Community  |
| Age range of pupils                 | 3 to 11  |
| Gender of pupils                    | Mixed  |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 447  |
| Appropriate authority               | The governing body   |
| Chair                               | Louise Dick  |
| Headteacher                         | Helen Gladstone  |
| Telephone number                    | 01914 881941   |
| Website                             | <a href="http://www.frontstreetprimary.co.uk/">www.frontstreetprimary.co.uk/</a>   |
| Email address                       | <a href="mailto:frontstreetcommunityprimaryschool@gateshead.gov.uk">frontstreetcommunityprimaryschool@gateshead.gov.uk</a> |
| Date of previous inspection         | 21–22 November 2012  |

## Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- Front Street Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The large majority of pupils are White British. Few pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor targets, which are the minimum

expectation for pupils' attainment and progress at the end of Key stage 2.

- At the request of the local authority, Front Street Primary School provided support to Winlaton West Lane Primary School between February and August 2016.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited lessons across all year groups, including the Nursery and Reception Years. A number of observations were undertaken jointly with the headteacher. During observations, inspectors sampled pupils' books and talked to pupils in order to evaluate the quality of their current work. In addition, inspectors scrutinised in detail a sample of books containing work from a broad range of subjects.
- Inspectors also observed an assembly and the general climate around the school at social times.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, other senior leaders, a group of teachers, the early years leader, the special educational needs coordinator and a group of pupils. Further meetings were held with a group of governors, including the chair of the governing body, and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans, policies, assessment information and records of checks on the quality of teaching. Inspectors looked at records of attendance, behaviour, minutes of governing body meetings and safeguarding information.
- Inspectors took account of the 52 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, the 26 responses to Ofsted's staff survey and the 171 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.

## Inspection team

|                             |                         |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Chris Smith, lead inspector | Her Majesty's Inspector |
| Chris Campbell              | Ofsted Inspector        |
| Ian Dawson                  | Ofsted Inspector        |
| Hugh Steele                 | Ofsted Inspector        |
| Colin Lofthouse             | Ofsted Inspector        |

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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](http://www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings).

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