

Ovingham CE First School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122278
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	380441
Inspection dates	13–14 June 2012
Lead inspector	Linda Buller

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	133
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kate Robson
Headteacher	Julie Shields
Date of previous school inspection	1 March 2007
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Introduction

Inspection team

Linda Buller

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed 10 lessons taught by five teachers. Discussions were held with pupils about their learning and their work in books was scrutinised. Discussions were also held with staff and members of the governing body. A range of documentation was scrutinised, including that relating to the tracking of the progress of different groups of pupils, monitoring by leaders, behaviour records and procedures for safeguarding pupils. Account was also taken of questionnaires completed by pupils, staff and the 86 returned by parents and carers.

Information about the school

The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage and none speaks English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average. Recent accreditations include the Artsmark, Basic Skills award, Food for Life award, Anti-Bullying accreditation and the Green Flag Eco School award. The school is not subject to government floor standards.

The school site is shared by Ovingham and District Under 5's provision. This provision was subject to a separate inspection and the report will be published on the Ofsted web-site.

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

- This is an outstanding school. Incisive systems of self-evaluation lead to swift, well planned actions for improvement. As a result, the school has built exceptionally well on the strengths identified at the time of the last inspection and has successfully addressed relative weaknesses.
- Pupils make rapid and sustained progress overtime. By the time they leave the school in Year 4 their achievement is outstanding. The majority of pupils reach levels of attainment which are consistently above those expected for their age. Typically attainment is at least a year beyond that expected.
- The majority of teaching is outstanding and the remainder is consistently good. Teachers skilfully motivate pupils to do the best they can by setting learning into contexts that are fun and relevant to pupils' everyday experiences. Verbal feedback in lessons provides pupils with a very clear understanding of how to improve their work. Feedback through detailed marking of completed work is occasionally not as effective.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage children thoroughly enjoy activities such as 'going to the moon' which provide opportunities for good progress to be made across all areas of their learning. Occasionally, activities are directed too closely by adults and limit the development of independent learning skills.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are exemplary. They consistently demonstrate very high levels of engagement. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is outstanding. In discussion and through their actions pupils demonstrate an excellent understanding of how to stay safe.
- The headteacher's insightful vision for the school is based securely on rigorous analysis of the impact of school provision on outcomes for pupils. This ensures that the actions taken to improve teaching and staff performance lead to all pupils, whatever their prior ability, achieving as well as they can. An outstanding curriculum, in which the focus for pupils' learning is exceptionally well chosen, results in pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Consistently use marking to challenge pupils to reach even higher levels of attainment in writing and mathematics.
- Further increase the opportunities for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage to develop independent learning skills by always ensuring an appropriate balance between those activities led by adults and those which children choose themselves.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils' achievement is outstanding. Children enter the Reception class with levels of attainment which are generally in line with those expected for their age. Attainment in early writing and calculation skills are often weaker elements of attainment on entry to school. Consistently good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 accelerates to outstanding in Key Stage 2. An increasing number of children enter Year 1 with above average levels of attainment in the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils' exceptionally positive attitudes to learning help to ensure that these basic skills are consolidated and built on well in Years 1 and 2. Consequently, pupils enter Key Stage 2 with above average reading skills, the confidence and imagination needed to become highly competent writers and the mathematical knowledge and strategies to be able to solve increasingly complex problems. Pupils in Year 2 demonstrated high levels of competence in reading to retrieve information regarding the role of a lighthouse keeper. Outstanding teaching skilfully guided pupils in using this information to write in the style of bullet points in order to form a job description. Pupils rose to the challenge and used their exceptionally well developed social skills to include requirements such as the need for the applicant to like cats and to be a non-smoker! Nearly all parents and carers who completed the inspection questionnaire say they are happy with the progress which their children make.

Pupils' excellent oral skills contribute exceptionally well to their outstanding progress in reading and writing. By the end of Year 4, pupils' attainment in reading is high in comparison with that expected for their age and overall is four terms higher than expected. A significant number of pupils are already attaining Level 4, which is the level expected nationally of pupils leaving Year 6 in primary schools. Pupils' love of reading and their ability to use inference and deduction supports their learning in other subjects extremely well. They have an excellent range of vocabulary and use their knowledge very successfully in writing which is lively and imaginative. Occasionally, the way writing is organised, for example, the use of paragraphs, is not consistent. As a result, although making the same outstanding progress from their starting points, attainment in writing is above average but not yet as high as that in reading. Improvements in the quality of teaching and adjustments to curricular provision have ensured that attainment in mathematics by the end of Year 4 has improved rapidly. Pupils in Year 4 are able to use their secure knowledge of place value to explain what each digit represents in whole numbers and decimals up to three places. Together with their secure knowledge of times tables and strategies such as partitioning, they are able to accurately complete a range of calculations. In all lessons tasks are adapted exceptionally well to meet the needs of those with special educational needs. These pupils

consistently make outstanding progress and attain levels above those of their peers nationally.

Quality of teaching

Outstanding teaching is characterised by teachers' excellent subject knowledge and highly effective use of assessment to plan tasks which meet the needs of all pupils. Lessons move at a fast pace. Teachers provide stimulating explanations and time is used to the full to provide opportunities for pupils to extend their knowledge and skills. Well planned activities provide excellent opportunities for pupils to develop strong social and communication skills. Teachers' timely interventions ensure that pupils remain fully motivated and challenged throughout the lesson. In literacy lessons, staff are highly skilled in linking different aspects of learning so that pupils make equally outstanding progress in reading and writing. In mathematics lessons, clear explanations ensure that pupils fully understand how to use their prior knowledge to solve new problems. In this way pupils grow in confidence and become proficient at using a range of mathematical strategies. In a Year 3 mathematics lesson, pupils rose to the challenge to compare prices from two supermarkets, skilfully using their knowledge of place value, times tables, doubling and rounding in a bid to save money which they could then donate to their favourite charity. Every opportunity is taken to link learning to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The Year 3 pupils carefully explained the democratic process and how they would decide which charity would benefit from their efforts. All parents and carers who returned the inspection questionnaire agreed that their children are well taught.

Highly committed support staff are exceptionally well briefed by teachers and make a valuable contribution to pupils' outstanding progress, particularly that of pupils with special educational needs. They skilfully provide additional explanations and encourage all pupils to participate fully. In the minority of lessons where teaching is good rather than outstanding, teachers do not always use their assessment of pupils' work as a focus for effective plenary sessions or the consistent marking of pupils' work. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, while careful observations provide staff with a very clear understanding of each child's ability, occasionally this information is not used to best effect in ensuring an effective balance between adult led activities and those which children choose for themselves.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The extremely positive response from pupils, staff, parents and carers to the inspection questionnaires confirms that the outstanding behaviour seen during the inspection is typical in this school. Pupils of all ages are able to work hard without the need for constant supervision. This ensures that learning flows without interruption and that teachers can direct their attention to where it is most effective. Pupils work sensibly in pairs or in groups and can arrive effectively at a consensus as to the best way to proceed with their tasks. This was demonstrated very well in a Year 4 lesson when pupils quickly shared out roles and provided each other with high quality stage direction. Well considered, positive and constructive criticism made an excellent contribution to pupils' outstanding progress.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy all the school has to offer and this is reflected in high levels of attendance. They have a thorough understanding of how to stay safe and make sensible suggestions as to how to avoid danger. Pupils say they cannot remember any incidents of bullying and this is also confirmed by school records, parents and carers. Nonetheless, in discussion they demonstrated a very secure understanding of what different types of

bullying could occur, for example, because of the colour of someone's skin or because of their religion or culture. Year 3 pupils maturely introduced into the discussion the analogy of this to global issues, such as the fighting in Syria.

Leadership and management

A shared vision to provide pupils with an outstanding education has led to a relentless drive for improvement and ensured that pupils' attainment has risen rapidly since the last inspection. Leaders and managers have excellent systems to track and record how well pupils are doing and take swift action if any pupil is in danger of falling behind. They know pupils and their families very well and use all of this information to ensure that everyone has an equal opportunity to succeed. Consequently 100% of pupils in the current Year 4 have made at least the expected one level progress in reading, writing and mathematics since entering Key Stage 2 and a significant number have achieved well beyond expectations. This confirms the school's outstanding capacity to improve further.

Inspection questionnaires completed by staff confirm that morale is high, team work effective and that leaders do all they can to improve performance through appropriate provision for professional development. The governing body has a detailed understanding of the work of the school and makes a constructive contribution to the setting of key priorities. It works very well in partnership with staff and ensures that safeguarding policies and procedures meet requirements and are kept under constant review.

Learning through first-hand experiences, which are relevant to everyday life, are key features of a rich and varied curriculum. Curriculum planning ensures that subjects are linked together well and that pupils have regular opportunities to put their knowledge into practice. Very carefully considered focuses for learning, residential trips and frequent educational and cultural visits all contribute exceptionally well to pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Whether it be researching and writing about Osama Bin Laden or reflecting on the values within the Olympic movement, pupils are helped to understand how these issues are relevant to how they develop as young citizens.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	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 to 31 December 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.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures
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.



18 June 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ovingham CE First School, Prudhoe, NE42 6DE

Thank you very much for the warm welcome you gave me when I came to visit your school. Observing you in lessons and discussion with you about your work helped me to agree that the school provides you with an outstanding standard of education.

It was good to see how enthusiastic you are in lessons and it was clear how much you enjoy the interesting and challenging activities. Your teachers provide you with excellent explanations and make it very clear how you will be able to use what you already know when tackling new problems. This helps you to make outstanding progress and reach levels of attainment which are higher than those expected by the time you are ready to move onto middle school. You are very good at working in groups and at finding things out for yourselves; your excellent reading skills help you with this. Your behaviour in lessons and around the school is outstanding. It was very good to hear that you cannot remember anyone having been bullied in school but that you have a very good understanding of what to look out for.

Even though your school is outstanding your headteacher and other staff are very keen to continue to improve. To help them with this I have identified a few things which need to be made more consistent. You confirmed that your teachers discuss your work with you in lessons and tell you how it can improve. Some of the marking in your books also does this exceptionally well. I have asked the school to make sure that all marking is of this high quality. It was great to travel to the moon with the children in the Reception class and to see the good progress being made. So that these children learn to work independently I have asked that they get more opportunities to choose activities for themselves.

I am confident that you will continue to rise to the challenge of doing as well as you can and send my best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Linda Buller
Lead inspector

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