

Backworth Park Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108580
Local authority	North Tyneside
Inspection number	377776
Inspection dates	5–6 January 2012
Lead inspector	Gordon Potter

This inspection of the school 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	128
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Eileen Goodwin
Headteacher	Carol Crerar
Date of previous school inspection	29 September 2008
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Introduction

Inspection team

Gordon Potter

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed 14 lessons taught by seven different teachers, including joint lesson observations and visits to several classes with the headteacher. The inspector held meetings with representatives of the governing body, staff, pupils, parents and carers, a representative from the local authority and the school's external Development Partner. The inspector observed the school's work, and looked at a range of school policies and documentation relating to safeguarding and strategic planning, examples of pupils' work, assessment data and monitoring records. He also scrutinised the 97 questionnaires returned by parents and carers as well as questionnaires from pupils and 17 staff. No responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) were available to assist in planning the inspection.

Information about the school

This school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The percentage of pupils at the first level of additional support (School Action) is below average. The proportions of pupils with special educational needs at School Action Plus and those with a statement of special educational needs is above average. These include pupils who have significant behavioural difficulties. There are no disabled pupils in the school. The school has achieved Activemark and Healthy School status. The school has met government floor standards in one of the past three years. These are the minimum standards set for pupils' attainment and progress. The school runs a daily breakfast club.

The deputy headteacher has been in post since January 2011. Staffing difficulties are being caused through long term absence.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall Effectiveness	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	3

Key Findings

- This is a satisfactory school. It has a number of strengths. Pupils, parents and carers are very positive about the school and the way it keeps pupils safe and encourages them to behave well and to have high attendance.
- Achievement is satisfactory. It is good in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1 where children make good progress from starting points which are well below expectations. Attainment at the end of Year 2 is now typically average. This improved achievement has not had time to impact on attainment at the end of Year 6, which is low. In 2011, too few pupils achieved the nationally expected levels, especially in mathematics.
- Teaching is satisfactory overall. It is good, and often excellent, in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1. Teaching in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory and improving but is not yet consistent enough to ensure that pupils can make better than satisfactory progress. The school provides caring, focused individual support in lessons for pupils with special educational needs, including behavioural difficulties. As a result, these pupils make satisfactory progress.
- The behaviour and safety of pupils is good. Pupils enjoy school and say that misbehaviour is uncommon and is effectively dealt with by their teachers. There are highly effective procedures to support the learning of the few pupils who find good behaviour difficult.
- Senior leaders know the school's strengths and weaknesses well. They have used performance management and rigorous data analysis to improve the quality of teaching and target further improvements. Staff welcome opportunities to develop subject areas and contribute to school improvements. However, progress is slowed by staffing difficulties, inconsistency in the effectiveness of subject leaders and the newness of some initiatives. The governing body supports and challenges senior leaders well.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By the summer of 2013, ensure pupils make at least good progress and increase the proportion of pupils who attain nationally expected levels at the end of Key Stage 2, especially in mathematics, by:
 - sharing its existing good and outstanding practice in teaching to ensure teaching is at least consistently good across the school
 - using assessment information more effectively to ensure that work is matched accurately to the needs of individual pupils and lessons offer more pace and challenge
 - giving pupils advice on how to improve their work and clear targets that will help them understand how to achieve the next steps in their learning.
- Increase the consistency and effectiveness of subject leaders by:
 - ensuring the rapid and successful implementation of those strategies which have been designed to raise achievement
 - ensuring the consistent application of the school's procedures to analyse pupils' progress and to create, monitor and evaluate appropriate interventions.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Children's starting points on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage are well below those expected for their age. A wide range of stimulating, engaging activities capture children's imagination and move their learning on quickly in all areas of their development, especially in their personal and social development and their skills in counting and linking sounds and letters. The provision outdoors is particularly good, allowing children to investigate for themselves and to develop their independence and their creative and physical skills. Effective steps to develop children's reading skills begin in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Across the school there is a coherent and systematic approach to teaching reading with a balanced emphasis on letters and sounds and comprehension. In the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, this leads to good progress and typically average attainment in reading at the end of Year 2. There is a similar pattern of achievement in writing and mathematics in Key Stage 1 where pupils make good progress to achieve average attainment, although in 2011 boys' attainment was below average in all areas. These improvements in the quality of pupils' work have not had time to impact on attainment at Year 6 which is low overall. In 2011, while the large majority of pupils attained expected levels in reading and writing, only a minority of pupils attained nationally expected levels in mathematics. This was a small cohort of pupils as is typical for the school, over half of whom had special educational needs. Individual pupils within tiny cohorts can have a significant effect on average attainment. Pupils made satisfactory progress in both English and mathematics in Key Stage 2 and from

their starting points in Nursery. Pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals attained in line with similar pupils nationally.

Pupils with special educational needs, including those with a statement of special educational needs, make satisfactory progress due to a detailed analysis of their needs and tracking of their achievements. A review of the provision for these pupils has ensured programmes of support are more effective in closing gaps. Most parents and carers believe their children are making good progress. In lessons seen during the inspection this was the case, particularly in Key Stage 1 and in those lessons where teaching was clearly focused and offered pupils opportunities to engage with tasks which were at the correct level of challenge. This was less evident in some lessons in Key Stage 2, when there were low level activities which did not effectively engage pupils and progress slowed.

Quality of teaching

In the best lessons, teachers make learning fun, explain clearly to pupils what they will learn and how they will know if they have succeeded. Teachers employ interactive whiteboard technology well to engage pupils, and plan effective opportunities for pupils to learn through practical activities, including research, games and investigations. In an outstanding lesson in the Nursery class, for example, children were enthralled by the way the teacher involved them together in activities which developed their singing, counting, music and teamwork skills. Teachers use questions well to ascertain what pupils already know and check that they have made progress. Lessons have a measured pace which helps pupils to consolidate knowledge and assimilate new learning. There are strong relationships and teachers and teaching assistants interact well with pupils to support them in their learning. However, the quality of teaching is inconsistent across the school, being strongest in Key Stage 1 and the Nursery class. Occasionally, work is not well matched to the abilities of individual pupils and does not offer sufficient challenge or pace and teachers do not ask probing questions. For example, in some English lessons, teachers spent too much time explaining and modelling activities, and some tasks involved pupils in low level mechanical activities rather than in talking about the story or writing about their responses.

The impact of the planned curriculum is satisfactory. There are many activities which help pupils to see the links between subjects and to develop and apply important skills, including teamwork and writing. For example, work on topics such as the Vikings, the Second World War and the Gunpowder Plot, or life in Nepal, develops imagination, writing and research skills. In these cases, the impact of teaching on spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. However, occasions to allow older pupils to write at length are missed and there are too few opportunities for pupils to solve problems and apply their skills in mathematics. Marking is done regularly and is well used to tell pupils how successful they have been in specific tasks. It is used less successfully to tell pupils how to improve their work. Older pupils are unsure about the level of their work and pupils across school lack clear targets which would help them to take the next steps in their learning.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils enjoy school, are very polite to adults and respectful of each other and their school surroundings. Their attendance is high. The vast majority of pupils behave well in lessons, around school and when at play. Most parents and carers responding to the inspection questionnaire agree that overall behaviour is good but there are a few who express concerns about behaviour in lessons. Good behaviour was evident in all lessons observed during the inspection. The inspector talked to many pupils during playtimes and more formally in group discussions. They say that behaviour strategies are used effectively with pupils responding well to positive reinforcement of rules and praise. Although pupils' learning slows at times, behaviour does not routinely disrupt the learning of the majority. Pupils feel that behaviour is good and is improving for the few pupils who find good behaviour difficult. They respond well to the rules and rewards which they helped to create and these help to promote self-discipline and a strong sense of right and wrong. Pupils particularly like the merit system which encourages them to achieve well, work hard and develop teamwork and social skills.

A few parents and carers raised concerns about the way in which the school deals with bullying. Pupils say that sometimes they have minor problems, more to do with 'friends falling out rather than bullying', but that they talk to each other to sort out their problems. They feel that the Backworth Buddies help them to sort things out in a proper way. Although some felt bullying did take place, they said that instances were rare, and they were sure that any instances that did occur would be dealt with effectively. Pupils feel safe and know that the teachers and other adults in school will help with any problems if they arise.

The school council works very hard on behalf of other pupils and its members are particularly proud of the actions they have initiated to improve aspects of school life and improvements in pupils' behaviour. The breakfast club is very well attended and allows pupils many opportunities to play together and to develop their skills in information and communication technology (ICT).

Leadership and management

The headteacher, very ably supported by the deputy headteacher, has a clear vision and a purposeful approach to driving school improvement. Well-targeted professional development and the sharing of good practice are focused on improving the effectiveness of leaders at all levels and the quality of teaching. Robust monitoring and self-evaluation by senior leaders highlight the right priorities for improvement with clear action plans in place. This rigour in self-evaluation ensures that the school has a clear understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. However, capacity to improve is satisfactory as not all subject leaders consistently apply the school's procedures to monitor and plan initiatives and many of these strategies are in the early stages of implementation. Leadership responsibilities are distributed effectively to include all staff and they have a clear overview of teaching and learning and a developing understanding of progress and attainment. The school has a clear commitment to promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination. It has refined its system for tracking pupils' progress and this enables staff to swiftly identify groups and individuals who need additional support to close any gaps in their

learning, although the application of this by subject leaders is inconsistent. Safeguarding procedures meet the current government requirements.

The school has a range of effective partnerships, for example, to provide opportunities in music and sport and to support pupils who have a range of learning, emotional and behavioural needs and their families. The governing body is supportive of the school, effectively manages the resources of this small school and provides a good level of challenge. The school has a good partnership with parents and carers and keeps them informed of pupils' progress, including through learning journals, reading diaries and regular reports.

The curriculum is satisfactory. There is a strong focus on developing basic skills in English and mathematics and pupils' confidence in the use of ICT. There are many interesting activities to develop reading and writing skills in subjects across the curriculum. However, it is not always clear how work becomes harder as pupils grow older, particularly in mathematics, for example in data handling. Well-planned enrichment activities, including visits to residential centres and to museums, visits from religious and theatre groups, help to develop pupils' understanding of other faiths and cultures. Accordingly, pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is good. This is further enhanced by the school's emphasis on developing pupils' interest in local history and a detailed programme of religious education. There are many popular extra-curricular clubs which promote learning and enjoyment in sporting, arts and environmental activities.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its ' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well children acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which children are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the children' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



9 January 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Backworth Park Primary School, Newcastle-upon-Tyne NE27 0AH

Thank you for making me so welcome when I inspected your school. I particularly enjoyed your singing and talking to you about your school and your work. I was impressed by your politeness and the care you show for one another so that you behave well most of the time and feel safe. Your attendance is also praiseworthy.

You go to a satisfactory school and your teachers know how to make it better. Your teachers look after you well and try to make your lessons fun, although occasionally some activities are not challenging or exciting enough. You told me that you look forward to coming to school because you like your teachers and after-school and lunch-time clubs and visits. Your parents and carers like the school very much. Your teachers have agreed that they can help your school to improve even more by:

- helping you reach higher attainment at the end of Year 6, especially in mathematics, by making sure that all your lessons have pace and challenge
- making sure that all the information that teachers have about how well you are doing is used to plan work that is at the right level for all of you
- making sure that you know how to improve your work and have clear targets which help you to take the next steps in your learning
- checking that the things they are doing to improve the school are making your lessons better.

You can help by continuing to do your best. I wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Gordon Potter
Lead inspector

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