

Whinney Banks Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	134076
Local authority	Middlesbrough
Inspection number	395507
Inspection dates	3–4 July 2012
Lead inspector	Steven Goldsmith

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	399
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Linda Green
Headteacher	John Wiffen
Date of previous school inspection	22 October 2008
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Age group	3-11
Inspection date(s)	3-4 July 2012
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Introduction

Inspection team

Steven Goldsmith
Joanna Sharpe
Barbara Hudson

Additional inspector
Additional inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 15 lessons, each one taught by a different teacher. Four of the lessons were observed jointly with members of the senior team. Inspectors had meetings with two groups of pupils and evaluated samples of pupils' work. They also held meetings with members of the governing body including the Chair of Governors and two different groups of staff. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documents including those relating to safeguarding, a summary of the self-evaluation records, examples of its monitoring records, and a wide range of the school's own assessment data. They also analysed responses to the inspection questionnaires completed by 187 parents and carers as well as those completed by the staff and pupils.

Information about the school

Whinney Banks is a larger-than-average primary school which serves its local community in west Middlesbrough. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is almost double the national average and has been since the previous inspection. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average but has risen gradually over the past three years. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is lower than average. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or by a statement of special educational needs is below average. The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school other than at the usual times is higher than the national average for primary schools.

The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for attainment and progress. The school has gained a number of awards, including Activemark and Healthy Schools status.

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	1

Key findings

- Whinney Banks is a good school which is a beacon of success within the local community. It is not an outstanding school because the quality of teaching is not yet leading to the achievement of pupils being outstanding. The parents and carers are rightly proud of the school and what it is doing for their children. In the words of one parent, 'The teachers encourage, respect and empower the children - moulding tomorrow's generation.'
- Achievement is good, because pupils make good progress from below average starting points and leave in Year 6 with above average attainment. Pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics in Key Stage 1 is good. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children make good progress in their personal and social development and in the development of their numerical skills.
- Teaching is consistently good with examples of outstanding practice. Teachers have high expectations of all pupils, present them with interesting activities and use their involvement in the creative and expressive arts effectively to develop their basic skills. High-quality marking normally gives pupils excellent advice on how to make progress in their learning but this is not consistent across the school, particularly in mathematics.
- The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding. Pupils get on exceptionally well with each other and the adults in the school. Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and enjoy school. Hence, attendance has improved steadily and is now average.
- Leadership and management of the school are outstanding. The headteacher has proven that he understands precisely how to move the school forward. Self-evaluation is accurate and all members of the school community play a full part in implementing changes. Senior staff monitor teaching effectively and the quality of teaching is continuing to improve. Data are used most effectively to manage and monitor the performance of staff. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted exceptionally well as a result of the rich curriculum they experience.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching and further accelerate pupils' progress by;
 - giving pupils more detailed feedback on the quality of their work and the next steps in their learning, particularly in mathematics.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

The uncompromising commitment of the headteacher and the staff to 'prepare children for the challenges they will meet in the real world' has been successful in maintaining pupils' good and sometimes outstanding achievement since the previous inspection. Parents and carers believe their children make good progress and the inspectors endorse these views. Pupils are rightly proud of their good achievement. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve well as a result of good provision and early identification of their learning needs. No groups of pupils do less well than their peers over time. Skilled support staff are well briefed and support pupils effectively in this very inclusive school.

Children enter the school with skills that are below average for their age, especially their communication skills. The well-established routines help them settle quickly and make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. In lessons, children work well together because their personal and social skills are effectively developed. There is a good focus on developing speaking and listening and inspectors observed some effective teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make), which is helping children to make good progress in early reading. They benefit from practical activities which successfully promote their skills in recognising numbers and letters.

Pupils enter Year 1 with the majority having not quite reached the expected level for their age. In Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress and, by the end of Year 2, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is broadly average. Pupils read competently for their age and generally have the skill to understand what they are reading.

Pupils' progress in Key Stage 2 is good and, by the end of Year 6, overall attainment is above average. Attainment in reading is above average by Year 6 and nearly all pupils read fluently and enjoy reading. Current school data and work in pupils' books, indicate that progress and attainment in writing is improving and matches reading. In lessons, pupils make good progress and learning is effective. In Year 4, for example, pupils were able to apply their understanding of the features of two-dimensional shapes to identify those that meet a series of specific criteria. Writing, speaking and listening skills are enhanced in lessons through creative, expressive and performance experiences that capture pupils' imagination and provide them with interesting experiences to think, talk and write about.

Quality of teaching

Teaching is good with examples of outstanding practice. Teachers work closely in highly focused and cohesive teams throughout the school. Pupils are highly motivated, keen to learn and productively engaged most of the time. Parents and carers, as well as pupils, indicate that the teaching in the school is good and inspection evidence confirms this. Pupils rightly say many lessons are fun.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, teachers use the outdoor area effectively to promote children's communication skills. They ask challenging questions of the children that encourage thoughtful answers. Teachers make good use of role play to promote social development and are good role models for children's social development. Children are encouraged to cooperate and they take turns when using equipment. Regular, well-focused lessons on how to sound out letters and words are taught effectively by both teachers and support staff. This ensures pupils' good progress in reading.

Teaching in Key Stages 1 and 2 is good. In the best lessons, a rich variety of artistic and creative experiences challenge pupils to think about opportunities beyond the immediate area. Imaginative topics inspire pupils to discuss their ideas and write imaginatively. Educational visits, visitors to the school and the use of art, drama and dance activities promote pupils' spiritual and cultural awareness. As a result of their work being well tailored to pupils' abilities, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs learn successfully. These pupils are effectively supported by teaching assistants, who guide and give pupils the skills to be successful rather than doing the task for them. In the small minority of lessons which are less effective, there is too much teacher talk and direction. As a result pupils are not required to take responsibility for their learning and progress early enough.

Pupils' written work is generally well presented. It shows that tasks are adapted well to pupils of different abilities, allowing all pupils to achieve success as well as enjoying their learning. Pupils' work is regularly marked according to the school's marking policy. However, the extent and quality of the feedback they receive on their work is not consistent across the school and is less well developed in mathematics than in other parts of the curriculum.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils are exceptionally well behaved, respectful and polite. This is the norm for the school and pupils are calm and aware of the well-being of everyone around them both in the playground and at other times around the school. Pupils show a high level of respect for one another and their teachers. They demonstrate an extraordinary resilience and tenacity in their learning and are enthusiastic contributors to the life of the school. Excellent relationships between pupils and adults are evident in lessons and everywhere around the school.

Pupils are polite towards each other in class, saying 'excuse me' when moving around the room. In corridors, pupils routinely hold doors open for approaching adults and are often heard to reply 'you are welcome' in response to the 'thank you' from the adult. Staff manage pupils' exceptional behaviour well, and from the Early

Years Foundation Stage onwards actively model good behaviour.

Pupils have a very good understanding of the different forms of bullying. They are adamant that incidents of bullying are very rare, including cyber-bullying, name calling or racial comments. They are extremely aware of situations which are potentially unsafe and look out for the safety of one another as well as themselves. Their great interest in their work, their willingness to collaborate with their peers and the satisfaction they get from their successes all make a valuable contribution to their own learning. The vast majority of pupils say they feel very safe in the school. Most parents and carers who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire believe that behaviour is very good and overwhelmingly agree that their child is safe. Inspection findings concur with their views. Attendance has shown sustained improvement since the previous inspection and is now average.

Leadership and management

All in school share the ambition to excel in all they do for the benefit of the pupils and work unstintingly to ensure this is achieved. Most notably, the headteacher has been highly successful in maintaining the good achievement for pupils who join the school with knowledge and skills below what is expected nationally. He nurtures a climate of professionalism based on thorough monitoring. Teachers share their skills and expertise and one young teacher described the aim to provide pupils with 'good or better' teaching. As a result teaching is improving and only a few shortcomings remain. Senior leaders have well-trying and effective procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching which form the basis for continuing professional development as well as managing staff performance. Determined work over many years is the cornerstone of the highly successful relationships which the senior leaders have established with the parents and carers. The responses they provided to the questionnaire demonstrate this impressively.

The school has robust mechanisms to evaluate its own performance. These include a thorough analysis of pupils' performance data which is used productively to focus support and intervention for individuals and groups of pupils. This is a school that is extremely aware of the way forward, has sustained above average attainment and has the capacity to move forward with great confidence and enthusiasm.

The governing body provides very effective support. Their personal skills and extensive knowledge of the local community make its members vital assets of the school. They are well informed and do not hesitate to ask questions if they are not clear about the issues being discussed or the implications of any proposed actions. This enables them to give a good level of challenge and support to senior leaders. The headteacher, senior leaders and the governing body are highly effective in promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination. There is zero tolerance of any form of discrimination. Arrangements for safeguarding are robust and meet requirements.

The curriculum is outstanding and is appropriately adapted to the needs, abilities and interests of all pupils. The wide range of artistic, performance and creative experiences is a significant factor in providing pupils with excellent opportunities to explore and enhance their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary school converters. Secondary schools include secondary school converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special school 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.
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.



5 July 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Whinney Banks Primary School, Middlesbrough, TS5 4QQ

I want to thank all of you for the extremely friendly welcome that you gave us when we inspected your school. We found the time we spent talking with you, your teachers and other adults extremely enjoyable and rewarding. You attend a good school. You make good progress and the standard of your work, by the time you leave in Year 6, is above that of pupils in most other schools, because you are taught well. Your work shows that your teachers tell you how well you are doing, but the help you get on how you could improve your work varies across the school and could be much better in mathematics.

You told us how much you enjoy coming to the school and like to go on trips and visits. You clearly enjoy all of the creative and artistic activities which the school provides for you and we thought the Year 6 assembly was fantastic.

The school is exceptionally well led and managed and the headteacher and your teachers are always looking for ways to improve. To help them we have asked them to do the following:

- Give you more consistent help to understand how to improve your work, especially in mathematics.

Yours sincerely

Steven Goldsmith
Lead inspector

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