

Gosforth East Middle School

Harewood Road, Gosforth, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Tyne and Wear NE3 5JT

Inspection dates

4–5 July 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and deputy headteacher, with support of middle leaders and governors, are leading the school very well.
- The areas for improvement from the previous inspection have been addressed systematically. As a result, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved and is now good.
- Pupils' outcomes are good. In most subject areas pupils succeed regardless of their starting point or background. Consequently, their attainment is well above expectations by the time they leave at the end of Year 8.
- Good leadership and teaching ensure that pupils from all backgrounds, including the disadvantaged and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well.
- The school's curriculum is well balanced to meet the needs and interests of pupils. Pupils that enter the school with lower levels of literacy receive strong support that helps them to catch up rapidly.
- Pupils' behaviour is excellent. They take personal responsibility for their actions. In lessons, they take part enthusiastically and are respectful and considerate to each other. The school is very calm and supportive.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe is excellent. Staff are highly vigilant and ensure that all pupils receive the individual care and support to help them thrive.
- A strong focus on spiritual, moral, social and cultural development allows pupils to debate issues and have an excellent understanding of life in modern Britain.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By the end of Year 6, improve the progress for high-ability pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, in writing, by ensuring that:
 - senior leaders, through their monitoring and evaluation, have an accurate picture of the progress pupils can make
 - teachers in all subjects provide greater opportunities for pupils to extend their writing skills and use them for different purposes
 - leaders in English provide training for subject teachers to ensure that they provide challenging tasks for further practice of writing skills.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders have been very effective in maintaining good leadership. The governing body has strengthened the roles of middle leaders to ensure that all leaders share the same values, vision and ambition to ensure that the school improves at a pace.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher, staff and governors are ambitious for the pupils. They are passionate about providing all pupils with opportunities to succeed, no matter what their background. The clear focus on raising the expectations of leaders has enabled the quality of teaching to improve and, as a result, pupils are now making good progress.
- Teachers are highly motivated. They respect senior leaders' continual push for improvement and give them strong support. The overwhelming majority of staff believe the school is well led and managed. The energetic approach of staff has raised pupils' aspirations.
- The curriculum has been developed further since the last inspection to reflect the higher aspirations of leaders. Programmes in key stage 3 are designed effectively to ensure that pupils achieve well when they transfer to high school.
- The school provides a wide range of extra-curricular activities which encourage art, creativity and, particularly, sport. Leaders make effective use of the primary physical education and sport premium to increase opportunities for pupils to engage in physical activity and develop healthy lifestyles.
- The outstanding provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. There are rich opportunities for pupils to explore and discuss topical issues and develop personal values. Pupils talk maturely and in a knowledgeable way about British values, rights and responsibilities and how to keep themselves safe.
- Leaders have developed their system for assessing the knowledge and understanding of pupils throughout the school. This assessment system, combined with more frequent checks on the quality of work, means that senior leaders understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school accurately. This has brought about improvements in most subjects, however, writing for the most able learners, including the disadvantaged, by the end of Year 6 remains a focus.
- The school has worked effectively with the local authority since the last inspection and there has been valuable support from other external partners. Staff are eager to take up professional development and newly qualified teachers are supported effectively. Leaders are now sustaining improvements because they have developed their expertise effectively.
- The additional funding the school receives for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is used creatively and is having a positive impact on pupils' outcomes. Leaders have accurately identified the barriers for learning and ensure that the money is used effectively to provide opportunities for these pupils to excel.

Governance of the school

- The quality of leadership provided by the governing body has improved since the last inspection. Governors recognised where they lacked expertise and recruited specialists with the necessary skills. As a result, the governing body is now better organised and more effective. They are motivated and well informed about the strengths and areas for improvement in the school. They check the quality of the information they receive and are accurate in their evaluation of the school's performance. Governors are linked to key priorities for the school. They ensure that they use external evaluation to validate the impact leaders and teachers are making against these priorities.
- The financial management of the school meets statutory requirements. The governing body has a clear strategy for the effective use of the pupil premium and other additional funding that appropriately meets the needs of the pupils.
- The school's website is kept up to date with all relevant information so that parents can access any information required.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Checks made on staff are rigorous and meticulously recorded. There is a culture of vigilance and care that pervades the school. Staff are all trained appropriately in child protection and know what steps to take to protect pupils if they identify any concerns. Pupils trust members of staff implicitly because relationships within the school are so strong.
- Leaders carry out statutory duties well. Minutes show that they spend time on the important matters of keeping pupils safe and well cared for. All are fully trained in line with the most recent government guidance and they ensure that safeguarding policies and procedures are implemented robustly.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers have raised their expectations of what individual pupils can achieve. The improvements in teachers' questioning skills, marking and written comments on improving work are now supporting good progress. Most pupils achieve well and are well prepared to move on to their next school.
- Teachers and support staff enjoy excellent relationships with pupils. This is evident in the buzz among pupils at work in lessons and the eagerness with which they become immersed in activities. Increasingly, pupils are encouraged to think for themselves, consider problems and explain their conclusions or solutions fully. Activities provided are greatly improved in capturing and holding pupils' interest.
- Training and the professional development of teachers have a high profile in the school. There are regular opportunities for teachers to watch good practice in other schools. The more experienced teachers are highly supportive of their colleagues. Teachers regularly discuss practice and how they can develop their teaching, for example, through the subjects of science, technology, engineering and mathematics

known as STEM. As a result, their skills, knowledge and understanding are improved and enriched.

- Most teachers provide work which challenges and stretches the most able pupils. However, pupils do not have enough opportunities to write extended pieces of work or to try writing in a range of different formats in other subjects. The English department is planning to share its good practice with other departments to help to bring this about.
- Teachers set and mark homework regularly, in line with the school's policy. In some subjects, pupils get a choice of topics to research or questions to do, which encourages them to take a deeper interest in those subjects that appeal to them most.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- The school's ethos of 'In the pursuit of excellence' ensures that pupils' welfare is promoted exceptionally well. Staff are systematic and proactive in anticipating potential welfare issues and pursue any concerns relentlessly. Pupils told inspectors that they have no real concerns about bullying and that it is extremely rare. They have every confidence in the staff to address bullying, should it occur.
- Pupils show highly positive attitudes and a keenness for learning. They take part confidently in lessons and take pride in their work. They concentrate carefully in lessons and collaborate very effectively with one another. They are proud of their school and the very positive relationships they have with the staff.
- The school offers a caring environment where pupils feel safe and well looked after. The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to Parent View believe that pupils are both safe and happy at school.
- The headteacher is passionate about the benefit of sport and exercise for pupils' physical and emotional well-being. An emphasis is placed on the importance of sport and outdoor activity. The opportunities for physical education and sport at the school are excellent and this gives pupils a wide range of activities to choose from. As a result, a large proportion of pupils are involved in either team or individual sports.
- Older pupils are ably prepared for the next stage of their education as a result of carefully planned visits to their new school which give them good insights into what they can achieve. Inspectors observed younger pupils experiencing a broad range of exciting activities on their transition day. They were warmly welcomed around the school by both staff and pupils and also produced some fabulous art work.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is exemplary because they know how to regulate their own behaviour appropriately. Pupils mix happily and are

respectful and considerate of one another at social times. In lessons, they are polite and cooperate extremely well with one another because teachers manage behaviour and consider seating plans very carefully.

- Pupils are punctual to lessons and arrive with the right equipment. There is no litter around the school site. Pupils wear the uniform in line with the requirements of the school's policy.
- Pupils enjoy school and attend well. Few pupils miss school on a regular basis. The overall rate of attendance is better than the national average.
- The majority of the parents who responded to Parent View believe that the school ensures that its pupils are well behaved.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- In 2016, the progress of Year 6 pupils from their key stage 1 starting points was below average in writing for middle-ability and high-ability pupils. It was average in reading and above average in mathematics. The progress being made by pupils currently in Year 6 in reading and mathematics remains strong because the quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved significantly in the last year.
- Pupils' writing skills are competently developed in English lessons and there is some high-quality writing in pupils' books. Moderation of the current Year 5 in 2017 was accurate and showed pupils were progressing well in writing. However, recent external moderation of Year 6 has identified that there are not enough higher-ability pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, attaining at greater depth. Leaders are addressing this through providing more opportunities to write at length in other subjects.
- The quality of pupils' reading displayed in English lessons is good because teachers have high expectations for pupils to question what they read. Most pupils enjoy reading and are competent readers.
- Year 8 pupils leaving the school in 2016 made overall progress which was above expectations in English and mathematics and had attainment above national expectations. The school's assessment information indicates that current Year 8 pupils are achieving similar levels of attainment and this is confirmed by pupils' work in lessons.
- Pupils make at least expected progress in mathematics in all year groups as a result of more engaging lessons which are based on a better understanding of what individual pupils know, understand and can do. Pupils have risen to the challenge of a more demanding curriculum which emphasises mathematical reasoning and requires them to think more deeply about the processes they are employing.
- Teachers' skills in planning activities that meet pupils' individual needs and interests mean that disadvantaged pupils who are entitled to the pupil premium and those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve as well as their peers. One-to-one sessions and individual interventions ensure that pupils' previous barriers in developing literacy, numeracy and reading skills are tackled skilfully.
- Pupils communicate their ideas nicely. They express their thoughts with confidence and

in a refreshingly positive manner.

- The majority of pupils respond enthusiastically to learning activities in other subjects, particularly science, art and history. In science, for example, pupils, when looking at the teacher's bike, were keen to explain where it would have points of friction.

School details

Unique reference number	108521
Local authority	Newcastle upon Tyne
Inspection number	10031990

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

Type of school	Middle deemed secondary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	9 to 13
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	505
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	George Snaith
Headteacher	Tim Stout
Telephone number	0191 2855 445
Website	www.gosforeast.newcastle.sch.uk
Email address	admin@gosforeast.newcastle.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	29–30 April 2015

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- This middle deemed secondary school is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The school is a foundation school. It is part of the Gosforth Schools' Trust which comprises nine first schools and two middle schools working with local partners in business and higher education.
- Most pupils are of White British backgrounds. There are fewer pupils than average that speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs without a statement or education, health and care plan is above average.
- Currently, about an eighth of pupils are eligible for support through the pupil premium, which is much lower than average. The pupil premium is additional funding that

schools receive to support those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.

- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed teaching and learning in most lessons. The headteacher visited some of these lessons with an inspector.
- The inspectors spoke to pupils about their school, observed pupils' conduct around the school, and looked at work in their books in lessons.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, middle leaders and staff. An inspector also spoke to the governing body and had a meeting with the local authority.
- There were 147 responses to Parent View, the Ofsted online survey, for the inspectors to analyse. The inspectors had discussions with two parents and looked at the information from the school's recent parental survey.
- Questionnaires from 20 staff were considered.
- The inspectors examined a range of documents, including the school's own systems for the tracking of pupils' progress, school evaluations, safeguarding documentation and policies and records of attendance.

Inspection team

Ann Muxworthy, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Iain Veitch	Ofsted Inspector
Geoffrey Brookes	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.

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