

Walbottle Village Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	108448
Local authority	Newcastle Upon Tyne
Inspection number	384850
Inspection dates	7 February 2012
Lead inspector	Wendy Ripley HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills (HMCI) the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	101
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sharon Little
Headteacher	Nicola Nelson-Taylor
Date of previous school inspection	3-4 March 2010
School address	The Green Walbottle Village Newcastle-upon-Tyne NE15 8JL
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Age group	3-11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Wendy Ripley

HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 as a special measures monitoring visit. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

The school was given one day's notice of this inspection. The inspector observed teaching and learning in five lessons taught by all five teachers. She examined a sample of pupils' work including English and mathematics, and spoke to pupils about the opportunities they are given to develop their reading and writing skills. The inspector met with school leaders and pupils who are members of the school council, and observed the school's work and pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school at lunch and break-times. She looked at a number of documents including the school's self-evaluation, development plans, key safeguarding procedures, pupil tracking and assessment information, and minutes of the governing body meetings. The views of parents and carers and pupils collected when school leaders sent out the Ofsted questionnaire in January 2012 were considered. Around a third of the parents and carers responded to this survey. The inspector also looked at the Ofsted on-line questionnaire (Parent View), and the three responses that were found were also taken into account.

Information about the school

Walbottle is a much smaller than most primary schools. Almost all pupils come from White British families and speak English as their first language. A much higher proportion of the pupils than is typical are girls. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals has increased and is well above the national average. The proportion of pupils who are disabled and those with a special educational need is broadly average; as is the percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational need. Pupils are taught in four mixed-age classes.

The school was placed in special measures at its previous inspection. It then went through a period of turbulence with high staff absence and turnover. In April 2011 the school entered into a formal collaboration with a local National Support School, whose headteacher is now also the executive headteacher of this school. The two schools have retained separate governing bodies but share the same Chair. There has been a stable staff team since then and improvements have been made to the building. The school holds a number of nationally recognised awards. There is on-site childcare provision that is not managed by the governing body. This is subject to a separate inspection and a report about its quality can be found on the Ofsted website. The school met the government's floor standards which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in the 2010/11 academic year.

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	1
Achievement of pupils	1
Quality of teaching	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	1

Key findings

- In accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.
- Outstanding leadership, strong governance and the clear direction provided for a knowledgeable, dedicated and committed staff team ensures that the school provides its pupils with a high-quality, well-rounded educational experience and an equal opportunity to do well.
- Most children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage unit with skills and knowledge that are below those expected for their age. In 2011, pupils left Year 6 with significantly above average attainment in English and mathematics. Taking their starting points into account, this represents outstanding progress for almost all pupils. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils are currently making rapid progress across the whole school.
- The quality of teaching and its impact on pupils’ learning is outstanding. The standard is consistently high throughout the school. Assessment information is used very effectively to plan activities that provide the right level of support and challenge for individual pupils. High-quality written feedback helps pupils improve their work. Pupils have a detailed understanding of their individual learning targets and strive hard to beat them.
- Pupils’ behaviour in lessons and around the school is exemplary. High levels of attendance attest to their enjoyment of school. The excellent partnerships that staff have formed with their pupils results in confident, independent and mature individuals who always want to do their best and who have outstanding attitudes to learning.
- The good curriculum provides rich opportunities to broaden pupils’ experiences. It makes a significant contribution to the pupils’ personal and emotional well-being and their spiritual, social and moral understanding as well as their academic attainment. However, opportunities to develop pupils’ cultural

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understanding of the region they live in, the United Kingdom and the wider world are more limited.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Provide pupils with more opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of the diverse cultures and communities that exist in their region, the United Kingdom and the wider world.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils' attainment is improving rapidly. At the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 in 2011, pupils reached significantly above average standards from starting points that were below expectations overall. Inspection evidence shows that almost all pupils make outstanding progress in lessons. Current in-year school assessment data show that the overwhelmingly majority of pupils in each year group are on track to exceed age-related expectations. For example, the very large majority of pupils in the current Year 6 is already working at expected levels and a majority is working above this; some considerably so. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve as well as their classmates and better than their peers nationally. This is because systems and strategies to meet their individual support needs are sharply focused and, along with all of their peers, they benefit enormously from individualised targets that are set to provide the right level of support and challenge for them. In the Nursery and Reception classes, children get off to an excellent start in their education and develop very positive attitudes to learning. Children's early reading, writing and numeracy skills are taught systematically and extremely well.

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who responded to the school's recent survey and those who have completed Parent View consider that their child is making good progress and the school helps their child develop skills in communication, reading, writing and mathematics well. Inspection evidence confirms this and shows that pupils' standards in reading at the end of Year 2 are above average and by the time they leave school are usually significantly so.

Quality of teaching

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who responded to the school's survey consider that their children are well taught. Inspection evidence endorses this; indeed teaching is outstanding. Teachers ensure that pupils are active and engaged partners in their learning, for instance, by providing them with ample opportunities to shape the curriculum by choosing whole-class topics. The sharp

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focus throughout the school on developing pupils' reading, writing and mathematical skills ensures that all pupils are very well prepared for the next steps in their learning journey.

Teachers skilfully plan lessons to build on pupils' earlier learning and provide very challenging activities. This drives pupils' learning on at a cracking pace. Astute questioning and strong subject knowledge lead to lively discussions that enthuse and include all pupils. Learning objectives and success criteria are used very effectively to monitor progress and understanding. Teachers and teaching assistants form a strong team. This ensures that additional support is available for those who need it for whatever reason, including those who are at risk of missing their targets and the more-able pupils who require more challenge. Pupils' work in books and displays around the school is of a high standard and there is a strong emphasis on presentation, grammar and punctuation. Marking is of a consistently high standard throughout the school. Pupils regularly comment on their own and each other's work and make considered comments about their progress towards their learning goals.

Discussions the inspector held with pupils during this inspection confirm that pupils are confident and competent readers who can articulate their views and opinions well. Pupils have highly developed information and communication technology (ICT) skills. For instance, pupils were observed using hand-held devices to record and edit clips of an assembly about Buddhism; and in the Years 3 and 4 class, pupils used a video conference to contact their peers at their partner school to discuss their joint trip to a Roman Fort. Such features also make a strong contribution to the pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The stimulus, positive experiences and challenge that the pupils are provided with enables them to utilise their individual gifts and talents whatever their starting points. As a result, they are keen and happy learners who look forward to coming to school and enjoy all it has to offer. This accounts for their well above average attendance and outstanding behaviour. Pupils' attitudes to learning are exemplary. They show very high levels of engagement, courtesy, collaboration and cooperation in and out of lessons. Almost all pupils show remarkable resilience and self-discipline, sustaining their focus on tasks for prolonged periods. This makes an outstanding contribution to their achievements and stands them in very good stead for the next steps in their learning.

Pupils report that they feel safe and say overwhelmingly that adults are very approachable if they have any concerns. They have a good understanding of the risks to which they may be exposed, both within and outside of school. Incidents of bullying in any form are extremely rare. Pupils, parents and carers express confidence in the school's systems for dealing with any such occurrences.

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Leadership and management

Leadership and management are outstanding. The many new resources and improvements made to the school, such as the creation of a library and quiet reading area and the extensive remodelling of the Early Years Foundation Stage unit has resulted in learning environments that are rich in their support for pupils' learning.

Senior leaders provide a crystal clear sense of direction and vision. The staff form a strong and cohesive team and benefit from a good range of professional development and training opportunities. Coaching and mentoring of all staff including that provided by colleagues at their partner school, are used to good effect and have proved to be a key driver for improvement.

Scrutiny of the standards of pupils' work and lessons observations are conducted regularly. Assessment of pupils' progress is rigorous and comprehensive and routinely undertaken. The school consistently exceeds the challenging targets it sets itself. Actions are well considered, carefully implemented, monitored effectively and evaluated honestly. Planning and management information is being used consistently throughout the school because it is well organised, readily understood and its benefits are tangible. Its impact is seen in the outstanding outcomes for pupils. Every individual child is provided with an equal opportunity to succeed. The good curriculum is broad and balanced. It provides pupils with interesting and challenging activities that promote their spiritual, moral and social development very effectively as well as their academic achievements. However, there is scope to include more opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of the diverse cultures and communities that exist in their region, the United Kingdom and the wider world.

Safeguarding procedures have been strengthened considerably in the last year. They meet current requirements and are updated frequently. Risk assessment and health and safety audits are robust and the subject of regular review. Very active and well-informed members of the governing body make a good contribution to the school through their support and challenge. They take their responsibilities very seriously as demonstrated by their participation in lesson observations, learning walks and curriculum-planning groups.

The school communicates effectively with parents and carers. For instance, it provides good quality information about the termly themed learning in each class and how they can contribute to this. The overwhelmingly positive responses to the school's recent survey of parents and carers and the significant increase in the number of children set to join the Early Years Foundation Stage in 2012 stand as testimony to the confidence the local community has in the school. The school has an outstanding capacity to sustain further improvement.

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 pupils' 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 pupils 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 pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' 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.



8 February 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Walbottle Village Primary School, Walbottle, NE15 8JL

Thank you for making me so welcome when I came to inspect your school. I took full account of your views and those of your parents and carers who completed the school's recent survey. You told me that you love coming to school and enjoy your learning because 'Walbottle is a happy and safe place where children look after each other and the teachers are wonderful'. I agree with you. I found Walbottle to be an outstanding school where you attain standards that are usually well above that found nationally because you make outstanding progress from the time you start school in the Nursery to the time you leave in Year 6. Your headteacher leads the school exceptionally well and is helped in this by all of the staff and the governors. You are taught extremely well and helped to make your own wise choices about class topics. This makes your learning exciting and fun. I was really impressed by your excellent attendance, outstanding behaviour, resilience (do you remember that word from your assembly about the Buddha?) and your self-discipline. You stay focused on your tasks, take responsibility for your own learning and work in partnership with your teacher, teaching assistants and each other. You very often mark your own work and give sensitive and carefully thought out feedback to your classmates too. Your individual learning targets motivate you and you strive really hard to beat them and achieve your personal best rather than compete with each other. All of these things and the very good skills you develop in reading, writing, mathematics, science and information technology ensure that you are very well prepared for the next steps in your learning journey.

Even in outstanding schools there are always things that can be improved. I have asked the headteacher and staff to make sure that you are given more opportunities to learn about the different communities in the region you live in and in the United Kingdom and the rest of the world. You are quite rightly proud of your school and all the things you achieve. I wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Wendy Ripley
Her Majesty's Inspector

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