



Trimdon Grange Infant and Nursery School

Inspection Report

Better
education
and care

Unique Reference Number 114071
LEA Durham
Inspection number 279306
Inspection dates 16 February 2006 to 17 February 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Arthur Allison

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	Trimdon Grange
School category	Community		Trimdon Station
Age range of pupils	3 to 7		County Durham, TS29 6EY
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01429 880347
Number on roll	78	Fax number	01429 880347
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Ms Kaye Marshall
Date of previous inspection	1 September 2000	Headteacher	Miss Catherine Worton

Age group 3 to 7	Inspection dates 16 February 2006 - 17 February 2006	Inspection number 279306
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one additional inspector.

Description of the school

This is a small community school for children aged 3 to 7. The nursery serves several surrounding villages. Socio-economic deprivation is higher than in most schools, as is the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is similar to most schools, but the percentage of pupils who have a statement of educational needs has risen and is above that of most schools. Very few children come from minority ethnic backgrounds. There are no children who speak English as an additional language. Attainment on entry to school is below average, particularly in language skills.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Trimdon Grange is a good school with some outstanding features. It gives good value for money. The school has tackled the shortcomings identified at the time of the last inspection successfully and has the capacity to improve further. The school's own assessment of its effectiveness is accurate. The school has worked very successfully to improve its partnership with parents, the overwhelming majority of whom have confidence in the school. One parent wrote 'This school is something special.' It is a very welcoming school. The children are friendly and talk enthusiastically about the wide range of opportunities provided, such as the 'Light and Dark Adventure'. They want to do their best and know what they have to do to improve. The school provides excellent levels of care, support and guidance for its pupils. The children's personal and social development is outstanding. Standards are broadly average in reading and writing, but above average in mathematics. Standards have risen since the previous inspection. The trend of improvement is higher than the national trend. All children, including those who have learning difficulties or disabilities, achieve well, and better than that in mathematics. Teaching is good, as is the progress made by children, though boys do not do as well as girls in writing. Teaching is sometimes outstanding. The curriculum is excellent and provides a wealth of rich experiences for all children. In the Foundation Stage, good teaching helps children become confident and independent learners so that standards were close to those expected for their age at the end of the Foundation Stage in 2005 apart from boys' writing.

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

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise boys' attainment in writing by improving planning for pre-writing and writing activities.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

When children start school their attainment is below average. Their skills in mathematics and personal development are slightly more advanced than their language skills. The language skills of boys are weaker than those of girls. All children enjoy school and make good progress in the Foundation Stage, particularly in personal development, language and mathematics. Those who left the Reception class in 2005 attained standards that were similar to those expected for their age, with the exception of boys' writing. Children continue to make good progress as they move up the school. The national test results in 2005 showed that attainment was broadly average in reading and writing, but above average in mathematics. The percentage of children reaching level 2A or higher in mathematics was significantly higher than the national average. Despite making good progress, boys, do not attain as highly as girls in writing and

start from a lower baseline than girls. The school came very close to meeting its challenging targets. The improvement in test results since the previous inspection is above the national trend. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, or who may be gifted or talented, make similar progress to other children because they are identified early and given help of a high quality. All children achieve well, and better than that in mathematics.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The personal development and well-being of all children is excellent. Children demonstrate an extremely mature approach. They talk with great confidence about how much they enjoy school. This is reflected in a level of attendance that is higher than the national average. They are very well informed about how to stay safe and lead healthy lifestyles. One of the decisions made by the School Council was to buy climbing apparatus for the playground. The members of the School Council are very proud of their role and how they represent the views of others. Children take the responsibilities given to them very seriously, particularly when helping other children via the 'buddy' system.

The school prepares the children very well for life-long learning and their economic well-being. This is shown by the way they want to do the best they can, work very well together yet develop a very high level of independence and become very familiar, through daily use, with a range of information and communication technology equipment. Bullying is not a problem. Behaviour is excellent and no time for learning is lost. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is of a high order. A link with a school in Kenya is only one of the many ways the school promotes an understanding of other cultures.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are consistently good, and in Key Stage 1 sometimes outstanding. Teachers plan activities that motivate children and are challenging but pitched at the right level and this enables all children to make good progress from year to year, and, in mathematics, to do better than children in most schools. However, there is insufficient planning of pre-writing and writing activities in order to improve boys' writing. Children have targets and know what they have to do to improve. Teaching assistants make a notable contribution to the quality of teaching and learning. Children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities benefit considerably from the extra help they receive. Outstanding teaching, as in a literacy lesson with children in Year 1, is marked out by the extremely high expectations of the teacher and the challenge of the tasks that inspire children to make excellent progress in their learning.

Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. Children very quickly learn to concentrate. They rapidly gain confidence. Extremely good use is made of the very well equipped outside and indoor accommodation to ensure children have a wealth of learning opportunities. An outstanding feature is the way teachers and teaching assistants promote independent learning yet knowing when to intervene to extend children's learning, for example in a large polar role-play area. Staff and children use digital cameras very confidently to record activities. The pictures are often used to inspire discussion and writing.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum, fulfilling all statutory requirements, is excellent. It meets the needs of all children including those in the Foundation Stage. The visits by staff to Italy and Denmark to observe excellent practice in the education of young children vastly enriches the quality of the school's provision. The emphasis on personal development in specific lessons and in all other activities is an excellent foundation on which the school is building in its drive to raise standards. The curriculum is enriched extremely well by a very wide range of visitors and outings, including the residential experiences about which older children talked enthusiastically. Older children also value the after-school clubs. The way all staff in the Foundation Stage, and increasingly in Key Stage 1, observe what children are doing and capitalise on these observations to extend and enrich the learning experiences is outstanding. For example, the use of a digital microscope to observe closely a penguin made by a professional potter enhanced the quality of the children's own clay models.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school provides an excellent level of care, guidance and support for all children. The school has high quality procedures to ensure that staff and children are safe. Children know that if they have any concerns they will be taken very seriously, so they become very confident about sharing their feelings and ask for help as necessary. Child protection systems are appropriate and staff undertake regular training.

Children who have learning difficulties receive high quality help, as do those who may be gifted or talented. Children have targets so that they know what they have to do to improve. The partnership with parents is outstanding. Induction to the nursery is tailored on an individual basis to best meet the needs of the parents and the child. The parents are given a wealth of advice on how to help their children at home as well as information on progress and targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. Under the dynamic and visionary guidance of the headteacher, with the support of the recently appointed assistant headteacher,

all staff are united in their determination to drive up standards. A key feature is the way the headteacher identifies the strengths of all staff, for example through focused observations of their work in classrooms, and helps staff to build on these strengths to the benefit of the children. The school promotes equal opportunities very well and deploys teachers and teaching assistants to help raise achievement. This is illustrated by the decision to deploy a part-time teacher to work with children in Year 2, a decision fully endorsed by the governing body, and the deployment of staff and other adults in the Foundation Stage unit.

All the shortcomings identified by the previous inspection have been successfully addressed, illustrating well the school's capacity for further improvement. The improvement in reading standards is above the national trend. Assessment in foundation subjects is now secure and is aimed at enabling more children to attain the higher level 3. Parents are given a wealth of support to enable them to help their children at home. Governors now monitor the work of the school more closely.

The governors know the school well. One governor holds a fortnightly 'surgery' for parents. Systems for self-evaluation are well established, accurate and take account of the views of children and parents. 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	3	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	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	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	2	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	1	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?	1	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	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

Trimdon Grange Infant and Nursery School

Trimdon Grange

Trimdon Station

County Durham

TS29 6EY

20 February 2006

Dear children

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

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

your teachers 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 really enjoy learning and behave extremely well because lessons are so interesting

you listen very carefully to what others in your class say and are so proud about the responsibilities you take on willingly

you thoroughly enjoy taking part in extra activities other than lessons

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

There is one thing that I have asked the school to do to make it better. The school should:

provide more activities in all classes to help the boys do better in writing.

Thank you again for making me so welcome. I am sure you will keep trying to do your very best.

Yours sincerely

Mr Allison

The Inspector