

Grangetown Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111647
Local authority	Redcar and Cleveland
Inspection number	378329
Inspection dates	13–14 March 2012
Lead inspector	Susan Bowles HMI

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	200
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Campbell
Headteacher	Roberta Jameson
Date of previous school inspection	5 October 2006
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Introduction

Inspection team

Susan Bowles
Patrick Hargreaves

Her Majesty's Inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Nearly eight hours of teaching led by eleven teachers were observed. Meetings were held with two contrasting groups of pupils, with two members of the governing body including its Chair and with a range of staff. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They observed the school's work, including that of the two specially resourced bases, and looked at a range of documents including the school improvement plan, self-evaluation, minutes of the governing body and records showing how the school ensures pupils' safety, equality and progress. They read 29 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, 53 received from pupils and 25 from staff.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized primary school. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. A few come from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds and some of them speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is exceptionally high compared with the national average. A well-above average proportion of pupils are disabled or have special educational needs. Some of these pupils are taught in a specially resourced learning support base, with 15 places, alongside other pupils who transfer from nearby schools. Another resourced provision (the early intervention support base) offers places for 10 pupils (or more if part-time) whose misbehaviour puts them at risk of being excluded from schools in the locality. The school has Healthy School status, the Anti-Bullying Charter for Action and a Leading Aspect Award for Behaviour Management. A new headteacher has taken over and there have been changes in the school's senior leadership team since the previous inspection.

The school's performance currently meets the government's floor standard, which sets minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

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	3
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

- This is a satisfactory school which goes the extra mile to care for all its pupils. Without this, they would not make the satisfactory progress that they do. They attain standards which are below average, but rising. They develop valuable personal skills. Virtually all the parents or carers who shared their views would recommend the school. It is not good mainly because teaching does not promote the quality of learning over time which secures performance above the floor standard.
- Learning is satisfactory. From the time they start in the nursery children are encouraged to take part and make progress. The large majority of pupils in Year 6 reaches the nationally expected level in writing, and more are getting closer in reading, communication and mathematics. However, weaknesses in basic skills hold some pupils back from learning without adult help and reading widely.
- Teaching is satisfactory, with much that is good and some that is outstanding. Pupils now have a better grounding in basic skills and more help if they fall behind, but they need more opportunities to practise their communication and reading skills without adult help. Questioning does not always encourage pupils to talk through their ideas. Occasionally, teachers do not correct errors in work when this would help pupils understand how to do better.
- Behaviour and safety are satisfactory. Pupils are well-mannered and try hard. The rare instances of poor behaviour are well-managed so that learning continues. Attendance has improved and is on track to be average this year.
- Leaders and managers set high expectations for what teachers and their pupils can achieve and manage performance effectively. Well focused plans are swiftly and effectively implemented. Staff work well together to spread good practice, so that teaching and learning are improving. There is good capacity for improvement.

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?

- Increase the proportion of teaching that is good and outstanding by:
 - embedding higher expectations for pupils' independent and wider reading
 - incorporating more high quality talk with adults during self-directed activities in the Early Years Foundation Stage
 - using more questioning which gives pupils time to think and respond in fuller sentences.

- Share the most effective practice in the school in correcting mistakes and enabling pupils to evaluate and improve their work.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

The quality of learning seen in lessons was at least satisfactory and often good. This is in line with parents' and carers' views. Both boys and girls try to do their best and, when teaching is more skilful, they participate actively and well. They say lessons are usually busy and interesting. They take pride in their work. However, pupils often struggle to apply their skills independently, for example, when they try to read a 'tricky' word or to explain how to do a calculation. This is an obstacle to really strong progress and enjoyment of reading and learning.

Many children have much lower skills than is usual for their age when they start in the Nursery. They take carefully recorded steps forward in all areas of learning. By the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, their achievement is well-below the national expectation, particularly in communication, language and literacy, and especially for boys. Pupils go on to make steady progress, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. The same is true for those pupils who use the learning support base and the early intervention centre, who enjoy a similar quality of learning. By the end of Key Stage 1, attainment is low, particularly in reading. By the end of Key Stage 2, it is below average overall and in reading and mathematics. Performance in these key areas has fluctuated over the past three years, but is clearly improving now. Attainment in writing is broadly average, and the recent focus on more effective teaching of calculation and reading has had a positive effect on pupils' current progress. The gap between boys' and girls' attainment has significantly closed. The attainment of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals still lags behind that of their peers.

Quality of teaching

Teaching is satisfactory overall in its effect on pupils' progress and achievement. Much is good, particularly in matching activities to pupils' different needs and maintaining pace and interest. This accords with the views of parents and carers. Reading is taught systematically and effectively, and pupils are expected to practise reading at home or with an adult in school. As a result, they are reading more, but some do not read widely or easily enough. The planned curriculum ensures that pupils use their communication, research and writing skills for varied purposes linked to other subjects. Some teaching is exceptionally skilful and

motivates pupils to apply their skills independently at a higher level. This was illustrated by one excellent lesson in which Year 3 interviewed 'Christopher Columbus', and another in which mixed groups of Year 6 pupils independently negotiated the plan for their travel guides. Each lesson enabled pupils to develop team work skills and broaden their cultural and moral horizons. However, such quality is still the exception. In more ordinary lessons, teachers do not encourage self-reliance in reading and communication sufficiently enough. Sometimes they do more talking than the pupils and then concentration wavers. They do not always give pupils time to reflect on or discuss a substantial question, or expect a reasoned answer.

Pupils' questionnaires and comments suggest some do not clearly understand how to improve their work. Observations and scrutiny of pupils' books showed that teachers check pupils' progress carefully during lessons and assess their independent work before planning the next step for each individual. Some good examples were found of clear feedback and pupils seriously evaluating their work, and this led to better progress. However, not enough is done to spread the best practice more widely. Sometimes written feedback is rather vague and misconceptions have not been effectively corrected.

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Leaders and managers ensure that a careful balance of activities reflects children's interests and gives all of them good opportunities to explore and learn. Children are well cared for and learn to play safely and sociably. They are taught effectively to take the early steps towards reading and writing. However, adults are sometimes insufficiently involved in nurturing children's use of language in the child-led activities. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make at least the expected progress, and, although most reach levels lower than is expected for their age, there are signs of improving achievement in key areas including reading and communication.

The school's early identification of special educational needs, well-trained assistants and the flexibly-used learning support base ensure that pupils with disabilities or special educational needs make similar progress to that of their peers in the school. Most lessons use well matched resources and activities to cater for pupils' different needs. The learning support unit provided good examples of the teaching of reading and the use of technology to consolidate and progress skills. The early intervention centre which serves pupils from a cluster of local schools has been successful in re-integrating pupils into mainstream schools as a result of good transition arrangements. Pupils using these resources understand their progress and what they need to do to improve. However, they need more experience of managing their own behaviour.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Behaviour and safety are at least satisfactory and the result of some of the school's most impressive work. Pupils chose words like 'protective' 'helpful' and 'kind' to describe the school, and their generally considerate and polite behaviour owes much to caring relationships and adults' very consistent modelling of high expectations. However, pupils and parents or carers are less confident about behaviour or bullying than about other aspects of the school. There is very little low-level disruption in lessons. There have been isolated incidents of disruptive behaviour. There are more fixed-term exclusions than is typical – although there has been no need recently to repeat such a sanction for any individual. Records and observations show incidents, including bullying and angry or racist behaviour, are well managed by staff who know exactly how to work as a team to ensure

pupils' safety. Inspectors saw how learning continues calmly. Most pupils develop a clear sense of what is right and wrong, understand the importance of preventing bullying and take sensible steps to do so.

Attendance has improved well for the past two years and is on track to be average this year. This is because the school has set high expectations for all its pupils and made strenuous efforts to ensure that, whatever the obstacles, pupils reach school in good time and ready to learn. Time lost from school as a result of persistent absence has reduced significantly.

One pupil explained why he thought that the school is 'unpredictable' by saying 'You look from the outside and it's just a school, but inside it's really great'. Inspectors agreed that the very caring, supportive relationships, extensive work with other agencies and the broad, well organised and stimulating curriculum do much to help pupils value education, contribute to the community and develop positive aspirations and personal qualities. One example is the impressive Breakfast Club, which provides a great service for families and teaches many useful skills – from punctuality and politeness to tennis! Pupils have opportunities to speak to visitors, research jobs and apply for responsibilities to help others. As a result, older pupils have thought seriously about the paths to their future careers, how to deal with risks they face, and how their current learning is relevant to the wider world.

Leadership and management

The school is well led and managed. Much has been done to strengthen its capacity to improve. The headteacher has, over three years, driven improvement energetically and with a clear sense of direction. Self-evaluation is accurately based on rigorous analysis of staff and pupil performance. It has led to clear priorities for improvement and focused planning. An enhanced senior team is sharing the work of raising expectations and improving teaching quality where needed. Staff are very open to advice and work well together. The governing body increasingly questions how well the school is doing, and knows what has been achieved and what still needs to improve. There have been solid improvements in pupils' attendance and writing over two years, and better progress in mathematics and (recently) reading, as a result of improvements to the curriculum and teaching across the age range. Equality of opportunity has improved as the gender gap has narrowed. Leaders are clearly focused on ensuring the hardest-to-reach pupils' attainment catches up with that of their peers. The school has the knowledge and strong determination to improve further.

As well as driving hard for higher achievement, leaders and managers make sure that pupils have a stimulating breadth of opportunities which foster their aspirations, social skills, participation in sports and the arts and sense of right and wrong. Discrimination, typically about race and cultural diversity, is being tackled more proactively, as pupils begin to mix with a wider range of people. Arrangements for safeguarding and child protection are effective. Through many extras, such as after-school clubs and sporting activities, helping a community garden and running Polish coffee mornings, leaders have improved communication with parents and carers who have not felt comfortable with school, provide valuable support for families and help to bind the community together.

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.
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.



15 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Grangetown Primary School, Middlesbrough, TS6 7JA

Thank you for your warm and polite welcome when Mr Hargreaves and I inspected your school. It was good to talk to so many of you and I am grateful for the questionnaires you and your parents or carers sent us.

I am writing to inform you that the school is satisfactory. It has strengths in caring for you and encouraging you all to make progress. It is also improving in some important ways. Attendance has risen and so has the quality of writing. Reading and mathematics are improving too, but you need to work hard at these so that you reach the standards you need to do well at secondary school and beyond.

Some of you think behaviour is not always good. Most of you are nearly always kind and considerate. We know there are sometimes problems, but saw that they are very well handled by adults, so that you sensibly get on with your learning.

To do better, the school needs to make sure more teaching is as good as the best we saw. We recommend that:

- you do more independent and wider reading
- adults get better involved in children's talk and activities in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- you have time to think and respond to teachers' questions in fuller sentences.

Some of you said you were not sure how well you were doing or how to do better. We have asked the school to correct your mistakes and help you to evaluate and improve your work.

Your comments were very helpful to the inspection and it was clear that you want your school to do well. I wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Susan Bowles
Her Majesty's Inspector

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