



Pallister Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 111631
LEA Middlesbrough
Inspection number 278736
Inspection dates 28 November 2005 to 29 November 2005
Reporting inspector Mrs Delia Hiscock

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Gribdale Road
School category	Community		Pallister Park
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		Middlesbrough, TS3 8PW
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01642 242174
Number on roll	493	Fax number	01642 254463
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Dave Peacock
Date of previous inspection	1 May 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Christine Wain

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Pallister Park is a large primary school in Middlesbrough that provides full-time education for 415 pupils between the ages of 4 and 11, and part-time education for 78 nursery children aged 3 and 4. The number of pupils with additional learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above the national average and almost two-thirds of the pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is well above the national average. Many pupils are from disadvantaged backgrounds and in many instances their social and language skills are lower than expected for their age when they enter the nursery. A very small number of children are from minority ethnic families; just a few of whom are learning to speak English. The school has gained several awards, including Healthy Schools Gold Award, Activemark Gold. The school were the British Gymnastics Champions in 2004.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school that provides exceptional value for money. Inspection findings agree with the school's judgement of its effectiveness. The leadership, vision and dedication of the headteacher, strong management team and governors have made some impressive developments since the previous inspection. The accommodation and resources are now excellent. The school is hugely successful in the quality of care and personal development it provides. Pupils enjoy an exceptional range of high quality sports, out-of-school clubs and visits. Teaching is of good quality and the curriculum is good. The quality of education provided in the newly built Nursery and Reception classes is good. In Reception, there are some outstanding features, which include high quality care and personal development. By the start of Year 1 standards are below those expected nationally and by the end of Key Stage 2 they are close to the national average. Given that standards are well below those expected nationally when children enter school, this represents good progress.

The school knows that there is a need to make improvements in standards of writing and features of teaching and learning. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress. The school leadership is well placed to bring about further improvements in pupils' achievement.

Pupils love coming to their school and their behaviour is excellent. They show great respect for others, reflecting that shown by adults. The school has an impressive ethos. The way that the school works with parents, welfare agencies and sports organisations ensures that pupils' well-being is outstanding. They are well aware of their own and others' health and safety as a result of the school's exceptional efforts. Pupils matter and they know this.

What the school should do to improve further

Improve the quality of teaching to that of the best by:

- developing the use of assessment to better match the learning needs of pupils and the quality of marking so that pupils know how to improve
- raising standards in writing in Key Stage 1.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Inspection findings agree with the school's view that pupils achieve well. Most enter Nursery with skills that are well below those expected nationally. Recent changes to the term children start are proving to be beneficial and standards are already rising in Reception. Children make good progress, particularly in their personal and language development. By the time they start in Year 1, standards are below those expected nationally.

Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1. That said, standards attained by pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 have risen steadily over several years, including those of higher attaining pupils. Targets set for pupils to achieve are largely met. Standards are below average at the end of Key Stage 1, particularly in writing, but, by the end of Key Stage 2, standards are close to average in English, mathematics and science. This is the result of the outstanding progress these pupils have made from the end of Key Stage 1. A higher than usual proportion of pupil mobility in Year 6 (over one-third) was a factor that affected the standards pupils attained in 2004. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Provision for personal development and well-being is outstanding. Pupils have exceptionally positive views of their school and they are proud of the opportunities it gives them. Attendance has improved immensely and is now broadly average. Pupils behave courteously to adults and show great respect for each other. They say that lessons are fun and that their teachers support them well.

Pupils have a very good awareness of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. This is partly due to the exemplary provision for them to take part in sports. They are encouraged to have high aspirations, get help in understanding how to achieve these and gain the basic skills needed to get there. Pupils take on additional responsibilities willingly, as a school 'buddy' said, 'I like to make the little ones happy'. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. The very good role models of staff and wide scope of experiences provided, help pupils to see what the world offers and prepare them for their future. That said, their awareness of local tradition is stronger than that of other cultures.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good and promote pupils' good progress. Inspection evidence matches the checks made by the school. It is creditable that a good standard has been maintained despite unavoidable absences and several appointments of inexperienced teachers.

The strongest teaching is seen in the Foundation Stage and Year 6. As a result, children make a really good start and make good progress in their last year in the school. The particular strengths include outstanding relationships, good subject knowledge in the main, effective classroom management and good use of support staff. Consequently, pupils enjoy their lessons, concentrate well for long periods and benefit from the extra help. Specialist teachers promote consistently good learning in areas such as music, physical education and science. This also leads to exemplary work outside lessons, particularly in physical education and singing.

However, there is much variation in the quality of assessment and how it is used to aid planning. Where it is best, it allows teachers to match work well to the needs of the pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities; all of whom go on to make good progress. In the junior support base, high quality teaching means that progress in some instances is outstanding. Nevertheless, inconsistencies in marking in most classes mean that progress in areas such as writing is slower than it should be.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. All legal requirements are met. The school knows the needs of its pupils very well and rightly places a very strong emphasis on personal development. This is highly effective. At the core of this work are the exemplary opportunities provided through the exceptionally wide range of out-of-school activities. These play a major part in developing children's skills, attitudes and self-esteem. Due credit must be given to the excellent, wide provision made for sport. This work makes a great contribution to the first class provision for learners' health and safety development. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are provided for well and there is equality of opportunity for all children in the school. The school is becoming aware of missed opportunities for children to use their literacy and numeracy skills in the full range of subjects. This stalls the pace at which basic skills can improve, particularly in writing.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care, guidance and support for pupils are good. Provision for children's care is exemplary. The children know that they are at the heart of this school and all staff work very hard to ensure that they feel safe, secure and happy. The exceptionally positive climate for learning which the staff have achieved has allowed the children to make substantial progress as they journey through the school. A school council member said 'Everyone in this school has talents – and this school helps them all'. Health and safety procedures are clear, and there are good arrangements in place for child protection.

Guidance and support for children's academic progress is satisfactory; while there is a very comprehensive tracking system, information from this is not used effectively enough to form clear targets for improving children's work. Children do not know in sufficient detail what they have to do to improve or what they have done well that they can build on.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Inspection findings judge leadership and management to be good, including that in the Foundation Stage. There are some outstanding features of leadership. In the words of a governor 'The headteacher has spread sunshine through the school'. Together

with subject leaders, support staff and governors, she has built a vibrant staff community and led impressive improvements in the school environment, resources and conditions for learning; all of which are outstanding. Pupils' well-being is at the heart of the school. Staff work very hard to include everyone and maintain the very high quality care and personal development that removes barriers. Governors carry out their responsibilities fully and with dedication. The school takes good account of what pupils and parents have to say and acts on their views. Pupils and parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. Very good links with external agencies rightly focus attention on pupils who need help. This increases the support available.

Pupil performance is effectively tracked. However, the school's good assessment information is not used well enough to aid teaching plans or to raise standards in writing. There are also inconsistencies in marking and these do not help pupils to improve their work.

Inspection findings match the school's self-evaluation overall. The capacity for further improvement is good; demonstrated recently in the school's effective recruitment of staff that helped it to sustain and improve pupils' achievement during a period of unavoidable staff absence. The school makes very effective use of grants for building and assures that it gauges best value against the difference it makes for its pupils.

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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?	1	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	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	1	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	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	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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30 November 2005

Dear Pupils

First of all, thank you very much for welcoming the three school inspectors to your school so well. We came to find out if the school is providing you with the education you should have. We really enjoyed talking with you, seeing your work and finding out about the things that you like most. I am delighted to tell you that we decided that you have an excellent school. These are the things that we particularly liked:

the way you enjoy coming to school and love the sports and clubs on offer

the excellent way the school cares for you all

the way you try hard to learn in lessons

your very good behaviour towards each other and your teachers.

We would like to tell you what we have asked your teachers to improve, to make your school even better for you:

Your teachers are pleased with the way that you listen and work so hard. There are two things that we would like them to do to help you to improve your work.

The first one is to help you to improve your writing. The second one is to tell you what you can do to make your work better when they mark your work.

Thank you so much for helping us with the inspection of your school. We hope that you will carry on enjoying learning and helping your teachers to make Pallister Primary School such a good place to be.

Yours sincerely

Delia Hiscock (Lead Inspector)

John Heap and Carole Snee (Additional Inspectors)