

South Wellfield First School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 108588 |
| Local Authority | North Tyneside |
| Inspection number | 356386 |
| Inspection dates | 19–20 October 2010 |
| Reporting inspector | Clive Petts |

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

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|--|--|
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3–9 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 299 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mr Paul Ridley |
| Headteacher | Ms Julie Gordon |
| Date of previous school inspection | Not previously inspected |
| School address | Otterburn Avenue South Wellfield, Whitley Bay Tyne and Wear NE25 9QL |
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors visited 16 lessons and observed 11 different class teachers. They held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils, analysed 102 questionnaire responses from parents and carers and looked at questionnaires returned by staff and pupils. The inspectors also looked at development plans, pupils' progress and attainment data, documents relating to the safeguarding of pupils, school policies and procedures, scrutinised pupils' current and past work and spoke to the School Improvement Partner.

The inspectors reviewed many aspects of the school's work and looked in detail at the following:

- The quality and impact of teaching and learning on current achievement, rates and patterns of progress and the attainment of all pupils.
- The effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage in exploiting the available provision, both indoors and outdoors.
- The capacity of leadership and management at all levels to sustain school improvement.

Information about the school

South Wellfield is a larger-than-average first school serving the surrounding estate and nearby communities. Almost all pupils are of a White British heritage and very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The percentage known to be eligible for a free school meal is well below average. A lower-than-average number of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is half the national average. The on-site childcare provision, School's Out (Northern) Ltd, is subject to a separate inspection and will receive its own inspection report. The school has been awarded the Healthy Schools, Eco School and Activemark awards. A new deputy headteacher was appointed in September 2010.

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: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school in which pupils are extremely well cared for, supported and looked after. At the centre of the school's continued good progress is the clear vision and ambition of the headteacher, ably supported by a knowledgeable governing body and a committed team of staff. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive and appreciate the high quality of care and enjoyment the school provides. The comment, 'I have every faith in the school and feel confident that they are meeting my child's needs and supporting him fully', illustrates the views of almost all parents.

Most children enter Nursery with skills broadly typical for their age but sometimes with weaknesses in speech and language. By the end of Year 4, attainment is above average overall, with high attainment in mathematics. This represents good progress. The school data, supported by inspection evidence, show that writing skills are much improved as a result of the initiatives taken, although higher level skills are less well developed among those more-able pupils. Pupils' achievement is good because teaching is rarely less than good. However, opportunities are occasionally missed to make learning even more demanding, for example by using fresh approaches to enliven learning in order to boost achievement. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because their needs are accurately identified and intervention and support well targeted. Pupils' enjoyment of learning is evident in their regular, above average, attendance. They feel safe and demonstrate an excellent appreciation of how to stay fit and healthy. They behave well, show respect for each other and display a good understanding of right and wrong. Good opportunities are provided for the pupils to find out about their local and wider community, but first-hand experiences of the diversity that exists in the world are limited.

Senior leaders' demonstrate an unmistakable drive to achieve their ambitions and secure ongoing improvement. Action to eliminate small pockets of underachievement is having a positive impact on raising attainment. The recent appointment of a deputy headteacher has strengthened leadership and management. Rigorous approaches to check and measure pupils' achievements are in place and these are informing strategic planning well. The governing body provides much expertise and regularly holds the school to account for all that it does. Its expertise is reflected in the school's high quality of safeguarding practice. Consequently, the school has a good and strengthening capacity for continuing improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure more teaching and learning inspires and excites, by ensuring that:
 - staff expectations of what pupils can achieve are raised even further

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- there is a constant focus on getting the best out of pupils through the use of more imaginative approaches to promoting learning
- all tasks and activities build on prior learning and are always challenging, especially in the quality of writing of the more-able pupils.
- Increase the range of curriculum opportunities to develop the pupils' knowledge and understanding of the diversity of beliefs and cultures globally.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils of all ages and backgrounds achieve well and make good progress. Older pupils were observed absorbed in a science experiment testing the streamlining qualities of modelling clay shapes in water. Increasing use of themes to link subjects together is enabling pupils to become more confident explaining their ideas and justifying their thinking. The pupils' good progress as they move through the school leads to above average attainment overall by the time they leave Year 4. The school's own information and work seen in books confirm above average and rising attainment in writing and high attainment in mathematics. Personalised support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the potentially vulnerable is well focused, enabling all to make good progress. There remains scope to expect more from pupils so that they can achieve even more.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good. It provides a firm focus on respect and care for the feelings of others and successfully supports their good personal development. Pupils demonstrate an excellent awareness of the benefits of keeping active and healthy and being safety conscious. Behaviour is good in lessons, although there are occasions when it takes a little too much time for pupils to settle and be ready to work. Pupils report that bullying is rare and describe how staff are always on hand to sort out any inappropriate behaviour or resolve any of their worries or concerns. Pupils thrive on the responsibilities that are given them to help the school to improve. They listen to each other's views and opinions and are happy to work as a team. All attend school regularly. As a result, they are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

| | |
|---|----------|
| Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning | 2 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Pupils' attainment ¹ | 2 |
| The quality of pupils' learning and their progress | 2 |
| The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils feel safe | 2 |
| Pupils' behaviour | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles | 1 |
| The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 2 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Pupils' attendance ¹ | 2 |
| The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Pupils benefit from their learning because good teaching ensures that they are motivated and engaged. In the best lessons, teachers establish clear routines for working. Secure subject knowledge adds weight to the probing questioning, especially when building on earlier learning. In other lessons, not all opportunities are seized to create the essential 'spark' to provoke pupils' imagination and thinking, to increase interest and to extend concentration. The marking of pupils' work is positive and helpful with pupils being made aware of what they need to do to improve. Significant improvements in the way pupils' work is assessed have been made since the last inspection, although sometimes this is not always fully exploited to develop pupils' own assessment skills.

The good curriculum is increasingly more relevant to pupils' interests as more imaginative ways are developed to allow pupils to apply their skills, for example, capturing the pupils' interests in Halloween and witches to encourage their creative writing. Pupils enjoy the excellent range of activities that enrich the curriculum, such as learning to speak French, although their experience of different ways of life in the world is otherwise restricted.

Outstanding care, guidance and support ensure all pupils are able to achieve success, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities or those new to learning English. Parents particularly appreciate the excellent induction and transition arrangements, which enable pupils to settle quickly and be confident about their future.

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Valuable and productive links with external agencies, including specialist support for learning, enhance the pupils' well-being and development.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

| | |
|--|----------|
| The quality of teaching | 2 |
| Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning | 2 |
| The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships | 2 |
| The effectiveness of care, guidance and support | 1 |

How effective are leadership and management?

The continuing progress the school has made shows the unmistakable aspirations of the headteacher and the governing body. Robust checking of progress, accurate assessment of pupils' work and a developing curriculum support improvement well. Any inconsistencies in the quality of learning are being successfully tackled, for example literacy skills are improving year-on-year. The strengthening of senior leadership is adding to the sharpness of the monitoring and evaluation of the quality of learning but this is not yet fully embedded. School self-evaluation identifies strengths and areas for development accurately. There is a good range and variety of experiences, both in school and in the wider community, to develop pupils' essential skills. The already good engagement of parents and carers is being enhanced by their increasing involvement in their children's learning. The good links with other schools and organisations help enrich learning and support pupils well for the next stage in their learning, for example, using the gymnastic expertise at a nearby centre for sporting excellence. The governing body are actively involved in shaping the strategic direction of the school. Safeguarding is outstanding because the school leads high quality practice and has excellent systems in place to minimise risk to children, for example regular e-safety training and briefing for parents and carers, staff and pupils. The rising achievement of all pupils demonstrates the school's commitment to ensure all are equally involved and can fulfil their potential. Community cohesion is promoted well, reflected in the strong sense of belonging, yet pupils' experiences of global diversity are not as fully developed.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

| | |
|--|----------|
| The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement | 2 |
| Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers | 2 |
| The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being | 2 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination | 2 |
| The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures | 1 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion | 2 |
| The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money | 2 |

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle exceptionally quickly and confidently to make excellent progress in the very happy, friendly and highly stimulating Nursery learning environment. They acquire assured early communication skills and safe habits. In Reception, children make good progress. It can be a little variable as a few children are not equally well prepared for the rigours of classroom routines, especially during child-initiated activities. Overall, children make good progress working within the goals expected for their age, with a small but increasing number exceeding what is expected of them. For example, children make very good progress in their early counting, calculating and recognition of number patterns especially when 'Dinosaur Dan' joins in and helps. Provision is enhanced by the effective use of the high-quality outdoor area with many opportunities for pupils to explore and investigate. A shared practical area helps to broaden the range of activities, such as when making fresh, hot porridge for the three bears. Regular observations and assessments are thorough and accurate. The recently introduced home–school diaries provide opportunities for parents and carers to make regular contributions to their children's learning and achievement. Welfare requirements go beyond those required. The continuous improvement in provision, the effective partnerships with families, the developing rigour in the evaluation of the quality of learning reflect the drive and ambitions of good leadership and management.

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

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

| | |
|--|----------|
| Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |
| The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |

Views of parents and carers

Just over one third of all parents and carers returned a questionnaire which solicited their views of the school. These views were overwhelmingly positive about the school's work. Almost all felt that their children are safe and happy in school. Parents and carers speak highly of the ease with which they can approach staff to resolve any issues or concerns and the high quality care their children receive. Inspectors endorse the many positive views expressed. A few parents and carers expressed concern that the school did not take account of their suggestions and concerns. Inspectors found that the staff engage with parents and carers in many positive ways and make every effort to respond to any worries or suggestions.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at South Wellfield First School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 102 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 299 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|---|-------------------|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 78 | 76 | 23 | 23 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 82 | 80 | 19 | 19 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| My school informs me about my child's progress | 71 | 70 | 29 | 28 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 69 | 68 | 28 | 27 | 4 | 4 | 1 | 1 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 72 | 71 | 28 | 27 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 68 | 67 | 30 | 29 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 66 | 65 | 34 | 33 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment) | 61 | 60 | 34 | 33 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 61 | 60 | 38 | 37 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 48 | 47 | 43 | 42 | 4 | 4 | 1 | 1 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 49 | 48 | 41 | 40 | 5 | 5 | 1 | 1 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 64 | 63 | 32 | 31 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 77 | 75 | 23 | 23 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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 | 58 | 36 | 4 | 2 |
| Primary schools | 8 | 43 | 40 | 9 |
| Secondary schools | 10 | 35 | 42 | 13 |
| Sixth forms | 13 | 39 | 45 | 3 |
| Special schools | 33 | 42 | 20 | 4 |
| Pupil referral units | 18 | 40 | 29 | 12 |
| All schools | 11 | 42 | 38 | 9 |

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Achievement: | the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training. |
| Attainment: | the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons. |
| Capacity to improve: | the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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: | <p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support. |
| 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. |

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.



21 October 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of South Wellfield First School, Whitley Bay, NE25 9QL

I want to thank you all for the friendly welcome that you gave the inspectors when we visited your school. We thoroughly enjoyed our time talking to you all.

South Wellfield is a good school. It has a number of outstanding features. We were impressed by your good behaviour and the excellent care taken of you to keep you really well supported and effectively protected. You obviously feel safe and confident because of this. You really do understand the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. The good links the staff enjoy with your parents and carers adds much to your learning. You all make good progress and as a result, your skills are above average, especially in mathematics. Your school is taking positive action to continue to improve and this can be seen in rising standards, for example in your writing.

We have asked your headteacher, staff and the governing body to look at extra ways of helping you to achieve more. We want them to expect more of you in lessons, use more imaginative approaches to inspire you to achieve more. For example, we have asked them to make sure that your writing improves even more, especially those of you with a lot of writing talent. We have also asked the school to provide with you with more experiences which will enable you to think about the different lifestyles of other people around the world. This will help you to discover more about the diverse world in which you live.

You can play your part by working as hard as you can and continuing to attend regularly. Thank you for helping with this inspection.

Best wishes for your future.

Yours sincerely

Clive Petts

Lead inspector

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