

Benton Dene Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108604
Local authority	North Tyneside
Inspection number	395493
Inspection dates	14–15 June 2012
Lead inspector	Jeffery Plumb

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	454
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Janet Hunter
Headteacher	Jill Forster
Date of previous school inspection	15 January 2007
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Introduction

Inspection team

Jeffery Plumb
Frank Cain
Julia Bayes

Additional Inspector
Additional Inspector
Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 21 lessons taught by 18 teachers. Six were joint observations with members of the senior leadership team. Inspectors also conducted a 'learning walk' (short visits to several classrooms) and examined case studies of three pupils. A detailed work scrutiny was carried out. Inspectors met formally and informally with pupils. Meetings were held with staff and a group of governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body. Inspectors observed the school's work and examined a number of documents, including progress and attainment data, attendance figures, safeguarding policies and risk assessments, equality and diversity policies, the most recent school improvement partner report and the school improvement plan. They attended an assembly. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) survey in planning the inspection. They also took account of 182 questionnaires returned by parents and carers as well as those completed by staff and pupils.

Information about the school

This larger than average primary school is co-located on one site with a maintained special school and shares many resources. Opened in a purpose-built building in 2010 it is part of a loose federation with two separate headteachers and governing bodies. The school has a Communication Support Base which provides for up to 12 pupils with statements of special educational needs for speech and language difficulties. The proportion of pupils supported at School Action Plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above the national average. About a third of the pupils on the special needs register have a speech and language difficulty. Some of them have an autistic spectrum disorder. Inward mobility is high; about 39% of pupils in the current Year 6 joined the school at different points during Key Stage 2. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. Most pupils are White British. A few pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and very few are at an early stage of learning to speak English. There are a few looked after pupils. The school meets the government's floor standard which sets the minimum expectations for attainment and progress. Childcare is provided on the school site, though this is not managed by the governing body and was inspected separately. The report can be found 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	1
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	1

Key Findings

- This is an outstanding school. Until recently the rate of progress pupils made in writing lagged behind the outstanding progress they make in reading, mathematics and science. The programmes put in place by the school to improve the teaching of writing are proving to be extremely successful and as a result, achievement in writing is rapidly improving. Parents and carers greatly value what this school achieves for their children. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted exceptionally well through an innovative and creative curriculum.
- Pupils make outstanding progress in lessons for reading, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT) and in most lessons for writing. Achievement over time is good rather than outstanding, because this acceleration in rates of progress in writing is recent. Attainment for pupils in the current Year 6 is above average overall in English and mathematics. Pupils with speech and language difficulties achieve exceptionally well.
- Teaching is outstanding. It is imaginative and activities are tailored to the learning needs of all pupils. Teachers are highly skilled in teaching pupils with speech and language difficulties. Teaching of writing has improved and is now of a high quality; the school is aware that new strategies need to be embedded fully to ensure that recent improvements are maintained over time. In reading, mathematics, science and ICT lessons, teaching is challenging and expectations of pupils are high. In the Early Years Foundation Stage teachers are adept at allowing children to run with their interests and this successfully motivates them to learn.
- Behaviour and safety are outstanding. Pupils have exceptionally positive attitudes to learning. They feel very safe and valued at school. They are adept at assessing risks and adopting safe practices. Their attendance is above average.

- Monitoring of performance by leaders is rigorous and incisive. It leads to speedy, decisive and highly effective action to improve teaching and raise pupils' achievement. The management of performance is exceptionally effective in providing targeted professional development to equip teachers to improve their teaching. Highly effective practice is fully and firmly embedded in all classes.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that pupils' achievement in writing is consistently outstanding over time by continuing to:
 - embed strategies to improve pupils' use of suitable vocabulary
 - implement and monitor interventions aimed at raising pupils' achievement in writing
 - provide opportunities wherever possible for pupils to write independently and at length across the curriculum.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make outstanding progress from low and often very low starting points. They usually attain skills expected for their age by the end of Reception; last year they attained above those levels. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, and those known to be eligible for free school meals make rapid progress throughout the school.

Attainment in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 has been variable over recent years. More pupils with statements of special educational needs are entered for these tests than is typical in a mainstream primary school because of the school's specialist resource base. Inward mobility throughout Key Stage 2 is exceptionally high. Both these factors vary from year to year and impact on overall attainment at the end of Key Stage 2. Attainment for the current Year 6 pupils who started the school in Year 3 is above average in English and mathematics, but attainment in writing of some pupils in this year group who joined at different points during Key Stage 2 lags behind that of their peers. Robust assessments of these pupils on entry to the school show that most make excellent progress from their starting points as a result of highly effective interventions made by teachers in lessons. As a result, achievement in writing is improving rapidly. However, because this rapid improvement in writing is recent, achievement is judged to be good and not outstanding.

Higher-attaining pupils now make outstanding progress; the achievement gap between boys and girls is significantly less than that found nationally; and the few looked after pupils achieve exceptionally well measured against their capability, as do those with speech and language difficulties. Progress in science and ICT is outstanding. Overwhelmingly, parents and carers are pleased with their children's progress.

Learning and performance in lessons is outstanding. For example, in a literacy lesson, there was outstanding learning and pupils made rapid progress in their understanding and use of figurative language. Working in pairs they used a picture of an event at the Beijing Olympics as a stimulus to identify and list examples of alliteration, simile and onomatopoeia. Then they used these examples to write high quality poems. In a mathematics lesson, pupils examined flags from around the world to discover what mathematical properties they could find. Their mathematical findings were significantly above what is typical for pupils of their age.

Quality of teaching

Teaching is relevant, challenging and very successfully accelerates pupils' learning. Exceptionally well-planned activities are based on the assessment of the next steps of learning required by pupils. A focus on developing pupils' use of suitable vocabulary contributes effectively to their accelerating progress in writing. Very effective questioning is used to deepen pupils' understanding. In a reading lesson, pupils were asked about the setting of the text. They said it was set in America. Immediately the teacher asked them about the clues which led to their answer and went on to deepen their inference skills. High expectations, brisk pace, outstanding subject knowledge and fun-based activities develop pupils' problem-solving skills in mathematics exceptionally well.

Imaginative activities provide children in the Early Years Foundation Stage with exciting and meaningful opportunities to develop their reading, writing and numeracy skills. Consequently, their knowledge of letters and the sounds they make is very secure. Skilful support enables pupils with speech and language difficulties and other pupils with special educational needs to make outstanding progress. Parents and carers are delighted with the teaching their children receive and, as one pupil said, 'Our lessons are hard, fun and help us develop very good skills'. Marking is excellent. Pupils respond to the guidance they are given and so make rapid gains in their skills. All pupils engage in homework, which motivates their learning and develops their research skills.

An innovative enquiry-based curriculum and excellent resources contribute to outstanding teaching in science and ICT. In an ICT lesson with inspirational teaching, pupils' eyes sparkled as they confidently performed a new Olympic anthem, which they created using digital equipment. Every opportunity is taken in lessons to promote pupils' reading, writing and numeracy skills. The school has trained parents and carers in how to support their children's reading. Reading at home is enjoyed and pupils have improved rapidly, as a result. Teachers promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development exceptionally well. Pupils' curiosity is evoked as they reflect deeply in lessons. Their awareness of cultural diversity is heightened as they learn to speak Spanish and Chinese. Pupils take responsibility for their own learning and are adept at working collaboratively in teams.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils engage enthusiastically with, and thoroughly enjoy, their learning. They speak with excitement about their animation work in ICT and their involvement as

journalists in producing a high quality magazine. Pupils have exceptionally positive attitudes to learning. A learning buzz pervades classrooms. Parents and carers say that behavior is outstanding, as do pupils. Inspectors concur with their view and scrutiny of behavioural records show it is the case over time, too. The school is calm and pupils treat each other with dignity and respect. Pupils with autism say confidently, 'This school helps us socially'. Attendance is above average.

Race relations are excellent. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of different types of bullying is exceptional because they are actively involved in shaping the school's anti-bullying policy. Rare incidents of cyber bullying, which occur outside of school, are dealt with swiftly. No exclusions have been given over the past two years. Overwhelmingly, parents and carers say that their children are safe. Pupils feel safe. They all have an adult whom they trust and with whom they can talk through anything that troubles them. They know that they must not speak with strangers when using computers and understand the health risks associated with smoking and misuse of alcohol. They are aware of the dangers involved when crossing a busy road and know how to cross safely. Older pupils are adept at carrying out risk assessments as they plan trips out of school.

Leadership and management

Senior leaders and the governing body are highly effective in raising pupils' achievement. Self-evaluation is thorough. Detailed analysis of performance data informs decisive actions to improve the quality of educational provision. For example, analysis of pupils' performance in the national writing test for 11-year-olds in 2011 revealed the need to develop pupils' use of suitable vocabulary further to raise their achievement. Following professional development, teachers have successfully embraced an agreed approach which focuses on developing pupils' use of vocabulary in their writing across the curriculum. Consequently, achievement in writing is improving rapidly. A reading programme trialled in the Early Years Foundation Stage accelerated children's reading and so it has been extended into Year 1. Pupils' reading is improving significantly in Year 1 as a result. Monitoring of teaching and targeted professional development continually improve the quality of teaching. Feedback given to teachers is rigorous and constructive. It leads to significant improvements. The capacity for sustained improvement is outstanding.

Senior leaders and subject leaders provide an innovative and highly creative curriculum, which lies at the heart of this very successful school. It is relevant, belongs in the 21st century and motivates pupils to learn. Pupils enjoy applying their literacy and numeracy skills in: solving problems; creating music; developing ICT skills; learning how to plan and prepare healthy meals; learning how to budget; learning to speak foreign languages. This helps them to be well-equipped for moving on to secondary school.

The school is fully committed to promoting equality of opportunity. Racist and disability discrimination issues are addressed very effectively through the personal, social, health and citizenship curriculum. Religious education and visits to the local mosque, church and synagogue raise pupils' spiritual awareness and their understanding of cultural diversity. Through mixing daily with pupils in the special school, their understanding of disability is significantly better than for pupils of their age. This exemplifies the outstanding provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and

cultural development. Management systems to ensure that students are safe and secure are exceptionally robust. Child protection procedures are outstanding and risk assessments are very thorough and detailed.

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 up 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 Benton Dene Primary School, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE12 8FD

Thank you for welcoming me and my colleagues to your school. We greatly enjoyed the time we spent with you. Your school is outstanding.

- You make outstanding progress in mathematics, science and ICT. By Year 6, those of you who started out in Year 3 attain above average standards in English and mathematics. Although all of you now make outstanding progress in reading and writing, a few of you do not do as well with writing as your peers. Those of you in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in the Communication Resource Base make outstanding progress.
- Your teaching is challenging, relevant and inspires you to learn. Interesting activities are planned which meet your needs and accelerate your learning.
- You behave exceptionally well and your attendance is above average. You know how to keep yourselves safe. You enjoy the many clubs and trips provided for you. Your enquiry and problem-solving skills are exceptionally good. You care for each other and have an excellent understanding of the different cultural backgrounds of people living throughout the world.
- Your headteacher, staff and governors lead and manage your school exceptionally well. They work successfully to make improvements for you. We have asked that they sustain the recent improvements they have made to improve your writing so that all of you realize your full potential.

Please help your school to improve even further by always working hard in all of your lessons so that you achieve your very best. We want you all to be successful and develop the knowledge and skills required to become valuable citizens in the 21st century.

Yours sincerely

Jeffery Plumb
Lead Inspector

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