

Tweedmouth Prior Park First School

Dean Drive, Tweedmouth, Berwick-upon-Tweed, Northumberland TD15 2DB

Inspection dates

21–22 May 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Outcomes for pupils are not yet good. Although progress is improving, pupils do not make consistently strong progress in all subjects.
- While standards are now improving quickly overall, gaps remain in some pupils' knowledge and skills as a result of a legacy of weaker teaching.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils has been slower than that of other pupils nationally. Although differences are diminishing, they are not doing so rapidly enough.
- Teaching has not been consistently strong over time. Until recently, it has not ensured that all pupils do as well as they might and meet standards of which they are capable.
- Work set by teachers is not always well matched to pupils' needs and abilities, including most-able pupils.
- Some teachers do not maintain consistently good behaviour. Low-level disruption still exists in some lessons.
- Rates of attendance remain below average, despite very recent improvements.

The school has the following strengths

- Under the inspirational and experienced leadership of the new headteacher, the school is now improving quickly. Leaders are now establishing higher expectations.
- Leaders and the revitalised governing body share a strong ambition to provide the best experiences for pupils. Concerted and effective action is now transforming the quality of teaching and learning.
- Teachers are now working collaboratively to address identified shortcomings. As a result of better teamwork and training, their practice is markedly improving.
- The school's work to develop pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils are well cared for and benefit from the inclusive school ethos.
- Provision in the early years is strong. Children get off to a good start in the Nursery and Reception. Staff are knowledgeable and ensure that all welfare requirements are met.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve outcomes for pupils by:
 - ensuring that all pupils make strong progress in their learning and attain the standards of which they are capable
 - further reducing any differences in the rates of progress made by disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally from similar starting points.
- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching by:
 - providing work that is well matched to pupils' needs and abilities and that presents suitable challenge for all pupils
 - checking that the pace of learning in lessons allows pupils to maintain their concentration and engagement in tasks
 - implementing consistently in every class the agreed whole-school initiatives to further improve teaching.
- Improve overall pupils' attendance and reduce the proportion of pupils who frequently miss school.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Since her appointment, the experienced and skilled headteacher has been unwavering in her determination to secure an excellent standard of education for pupils in this school. She has been supported well by the two new assistant headteachers, middle leaders, governors and the local authority school improvement partner. The whole school team has worked tirelessly to eliminate underperformance, improve the quality of teaching and accelerate the rates at which pupils make progress in their learning. The impact of their work is beginning to emerge.
- Swift and decisive action to address weaknesses in the quality of provision has been taken. This has included the introduction of many new initiatives, and effective partnership work with colleagues from a local first school. However, not all of these initiatives are fully effective across the school, and some are in need of further refinement. Work to secure consistently good-quality teaching is ongoing.
- The headteacher quickly identified weaknesses that had resulted in a decline across many aspects of provision. She has taken swift and decisive action to improve the quality of teaching and, as a result, current pupils are now starting to make improved rates of progress in their learning. There has been too little time to see improved outcomes for pupils in published data from statutory assessments.
- Leaders and governors have an accurate view of what the school does well, and what it needs to do in order to be more successful. Procedures for monitoring and evaluating the school's performance through checking the quality of teaching are incisive and detailed.
- The school development plan is detailed and includes the impact of planned actions on outcomes for pupils in their learning. Regular evaluation and tracking of actions mean that improvements are implemented without delay. Leaders are demonstrating a clear capacity to improve and secure higher levels of attainment for pupils.
- Although the school's curriculum is broad and balanced and all areas are covered, it does not yet ensure that subject-specific skills are planned and assessed effectively and progressively across year groups. In addition, the monitoring and evaluation of the quality of provision in creative and foundation subjects lack the tight focus seen in mathematics and English.
- Leaders are now managing pupil premium spending effectively to provide targeted support for disadvantaged pupils, following careful analysis and research into barriers to pupils' learning. A number of different initiatives are evaluated for their impact, and amended or changed as a result. The positive effect of these actions is now seen through the improving progress made by current disadvantaged pupils across the school.
- Funding to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is used effectively. This is because the leader of the special educational needs provision is knowledgeable and effective in ensuring that pupils' needs are identified, and ensuring that the provision matches their needs. She collects and analyses the information to check that these pupils are identified correctly and are beginning to catch up. As a

result, most pupils with SEND make strong progress.

- The physical education and sports funding for schools has been used well. Teachers benefit from working alongside a specialist coach. Pupils benefit from high-quality lessons and engage regularly in competitive sports, as well as participating in a range of after-school clubs.
- The school has benefited from good-quality support from the local authority. There are strong and purposeful links to nearby schools in the Berwick area.

Governance of the school

- The governors' commitment to improving their own effectiveness has resulted in a recent review of governance of the school and changes to the way that the governing body operates. Following new appointments, governors bring a range of appropriate skills and experience to the school. Scrutiny of minutes of recent meetings shows that governors now thoroughly challenge and investigate the actions of leaders, while also offering good support.
- Governors are playing a significant role in school improvement and the process of eradicating weaknesses. Leaders are held to account for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, as well as for the quality of outcomes for pupils seen in statutory tests and progress information. Governors have an accurate and incisive view of the school's strengths and weaknesses from first-hand experience, which was gained through participating in monitoring activities alongside senior leaders. Governors are passionate in their desire to see all pupils fulfil their true potential.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There is a well-defined culture across the school that informs the work of all staff. All staff have a clear understanding of what to do, and what to be aware of, in order to ensure that children are kept safe. Training programmes and regular updates are a part of school life. These ensure that staff remain vigilant and aware of current and ongoing issues.
- Pupils say they feel safe and parents agree. Pupils told inspectors that they feel comfortable sharing a concern with adults in the school.
- School systems for recording safeguarding concerns are fit for purpose. Scrutiny of case files and documentation demonstrates that the designated safeguarding lead responds to issues in a timely manner.
- The curriculum is responsive to current and emerging issues both locally and nationally, and ensures that pupils have a secure knowledge of how to keep themselves and others safe, including online, at home and outside school in the wider community.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching over time has been weak. It has resulted in pupils not reaching the standards of which they are capable or fulfilling their true potential. There are still

variations in the quality of teaching across the school, with examples of both strong and effective teaching, but some teaching is still not up to scratch.

- Teaching requires improvement because, in some lessons, expectations of pupils' attitudes to learning and behaviour are not high enough. On some occasions, a minority of pupils lose concentration and distract other pupils' learning. Teachers can be too slow to notice and address low-level disruption.
- Work is now usually pitched well according to pupils' abilities, allowing pupils to be engaged in lessons and productive. On some occasions this is not the case. Over time, teaching has lacked sufficient challenge, especially for most-able pupils. This has prevented them from developing their ability to work at greater depth on their skills and knowledge in all subjects, and to reach higher standards of attainment.
- Recently, teaching overall has improved, and is now mostly having a positive impact on learning, including in reading, writing and mathematics. This is reflected in the better progress pupils now make in each year group, with a much larger proportion on track to reach standards typical of their age.
- As a result of the tightly focused and systematic teaching of phonics, children are now getting off to a faster start in their reading. Adults are skilled in delivering well-structured reading lessons. Pupils who read to an inspector used their phonics skills well to read unfamiliar words, and some read fluently with expression and intonation.
- In mathematics, basic skills of number and calculation are taught well and consolidated regularly. Teachers make good use of resources to develop pupils' basic skills in calculation, counting forwards and backwards, and knowing tables. Older pupils are developing in their abilities to think mathematically, and to conjecture and reason when problem-solving.
- The vast majority of pupils have a positive attitude to their lessons. They settle to their learning quickly and are swift to react when responding to adults or moving between tasks. Time in lessons is generally used effectively.
- Targeted interventions are being used well to support progress and attainment for low-attaining pupils and those with SEND. Regular checks are made to ensure that these pupils keep up.
- School leaders have ensured that staff are aware of disadvantaged pupils, and have created a culture that ensures that they keep up in lessons, as well as receiving additional support where they need it.
- Most planning is effective. Assessments are accurate and provide the focus for the lessons.
- In early years, adults are skilful at supporting children to move their learning on quickly and ensure that children have a positive view of learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils show respect and care for each other. They value their classmates' opinions, and

are used to working happily and cooperatively in lessons. Pupils say they enjoy school, and thrive in the well-ordered and positive school environment.

- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good, and most are very keen to succeed and to always produce their best work. They take their roles of responsibility in the school community very seriously. They are proud to be school councillors and play leaders.
- Most of the parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and who spoke with the inspector are confident that their children are kept safe by the school. The vast majority say that any worries they raise are taken seriously, addressed quickly and resolved fairly.
- Pupils' emotional needs are well supported. They know they can speak in private to the school counsellor if they need to. During these meetings, they counsel or offer support to pupils for a wide range of issues, such as anxiety or making and maintaining friendships. This helps to develop pupils' emotional resilience.
- Pupils say that bullying is rare. They are aware of the different types of bullying that they may encounter, including cyber bullying. They are confident that, should any minor instances of misbehaviour occur, staff will resolve them quietly and effectively.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Pupils are considerate to each other and polite in corridors and lessons. They arrive to lessons in a timely manner, ready to learn, and settle quickly with positive attitudes to their learning.
- Pupils and parents are confident that issues with bullying will be taken seriously and resolved effectively by staff.
- Most pupils are attentive and well behaved in lessons. They willingly answer questions and are keen to support and help other pupils. Pupils cooperate when working in groups and are mature enough to work independently and show initiative. In some lessons, pupils drift off task when the work is undemanding or not matched to their abilities.
- While attendance is improving towards that seen nationally, some pupils continue to be frequently absent. The school is working tenaciously to challenge and support families to get their children into school. This has had some impact, but attendance remains an issue for the school.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Evidence from improving work in pupils' books, matched by detailed information from the school's assessment system, shows unequivocally that key stage 2 pupils currently in the school are now beginning to make stronger progress from their starting points. This has not always been the case. Action taken by leaders to improve teaching and accelerate pupils' progress is now starting to take effect.
- In key stage 1, pupils in current classes are making stronger progress from their starting points in reading and writing. Evidence seen in lessons and in pupils' workbooks confirms the school's own assessment information that the proportion of

pupils working at age-related expectations is increasing.

- The proportion of pupils who achieved the expected level in the Year 1 national phonics screening check has been below average for each of the previous three years.
- Disadvantaged pupils are increasingly making good progress across the school. The school uses clear information about the progress made by current pupils to ensure that they do not fall behind others. Across the school they are increasingly matching the performance of their peers and where they are not, they are catching up rapidly.
- The school is quick to identify any pupils who may be at risk of falling behind. Teachers make effective provision for these pupils through activities that are well matched to their individual needs and abilities. This includes pupils with SEND. Where needed, support plans are in place, with challenging targets. As a result, the progress made by the majority of these pupils reflects that of their peers.

Early years provision

Good

- The leader of early years is enthusiastic about her work. She has developed an inclusive, effective provision where children blossom. This is underpinned by a caring and lively learning environment which enables children to settle quickly into routines, gain confidence and thrive when exposed to the rich curriculum that the school provides.
- Children in the early years get off to a good start. Many enter Nursery with skills and abilities which are below those typically seen in children of their age. As a result of good teaching and provision, careful observation and good questioning, children make good progress.
- Although over time the proportions of children reaching a good level of development have been variable, current children are making strong progress from their starting points.
- Children behave well, take turns, share resources and listen attentively. They are able to sustain concentration for a considerable amount of time because they enjoy and are relaxed in their play.
- All adults sensitively and skilfully intervene in order to develop and enrich children's use of language. Adults play and work alongside children to explore and practise new skills, observing children carefully, building on their interests and effectively using open-ended questions to stimulate their imagination and creativity.
- Basic skills in reading, writing and number are promoted effectively. Opportunities for children to write, mark-make and count are plentiful around the early years area.
- All statutory safeguarding and welfare arrangements are met in the early years. Staff are appropriately trained and have a thorough understanding of the importance of their role in helping to ensure that children are well cared for and kept safe.
- The school works effectively with outside agencies, such as speech and language therapy services, to help children overcome learning difficulties.

School details

Unique reference number	122187
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	10087542

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

Type of school	First
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	172
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Isobel Hunter
Headteacher	Deborah Currans
Telephone number	01289 306 667
Website	http://www.tweedmouthpriorpark.northumberland.sch.uk/
Email address	admin@tpvfs.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	21–22 March 2017

Information about this school

- The school is a smaller-than-average-sized first school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium is above average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above the national average.
- Most pupils are White British. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language are well below average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes. Some lessons were observed jointly with senior leaders. In addition, shorter visits to classrooms were carried out to see particular aspects of the school's work, such as the teaching of reading or the provision of nurture guidance.
- Meetings and discussions were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, members of the governing body and the school's improvement partner.
- Inspectors met with a group of pupils, observed playtime and lunchtime, and talked with pupils and staff around the school.
- Inspectors analysed documents, including the school's plans for improvement and reports showing the school's view of its own performance. The school's website was evaluated. Safeguarding documents and policies and records relating to pupils' personal development, behaviour, welfare, safety and attendance were inspected.
- Inspectors analysed information on the performance of the school in comparison with other schools nationally, and the school's own records of pupils' attainment and progress.
- Inspectors took account of the 12 responses received from parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. In addition, inspectors spoke with parents in the playground at the start of the school day.

Inspection team

Geoffrey Seagrove, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Kathryn McDonald	Ofsted Inspector

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