



Windy Nook Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 108374
LEA Gateshead
Inspection number 277959
Inspection dates 22 May 2006 to 23 May 2006
Reporting inspector Mrs Andrea Lyons HMI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Albion Street
School category	Community		Gateshead
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		Tyne and Wear, NE10 9BD
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0191 4694954
Number on roll	348	Fax number	0191 4694954
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Cllr Jim Turnbull
Date of previous inspection	1 March 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Alwyn Bathan

Age group 3 to 11	Inspection dates 22 May 2006 - 23 May 2006	Inspection number 277959
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools and two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Windy Nook is a larger than average primary school situated in East Gateshead. There is some deprivation in its catchment area, and children typically enter the Foundation Stage with below average attainment. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is slightly above the national average. There are far fewer pupils identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities than is the case nationally. There are comparatively few pupils who are from a minority ethnic background or who speak English as an additional language. The school currently has no looked after children.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Windy Nook considers itself to be a good school, and the inspectors agree with that judgement. There is a genuine feeling of community, based on mutual responsibility and support. There is outstanding provision for pupils' personal development, and for pupils experiencing difficulties in learning at any stage of their school lives. Pupils enjoy school, and are very involved in the running of it. They are secure and confident, and their behaviour is exemplary.

Overall, achievement and standards are good. Progress is good in the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1. Progress in Key Stage 2 is less good than in Key Stage 1, and is also less good in mathematics than in English, although standards are still above the national average.

Although teaching is generally good, pupils have such good literacy skills and attitudes to learning that they are capable of more independent and exploratory learning than they are given opportunities for. This reduces their progress. Pupils are sometimes not stretched enough, particularly where the teaching is satisfactory rather than good.

After considerable disruption to staffing, which delayed some key developments, the school is now stable, and leadership and management are good. The headteacher's leadership is outstanding. The school is rightly turning its attention to improving mathematics, and has identified the reasons for the slowing down of progress in Key Stage 2. Its self-evaluation and planning for school improvement are good. It has addressed the recommendations of the last inspection report, and has the capacity to continue to improve further. The governing body is competent and supportive, and is increasingly involved in the school's strategic planning. The school provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve provision and standards in mathematics across the school.
- Increase the opportunities for pupils to develop more sophisticated learning skills through more practical, independent and exploratory learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

From a low starting point on entry to the Foundation Stage pupils make good progress overall by the end of Year 6. Progress in English and science is better than in mathematics.

Pupils make particularly good progress in the Foundation Stage and, by the end of Reception, most pupils are working at levels that are above or well above the average in key skill areas. This is a significant achievement, and contributes very largely to the high standards at the end of Year 2, which have reached the expected level for this age in all subjects for several years. Last year, they were significantly better for all

groups in reading and writing, and in line with expectations in mathematics for all but the highest achievers.

For several years, standards in Year 6 have been consistently above the expected level for this age, and well above in science. Last year, they were above expectations in mathematics and well above in English and science.

However, progress overall in Key Stage 2 is less good than in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. This is largely because of the comparative weakness of mathematics.

Progress across foundation subjects is generally good across the school, although it is hindered by a lack of opportunities for pupils to develop the more independent, investigative skills which are required for consistently higher attainment.

There are suitably challenging targets for pupils, and the school tracks progress against these well. Individuals and groups who may be at risk of underachievement are identified quickly and provided with effective support. In consequence, pupils generally make good progress in relation to their ability.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Attendance is around the national average but higher than in many neighbouring schools. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary.

There is a fine atmosphere of calm purpose in lessons, and pupils move around the school very sensibly. They are well able to represent themselves socially, with courtesy and confidence. The staff are vigilant in ensuring pupils' security, and pupils say that they feel very safe in school. Bullying is not tolerated and any incidents are swiftly dealt with. The Key Stage 2 listening buddy system is also very effective in supporting pupils who feel worried.

The staff have taught the pupils to be good speakers and listeners, and pupils use these skills successfully to agree decisions or generate ideas. This strongly aids their learning, supported by the very good working relationships at all levels. Pupils enjoy school and appreciate that the staff make lessons fun as well as to meet learning targets.

There is a good focus on healthy lifestyles. Through the school council and other roles of responsibility, pupils make an outstanding contribution to the school community. Very good development of basic skills and highly effective social skills give pupils knowledge and understanding that will be useful in later working life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching is good. In particular, the teaching of speaking, listening and literacy are very good, and the high level of skills pupils have gained in these areas enables them to be confident learners across the curriculum.

Lessons are carefully planned, and teachers have a very good knowledge of pupils' abilities and prior attainment. This knowledge is usually used effectively to match the work to pupils' individual abilities, though sometimes pupils are not stretched enough.

Teachers' expectations of pupils' standards are high, and this is supported by a very positive atmosphere in class. Support staff make a very valuable contribution to the pupils' learning. However, pupils' very good literacy skills and positive attitudes to learning are often not sufficiently exploited by the range of tasks offered and the teaching styles used. In lessons judged to be satisfactory, there was too great a reliance on direct teacher instruction. Even the lessons judged to be good tended to lack opportunities for pupils to set and solve problems independently, research their answers and develop their thinking skills.

A particular strength of the school is the well organised network of support strategies for pupils experiencing difficulties in learning or behaviour. These strategies are well linked with each other and with the school's overall approach to teaching, so that support is prompt, seamlessly linked with general class work, and highly effective.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. It is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. The school has worked hard on literacy development, and provision for this is now exceptionally good. The provision for numeracy is good overall, but lacks sufficient attention to the skills of using and applying mathematics.

The school is developing very effective assessment procedures, which ensure that pupils know what they have achieved and what they need to do to improve. However, they sometimes do not have enough opportunities to use, apply and extend what they have learned through independent and practical activities.

Interactive whiteboards are well used to stimulate pupils' interest. Links with the universities and the local secondary school broaden children's learning opportunities in information and communication technology (ICT), which is well used in other subject areas. There is good provision for personal, social and health education and the school has regularly achieved the Healthy Schools Award. Music and French enrich the curriculum, as do visits from, for example, a performance poet. The wide range of after-school clubs is well attended. Pupils are encouraged to have a good awareness of, and respect for, other faiths and cultures.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school's care, guidance and support are outstanding. The staff work creatively to ensure that pupils are very well looked after. Required procedures to protect pupils are in place, and parents praise the staff's interest in their children. Lunchtime organisers have also received effective training in how to manage the pupils safely. They make a significant contribution to the pupils' enjoyment of school through their good relationships and support for creative play.

The pupils are helped to make good progress towards set goals in their academic and personal development. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are involved in discussions of their learning plans. This helps to ensure they make good progress towards agreed targets. Recent developments in assessing pupils' learning are increasingly effective in recognising their progress and in setting new and sharply focused learning aims for them.

Teachers' very good knowledge of their pupils, and the very effective arrangements for providing additional support for pupils' learning or behavioural needs, ensure that pupils receive a very good level of individual attention.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The school's self-evaluation is accurate, and planning for school improvement is thorough and well focused. Both are appropriately developed with staff and increasingly with the governing body. Parents and pupils are involved through regular questionnaires and other opportunities to make their views known, for example, through the school council. The school responds well to these views, taking action wherever possible and involving pupils in actively finding solutions. Parents are strongly supportive of the school, and a number are directly involved within the school to support pupils' learning.

The school's senior management and staffing have been disrupted over the past three years which delayed some school-wide developments, including the establishment of an effective leadership team. However, the headteacher worked hard to maintain effective systems in key areas for school improvement, such as monitoring the quality of teaching. Her understanding of her staff and arrangements for support and challenge are a strength of the school. With the appointment of a very effective deputy head, there is now a strong and improving management group. The headteacher's leadership is outstanding. The management of mathematics is not as well established as other areas.

All necessary policies and procedures are in place, and funding is well used. The governing body has worked hard to support the school through the recent staffing difficulties. It is increasingly involved with the school's strategic development and is beginning to develop a role which appropriately challenges the school.

The school has successfully acted on the recommendations from the last inspection report, and is well placed to continue to improve further.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

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Windy Nook Primary School

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22 May 2006

Dear Pupils

Thank you very much for welcoming us into your school. We all enjoyed meeting you very much. Everything you told and showed us about your school was interesting and useful.

We think your school is a good school. It is particularly good at helping you with literacy, so that you are all very good at reading and writing, and you use these skills well to help you learn in other subjects. You are also very good at speaking and listening, and we were impressed by how well you can discuss and explain things. We were particularly pleased with your behaviour, which was excellent throughout – you are courteous, thoughtful, confident pupils, and a credit to your school and families.

We thought that your teachers and all other staff care for you very well indeed, and that you are taught well. Both you and your families like the school and are loyal to it. We were very impressed by how much you help to run the school, through the school council and things like the buddy system and listening buddies.

There were two areas where we thought that the school can improve. Although your maths is good, it is not quite as good as English. So we have asked the teachers to look at ways of improving that. We also felt that your literacy skills and attitudes to learning were so good that you can go even further in your learning. So we have asked Mrs Bathan and the teachers to give you more chances to work independently and solve problems or do research.

You can help by continuing to work hard at your literacy and other subjects; so that you can manage the more advanced and exciting work that teachers will be able to give you.

You should be very proud of yourselves and very proud of your school. Well done!

Andrea Lyons, Her Majesty's Inspector

Tony Kemp, Additional Inspector

Eric Jackson, Additional Inspector