



# Lord Blyton Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 108700  
**LEA** South Tyneside  
**Inspection number** 278028  
**Inspection dates** 19 September 2005 to 19 September 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Eric Jackson

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Blyton Avenue
<b>School category</b>	Community		South Shields
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		Tyne and Wear, NE34 9BN
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 4240550
<b>Number on roll</b>	169	<b>Fax number</b>	0191 4240550
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Alice Malcolm
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	1 June 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	David Boyle

<b>Age group</b> 4 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 19 September 2005 - 19 September 2005	<b>Inspection number</b> 278028
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Lord Blyton School is a smaller than average-sized primary school in a building designed to hold many more pupils, with spacious grounds and play space. Levels of social and economic disadvantage are very high locally, and almost half of the pupils are eligible for free school meals. The number of children on roll has fallen from nearly 250 at the last inspection to about 150 now. Almost all the children are of white British heritage. All of the children currently on roll speak English as their first language. A similar proportion of children in the school have learning difficulties or disabilities as is found nationally. The number of children who leave or join the school during the school year is about average. At the time of the inspection, two temporary staff were covering long-term absences.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

The staff and governors of Lord Blyton School believe that it is a good school where children are taught well and are safe. Inspection findings confirm their views. The extra money received through grants and the local Education Action Zone has helped the school to improve since the last inspection, and it gives good value for this money. The school's extensive facilities are used well.

The experienced headteacher leads the school well and the staff provide a well-rounded education for the children. Parents all say that their children really enjoy school, and the children agree. The children's personal development is good, and they learn well how to behave and be safe and healthy. They also learn skills to help them understand the world of work when they are older. However, the staff do not encourage the children to be independent enough in their learning.

Many children have skills which are well below average when they start school in the reception class, particularly in speaking and listening, but they make good progress. Results in national tests at the end of Year 6 show that the children are achieving well.

The staff work hard to improve children's learning, and keep detailed records of their attainment. However, they do not yet use this wealth of information well enough to plan the next steps in teaching and so help the children learn better. The school has the capacity to make the necessary improvements.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Make more precise use of monitoring and assessment information to further improve teaching and learning.
- Encourage pupils to become more independent learners by taking greater responsibility through structured paired and small group work.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

The good progress made by the children from the beginning of their time at school was set out by one parent who wrote, 'My daughter has come on in leaps and bounds since starting'. Standards by Year 6 have improved well in the last three years, particularly at higher than expected levels. In 2005, results in English, mathematics and science were well above the average in schools in similar socio-economic circumstances. This reflects very good progress in mathematics and science since Year 2. The school ensures that almost all children achieve the expected level by the end of Year 2, but the number reaching higher than this has gone down. This is partly due to the fall in numbers, and partly to disruptions in staffing. Teachers and support staff give effective support to those children needing extra help. These pupils make good progress towards the goals set for them. A parent, with a child with learning difficulties, underlined this when she expressed disappointment 'that the rest of her education could not be spent here'.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Inspection findings confirm the school's view that children's personal development is good. They really enjoy their time in school. A parent of a new child in reception wrote, 'Everyone has made my child feel very welcome.' This is exactly the impression visitors receive. The pupils are relaxed, smile often, and join in activities well. Behaviour is generally good because relationships are good and children feel that they are treated fairly. Children feel safe because they see that staff deal well with problems as they crop up. Attendance matches the national average. It reflects the school's and parents' efforts, and shows how keen the children are to come to school.

Children learn well the difference between right and wrong. They know that the school's expectations of their behaviour are high and they generally live up to those expectations, even when this conflicts with pressures outside school. They learn to work together in different social groups effectively in the main, but they need more opportunities to collaborate and make decisions for themselves. The work of the School Council shows they could do this more often. Children develop their spiritual understanding satisfactorily in assemblies and religious education, and through literature, music and art. Their cultural development is promoted well. They learn about their locality, and the wider culture of British society. Through English, art, music, sport, geography, and history they also learn about the wider world. This was shown in a very good display of children's paintings and masks, based on African cultures.

The school has many awards for the way it promotes children's understanding of safety and of healthy lifestyles. The pupils also learn to care for the environment and, unusually so in a primary school, how important business and economic activity are in the local community. A local construction company, a business partner, recently held a construction day in the school hall. Children and adults worked together successfully to build models. The day helped the children's growing understanding of design and technology in practice.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching is good, leading to good progress in children's learning. This confirms the school's view of itself, shared by the large majority of parents. The staff, following the headteacher's lead, successfully develop good relationships with the children. This is vital, as some of the children have difficult circumstances to contend with outside school. Because of the good relationships in school the children develop positive attitudes and learn well. Despite significant changes to the staffing this term, the staff have worked effectively to maintain the school's even and calm learning atmosphere.

Pupils enjoy their lessons, especially art, physical education and sport. They say that they find the work hard sometimes, and easy at others. They recognise that their

teachers and other staff help them when they find things difficult. There is a good adult to child ratio in the school, and the teaching assistants are skilled in supporting the children, particularly those with learning difficulties. These staff feel that they are valued members of the team, and are kept well informed of what is expected of them by the teachers. Occasionally, their time is not used efficiently when the teacher works with the whole class. The staff regularly assess children's progress in their learning. The school is currently replacing its system for the assessment and recording of children's performance. At present not all children understand enough about how to improve their work and this slows the rate of progress in some lessons.

The whole staff has worked well to improve the teaching of writing in English lessons. This was evident in a Year 1 lesson where the teacher's enthusiasm created an excellent atmosphere for learning. Here the children understood exactly what they should be doing to improve. This type of approach has helped raise standards, particularly by the end of Year 6. There is still more work to be done and the pupils do not have enough opportunities to improve their vocabulary, discuss their work and improve their writing. The teachers recognise this problem, but some lessons leave little opportunity for children to talk about their work other than to answer the teachers' questions in whole class sessions. There are exceptions. For example, in a science lesson where groups of pupils told the rest of the class what they had found out about a topic. There is not enough of this type of teaching. Children sometimes sit on the carpet for long periods, or have to listen to the teacher for too long. In some lessons, this leads to boredom and restless behaviour, and slows progress.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

- Inspection evidence supports the school's view that the curriculum is good. It is broad and balanced, and enriched well through the many art, sporting and other opportunities offered, both and in and out of school. Science and mathematics are also real strengths. The children say that they enjoy what they do. Religious education has improved since the last inspection, and the curriculum meets all statutory requirements.

The emphasis on sports and the arts is popular with the children, and its good impact was evident in an enjoyable Year 1 lesson, and the school football team's success last year. An artist-in-residence says that she is delighted to work with the children, who have joined her successfully in a number of community projects. Youth and community work in the school building also enables some of the pupils to take part in such activities such as musical productions, and costume making.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

This aspect of the school is good and inspection evidence accords with the school's view. The headteacher sets the caring and supportive tone by his inclusive and welcoming approach to children and their parents. Despite there being children in the

school with significant behavioural difficulties, no child has been excluded for the past three years.

All children are well and properly cared for by all the staff. The children have clear guidance as to what is expected of them and keep to the guidelines well. Child protection and risk assessment procedures are secure. The school environment is safe for the children. It is looked after well by the caretaking staff. New toilets for the boys have improved facilities for them and ended many years of unsatisfactory provision.

The staff promote good relationships so that the atmosphere and ethos of the school is that of a happy and confident family. This has a strong influence on the children's attendance, behaviour and attitudes to learning. The staff set challenging targets for their own and the children's development that ensure good progress in children's learning. This includes setting learning targets in each lesson, and sharing with children the 'success criteria' that will help them know whether the target has been achieved. However, these are not consistently followed up during and at the end of lessons.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good, in line with the school's and parents' judgements. The headteacher has established and maintained a good school despite many changes. Key leaders, particularly for mathematics and science, have successfully set clear direction to raise standards and improve the quality of care for the children. These have led to the improved standards in Year 6. The school is determined to promote equality of opportunity for all, and to ensure that all its children have full access to all opportunities offered. As one parent put it, 'The school is run very efficiently with happy children and staff.'

There have been major disruptions to staffing recently due to long-term absence and promotion of the deputy headteacher to another school. The school has coped with these changes well, having prudently conserved funds to deal with such eventualities. All the staff are competent to teach in a primary school and recent changes have led to internal redeployment to teach different year groups. Some of these staff would benefit from further guidance in order to adapt to the new situation more effectively.

The governors are fully supportive of the school, and they have a strong level of trust in the headteacher. They have a keen interest in what goes on, and know the school well. They are prepared to challenge aspects of provision when necessary, but are rightly proud of recent achievements, including the awards for Healthy and Eco School status, among others.

There are good procedures to monitor the school's provision. The headteacher and staff regularly check that children are making appropriate progress, and that the quality of teaching and learning is acceptable. That the school has improved well recently is testament to the effectiveness of this process up to this year. However, following the recent staff changes, the school has been less successful in evaluating the information collected and identifying the steps needed to make further improvements.

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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>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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

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

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	3	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

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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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21 September 2005

Dear Children,

Mrs Bennett and I enjoyed meeting you, looking at your work, and talking with you about your school. You helped us to get a clear picture of what you do and how well you are improving in your school work. I particularly liked your singing in assembly – you sounded as though you really meant what you sang.

We think that Lord Blyton Primary is a good school where most of you do well. Almost all your parents agree with us. Your headteacher, teachers and all the other people who work in your school help you learn to be healthy and safe, and to develop your skills and understanding. You and your parents also help by making sure you come to school every day that you can. We were pleased to find that most of you behave well and try hard in whatever you do.

Since it was last inspected, your school has improved well. There are fewer children at your school now than there were then. Still, the improvements to your building and grounds and the equipment you have, such as the computer suite, mean that you have good resources to help you learn. Your school also invites artists, sportspeople and local businesses to add their skills to help you – this really widens your experiences. There have been good improvements in test results for Year 6 children in the last three years. We know that those of you in Year 6 now are also working hard to do your best. Many of you told us how much you like your work – one girl said, 'I would rather work in class than go out to play!' Most of you learn well the difference between right and wrong. You know that bullying is wrong, and that everyone should have an equal chance. Your School Councillors also give you a good voice in the school.

To help you even more, we have asked the staff to give you more chance to talk to each other about your work. We want them to encourage you to plan and develop more of what you do in your own way. We have also asked them to be clearer about how they build on what you can already do to help you improve further.

With best wishes for your future.

Yours sincerely,

Eric Jackson, Lead Inspector.

Annex B