



Grange First School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 108444
LEA Newcastle upon Tyne
Inspection number 277973
Inspection dates 2 February 2006 to 3 February 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Arthur Allison

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

Type of school	First	School address	Norham Road
School category	Community		Gosforth
Age range of pupils	3 to 9		Newcastle upon Tyne, Tyne and Wear
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0191 2852954
Number on roll	181	Fax number	0191 2858271
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Ron Hinshaw
Date of previous inspection	1 January 2001	Headteacher	Mrs Ann Leake

Age group 3 to 9	Inspection dates 2 February 2006 - 3 February 2006	Inspection number 277973
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average sized first school for children aged 3–9. The majority of children come from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds in Gosforth. More children are eligible for free school meals than in most schools. The percentage of children from minority ethnic groups is slightly lower than the national average, but the percentage of children whose first language is not English is above the national average. The percentage of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below the national average but is rising, as is the percentage of those who have a statement of special educational need, now at 2.8%, higher than in most schools. Attainment on entry to the nursery is just below average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school that gives good value for money. The school has tackled previously identified shortcomings successfully and has the capacity to improve further. There are now better arrangements for parents to know how their children are doing. The school's assessment of its effectiveness is accurate. A large majority of parents have every confidence in the school. One wrote: 'The school actively works with parents to resolve any issues'. It is a very welcoming school. The children are friendly and talk enthusiastically about the wide range of opportunities the school provides. They want to do well, but do not always know what they have to do to improve. The school provides good levels of care, guidance and support for all children. Children's personal and social development is good. Standards are above average. All children achieve well, including those who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and whose English is not their home language. Teaching is consistently good so all children make good progress. The curriculum is good and provides a rich experience for children. The school recognises that improved planning that links subjects and leads to better opportunities to write for a range of purposes in all subjects will help to raise standards in writing. Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage. Children settle quickly into school and reach the standards expected for their age at the end of the Foundation Stage in 2005.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher, who has high expectations, is perceptive about children's achievement and knows what needs to be done to raise standards. The governors fulfil their responsibilities well.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing by planning the curriculum so that children have better opportunities to write for a range of purposes in all subjects.
- Ensure all children know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well by the time they leave the school. The attainment of children starting school varies from year to year from just below average to broadly average. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage. Most reach, and some exceed, standards expected for their age. National test results at the end of Key Stage 1 and optional test results at the end of Year 4 show that children continue to make good progress and all achieve well.

- National test results in 2005 were average and lower than in 2004 because attainment on entry was lower and there were more children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and children whose first language was not English. Standards at the end of Year 4 were above average. Very challenging targets for

children in Year 2 were almost met for those expected to attain the nationally expected Level 2 or above. The target for Level 3 was exceeded in writing. The school has put in place strategies to help more children attain the higher Level 3. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those whose first language is not English make similar progress to other children because they are given considerable help.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The personal development and well-being of all children is good. Children look forward to coming each day. This is supported by levels of attendance which, although similar to most schools, have recently improved and won the school an award in a local authority initiative. Children take care with their work, try hard and enjoy their lessons. They approach challenging activities confidently, work well together and are willing to try out their ideas. Older children show good levels of independence. As a result, children are prepared well for life long learning and their economic well-being.

Children behave well in lessons and around the school. In discussion, older children were adamant that bullying is not a problem and relationships with other children and adults are harmonious. They are well informed about how to stay safe and lead healthy lifestyles. School council members and playground 'buddies' are proud of their contribution to the school. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They learn about themselves and others, particularly in family group lessons where they become increasingly aware of the part they all play in the whole school community. Children have good knowledge of different cultures through the work they do.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are consistently good throughout the school. All teachers create a very good working atmosphere so that children are keen to do their best. Lessons are brisk, well planned, take account of previous learning and no time is wasted. Teachers make clear what children should know or be able to do by the end of the lesson. Instructions are clear and children work productively on their own or in groups. However, children do not always know what they need to do to improve. Staff use praise very effectively, which results in children having high levels of confidence and being able to persevere with challenging activities. Staff work together well to match work skilfully to the different needs of children. Lessons regularly feature very effective use of information and communication technology (ICT). This was exemplified in a mathematics lesson in the Year 1 class where all were highly motivated by a 'Treasure Chest' activity using the interactive whiteboard. Care is taken to give children the support to enable them to make good progress; teaching assistants make an excellent

contribution to this. Children with learning difficulties and those whose first language is not English, benefit from the help they receive and learn as well as others.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and fulfils all statutory requirements. It meets the needs of all children, including those in the Foundation Stage, those who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and those whose first language is not English. The emphasis on basic skills helps to promote children's good achievement. The school has productive links with other schools and shares good practice in curriculum development to the benefit of all children. Team planning of the curriculum is a recent initiative. Teams are beginning to incorporate opportunities for children to write for a range of purposes in all subjects in order to raise standards in writing. The curriculum is enriched well by visitors, the use of 'experts' for special projects, and visits which extend learning in the classroom. The weekly enrichment afternoon is a very strong part of the school's curriculum because all children benefit from a wide range of activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides good care, guidance and support for all children, so that all achieve well. The support for children with statements of special educational need, reflected in their good achievement, is excellent. The school has good procedures to ensure that staff and children are safe. Children know that any concerns they may have will be taken seriously, so they are confident about asking for help when necessary. Child protection systems are appropriate and staff undertake training.

Arrangements to let parents know how well children are doing have improved since the previous inspection. Parents appreciate that they can always approach the school with concerns.

Children's targets and marking inform them how well they are doing, but there are too few comments that help children to know what they have to do to improve. The school has good links with other schools so that children are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. Under the thoughtful guidance of the headteacher and the senior management team, all staff are united in their determination to drive up standards. The school promotes equal opportunities well. All staff know what they have to do to make an even better contribution to helping all children, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and those whose first language is not English, to achieve as highly as possible. Teachers and teaching assistants have worked well together to raise children's achievement. Thorough

self-evaluation and analysis of test results means the school agrees with the inspectors about what it has to do to improve.

The shortcomings identified by the previous inspection have been addressed, illustrating the school's capacity for further improvement. Teaching is now consistently good across the school. There are improved arrangements for parents to know how their children are doing.

The governors know the school well and make a good contribution to the management of the school. Focused visits, reports and presentations from staff contribute well to their knowledge of the school. Systems for self-evaluation are well established and take account of the views of parent's and pupil's. Governors manage the school's finances well and follow up spending decisions to assess their effectiveness.

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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?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	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?	2	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	2	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	2	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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The Children

Grange First School

Norham Road

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Newcastle upon Tyne

NE3 2NP

4 February 2006

Dear Children

Following our visit to your school last week, we would like to thank you for being so friendly, helpful and polite. We enjoyed talking to you and seeing how well you work in lessons.

We can see why you are so proud of your school because:

your teacher's and other adults in the school work hard to help you to do your best and to be safe and well looked after in school

you enjoy learning and behave well

you listen carefully to what others in your class say and are proud to take on responsibilities

you enjoy taking part in a number of extra activities other than lessons

you have a headteacher who knows what the school should do to help you to do your very best and the other teachers and adults fully support her in this.

There are two things we have asked the school to do to make it better. The school should:

give you more opportunities to write in all subjects to help you do better in writing

make sure that you know what you have to do to reach higher standards.

Thank you again for making us feel so welcome. Keep trying to do your very best.

Yours faithfully

Mr Allison and Mrs Richardson

The Inspection Team