

Overfields Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111630
Local Authority	Redcar and Cleveland
Inspection number	356954
Inspection dates	28–29 June 2011
Reporting inspector	Graeme Clarke

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	161
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Angela McBride
Headteacher	Mrs Tracy Watson
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed the work of nine teachers in the school during short visits to parts of lessons and extended visits to 14 lessons. They joined two assemblies. They examined a variety of examples of pupils' written work. Inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body, teachers and a group of pupils. They scrutinised the school's child protection and safeguarding documentation, information about the curriculum, development plans, records of pupils' progress and minutes of meetings. They analysed 58 questionnaires from parents and carers, 61 from pupils in Key Stage 2 and 18 from members of staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The progress of all pupils this year, particularly the progress made by higher-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The effectiveness of the school's arrangements for setting pupils challenging targets on their learning and progress.
- How successfully participation in the 'Achievement for All' project improves pupils' literacy skills.
- The extent to which the role of the governing body in monitoring and evaluation, and in fostering improvement has developed recently.

Information about the school

Overfields is smaller than the average sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is very high. The school has additional resources to support pupils with speech and language difficulties who come from local primary schools on a part-time basis. The school also provides speech and language support for pupils in their schools nearby. A well above average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities although the number with a statement of special educational needs is lower than average. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The governing body manages a breakfast and after-school care club for children up to 11 years of age. The school has Healthy School status, the Activemark, the Anti-Bullying charter and the Gold Travel Plan award.

Privately-organised childcare provision adjacent to the school for children under five years of age was inspected separately: the report is available on the Ofsted website.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

The school provides a satisfactory education. The Early Years Foundation Stage is an outstandingly effective facility in the school. Most features of pupils' personal development are good. Many rich opportunities widen pupils' horizons, foster community cohesion well and contribute to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Parents are entirely at ease with the school's arrangements to safeguard the welfare of their children. A calm environment prevails throughout this caring and orderly school where children and pupils behave well and considerately towards others. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school, show positive attitudes to learning and express themselves with maturity and confidence.

The drive by leaders and managers since the last inspection to improve teaching and learning is beginning to pay dividends by raising attainment. Most pupils make satisfactory progress and now leave school with average attainment in English and mathematics. Nevertheless, progress in writing is slower than in reading and mathematics and boys are making less progress in their writing compared to girls. Although some teaching is very skilful and effective, occasionally teachers do not extend pupils' writing with suitably challenging work or systematically develop writing skills in other subjects. When marking pupils' work, teachers do not clearly link pointers for improvement to pupils' targets. Diligent care, effective guidance and adeptly-provided support ensure pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities reach levels comparable with those of their peers. Some pupils, including some of those receiving specialist support to improve their speech and language, make notably good progress. A family learning project, 'Achievement for All', is markedly improving literacy for those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities whose attainment in reading and writing is much lower than in mathematics.

The senior team fosters a strong caring ethos, and collectively all staff promote the school's values. The governing body has a clear commitment to extending its role in monitoring and evaluation although it is at an early stage of developing a programme of visits to see the school at work. School leaders and managers have a broadly accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. However, although the focus of planning for improvement is on raising attainment, the expected effect of planned actions is not identified with sufficient precision to help managers to judge accurately the progress the school is making. Taking these factors into account, the school's capacity for improvement is satisfactory.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve progress and raise attainment, especially in writing, by:
 - analysing pupils', particularly boys', writing and mathematical skills and focusing lesson activities on those skills and aspects of understanding needing particular help
 - systematically building opportunities throughout the curriculum for pupils to enhance and apply their literacy and numeracy skills
 - ensuring that when teachers mark pupils' work they consistently give them advice on their next steps towards meeting their targets
 - improving the quality of teaching by sharing the successful approaches that some teachers and teaching assistants use.
- Identifying in school development plans the most important actions and their intended impact on pupils' achievement.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils thoroughly enjoy school life and are keen to contribute to it. They are attentive in lessons and assemblies and willingly take part in discussions. They are self-assured when presenting their views to the class or, for example, when explaining how to solve mathematical problems. They work responsibly on their own or in small groups, though some could produce more work in the time available. Their written work is legible and clearly set out.

Children begin Nursery with skills and abilities that are below, and for some well below, those expected of children of their age. Attainment has improved and is now broadly average in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Last year the school surpassed its targets for English and mathematics and has sustained current pupils' attainment at levels expected for their age. By the end of Year 6, pupils' progress overall is satisfactory. Progress is noticeably slower in writing than in reading and mathematics because too many boys are making insufficient progress. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress overall. For those needing additional help with speech and language, expert support ensures that they make satisfactory and, for some, notably good progress. They demonstrate very positive attitudes to learning, show self-assurance in handling relationships and play a full part in school life. Overall, pupils' achievement is satisfactory.

Pupils feel safe in school and are very aware of road safety and the risks of irresponsible internet access. They know how to deal effectively with any bullying that occurs. Pupils of all ages speak knowledgeably of the importance of personal hygiene and a balanced diet and take part enthusiastically in a range of physical activities provided for them. Through an effective school council, pupils have improved amenities for their schoolmates and, with charitable activities, they make a good contribution to improving their community. Average attendance, well-developed social and average basic skills equip pupils satisfactorily for future life.

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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	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
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?

The school has successfully improved the quality of teaching since the last inspection. Overall, teaching is satisfactory with some that is good and outstanding. The most effective lessons are thoroughly planned with interesting activities that are well suited to pupils' abilities. Adroit use of humour and encouragement motivates pupils to take part enthusiastically and every opportunity is taken to reinforce their understanding. Teachers' and teaching assistants' skilful support and adept management of learning lead pupils to make good progress in such lessons. On other occasions, questioning is limited in scope or does not involve everyone. Occasionally, activities are too drawn out or not aligned closely to those areas where pupils need support to help develop and apply particular skills. Under these circumstances learning slows. Pupils are consistently set targets for improvement which are stated in a very clear-cut and helpful way in mathematics. Targets for writing are less well defined. In the most effective marking, teachers share the next steps for learning with pupils but more often the teachers' advice, when given, is not directly related to pupils targets and their next level of work.

Strengths in the curriculum lie in the way partnerships with museums, churches, community agencies and other schools successfully enhance opportunities to support pupils' personal development. Visits to museums and residential field centres strengthen pupils' awareness of their local heritage and environment. Through joint working with faith groups and through links overseas, pupils widen their appreciation of the multicultural

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nature of life within the United Kingdom and in other countries. Adaptations to the curriculum effectively support pupils needing specialist help with speech and language. The recently implemented thematic approach to developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects is becoming established but is yet to provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to apply basic skills, in written work particularly. A good range of after-school activities complements learning during the day; for example, in a well-attended session pupils threw themselves wholeheartedly into an exciting 'maths is fun' activity that is part of a children's university initiative for higher-attaining pupils.

In this caring school, rigorous procedures track the progress of all pupils. Of particular note is the close watch kept on the progress of pupils with the most complex needs. Effective arrangements enable pupils to benefit from a confidential counselling service on the premises. Well-organised breakfast and after-school care, sensitively managed, enable pupils to benefit from the provision available. Productive links with families and clearly aligned support, extended through the 'Achievement for All' initiative, help pupils, especially those with speech and language difficulties, to accelerate their progress. Fruitful partnerships enable these pupils to return to their own schools, and arrangements are made for expert support to continue. A strong partnership with local secondary schools successfully prepares pupils for the next stage in their education. Effective procedures have sustained average attendance and resulted in a low level of persistent absence.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The leadership team works well together and, through rigorous monitoring and analysis of pupils' performance, it has a clear understanding of pupils' development and progress. In their drive to improve teaching and raise attainment and progress further, leaders and managers recognise the value of using the expertise of the school's most skilful teachers. The governing body is dedicated in its support for the school and is committed to improving its role in evaluation. It knows its next steps are to develop its programme of monitoring and its involvement in school review. In planning for school improvement, leaders and managers set appropriate priorities for attention. However, planning does not always state with sufficient clarity the expected impact of suggested actions on pupils' learning and so makes it difficult for the governing body and senior leaders to evaluate their effect. The governing body assures the welfare of pupils by ensuring rigorous procedures to vet all adults who work with pupils, and measures for safeguarding the welfare of pupils are good. They ensure too that the curriculum promotes pupils' understanding of the importance of safe use of the internet and of looking out for themselves and others, such as when travelling to school and cycling on the road.

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The school promotes equality of opportunity satisfactorily. Although there is a marked difference between boys' and girls' progress, leaders and managers are taking action to tackle this and ensure all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities play a full part in school life. Through many activities in school and by sharing information widely and frequently, the school successfully fosters a strong, much-appreciated, partnership with parents and carers. Beneficial associations with support agencies, local services, and community and faith organisations successfully enhance the quality of education by widening pupils' experience. The school's good arrangements to promote community cohesion strengthen links locally and successfully extend pupils' understanding of the diversity of life in the United Kingdom and overseas.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
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	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Most children start in the Nursery with skills that are lower than those typical for their age. Their communication and language skills are very low. Children make outstanding progress so that by the end of Reception most have reached the levels expected for their age in communication, language and literacy and some achieve even higher levels in other areas of learning.

In this carefully-integrated unit, children learn exceptionally well and find it fun as a result of an excellent balance of activities such as those supported or led by adults and those they initiate for themselves. Themes are carefully chosen and, following careful assessment and analysis, activities are closely aligned to children's particular aptitudes. The parent-child shared learning activity at the beginning of each session very effectively helps children settle in quickly and enjoy learning. Highly skilled and well-trained staff use their extensive expertise to manage children's learning exceptionally effectively through sharply-focused teaching. For example, they develop children's knowledge of letters and

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sounds in a carefully structured way each day and extend learning by seizing opportunities whenever they arise. For example, when writing sentences or when children were exploring the lives of 'mini-beasts'. All children are able to benefit in this very inclusive setting; for example, children attending for additional speech and language support are fully integrated so they play and learn effectively alongside other children.

Successful caring and working relationships prevail throughout this facility which is led and managed exceptionally well. Rigorous assessments are used very well to record children's progress and to adapt plans for future learning. Record-keeping is meticulous and, from the outset when children join the Nursery class, exceptionally productive links forged with parents and carers inform them about their child's progress and foster learning at home.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

Around 36% of parents and carers returned questionnaires and it is of particular note that almost all were entirely supportive of the school. All agree that their children enjoy school, are kept safe, are well-taught and that they are happy with their children's experience. Of the small number who wrote comments, almost all were very positive and appreciative of the school. The inspection findings mainly support these views. A very small number of parents and carers expressed concerns about misbehaviour and with the way that the school is managed. The inspection found that pupils behave well in school and that the school is led and managed satisfactorily.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Overfields Primary 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 58 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 161 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	38	66	19	33	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	42	72	16	28	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	40	69	17	29	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	36	62	21	36	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	41	71	17	29	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	39	67	18	31	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	35	60	22	38	1	2	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)	34	59	22	38	2	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	34	59	21	36	1	2	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	32	55	20	34	4	7	2	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	32	55	22	38	1	2	3	5
The school is led and managed effectively	32	55	21	36	3	5	2	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	38	66	20	34	0	0	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 2010 and 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.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.



30 June 2011

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Overfields Primary School, Middlesbrough TS7 9LF

My colleagues and I enjoyed our visit to inspect your school last week. Thank you for helping us when we came to see you in lessons and in assembly and when we met you. You were always polite and very helpful. We enjoyed talking with you. We were delighted to see how much you like to take part in lessons and that you were well behaved in classrooms and around the school. We were very pleased to see how willingly you contribute to school life and are keen to help others.

Your school gives you a satisfactory education. All the adults in the school look after you well and ensure that you are safe. We were pleased to see how successfully the special support the school gives some pupils and helps them take part in school life. Your standards in Year 6 in mathematics and English are average but this year pupils' progress in writing is not as good as in mathematics. In particular, some boys have not made enough progress. We have asked the school to see if they can help more of you to do well, especially by improving your writing results in future. When we looked at your books we liked the way your teachers let you know your mathematics targets precisely and we have asked them set out your writing targets in the same way and to give you clear pointers in your written and mathematics work to help you reach the next level. We have also asked your headteacher and the governing body to be very precise when they plan to help you improve so that they can check carefully how well you are doing.

You have many opportunities at Overfields Primary School to learn about life and these help you to prepare for the future. Some of you will soon be leaving to move on to a secondary school. We hope that you all do very well.

Yours sincerely

Graeme Clarke

Lead Inspector

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