



Ferryhill Station Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 114078
LEA Durham
Inspection number 279307
Inspection dates 2 March 2006 to 3 March 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Arthur Allison

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Chilton Lane
School category	Community		Ferryhill Station
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Ferryhill, County Durham DL17 0DB
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01740 651291
Number on roll	89	Fax number	01740 655040
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Valman Woods
Date of previous inspection	1 October 1999	Headteacher	Mrs Valerie Jago

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 2 March 2006 - 3 March 2006	Inspection number 279307
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one additional inspector.

Description of the school

This is a small school with four mixed-age classes. It serves an area of high social deprivation. Attainment on entry is well below average. Mathematics skills are low. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is high, as is the percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. More pupils join or leave the school after the reception year than in most schools. Very few children come from minority ethnic backgrounds. The school experienced staffing problems which affected the pupils in Years 5 and 6 in 2004-5 and the current teaching team is new to the school.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school with some good features. It gives satisfactory value for money. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school's own thorough assessment of its effectiveness is accurate. Most of the previously identified shortcomings have been tackled successfully. The headteacher has a good vision for the school and there is capacity to improve further. The overwhelming majority of parents have confidence in the school. One parent wrote 'I have had lots of support from teachers and support staff.' The children are friendly and talk enthusiastically about the range of opportunities provided. They want to do well and know what they have to do to improve in the longer term, because targets have been set. They are not however given enough guidance on how to improve in the short term. The school is committed to enabling all pupils to do their best, drawing on outside expertise well to help. The school provides good levels of care, guidance and support for pupils. The children's personal and social development is good.

Provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Children are helped to settle into school and make satisfactory progress. Although standards throughout the school are well below average, attainment on entry is also well below average and all groups of pupils, including those who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make progress and their achievement is satisfactory. In mathematics pupils achieve well. Teaching is satisfactory; it is improving and many pupils have made good progress recently. However, teachers need to provide more planned opportunities for children to write in other subjects. The curriculum is good and provides a rich experience for children, but needs to link work in different subjects more closely

The governors fulfil their responsibilities satisfactorily.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in science by providing more opportunities for improving knowledge and investigative skills and giving the lower attaining pupils more help.
- Raise standards in English by planning more opportunities to practise and extend the skills of writing in subjects other than English
- Improve marking so that pupils are given better guidance on what they have to do to improve

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

The attainment of children starting school is well-below average. Mathematics skills are low. Those who left the Reception class in 2005 attained standards that were well below those expected for children of their age. In 2005 the Key Stage 1 test results were well below those of other schools because few children attained the higher levels. The Key Stage 2 results were well below those of other schools. Despite these low levels of attainment, all pupils make progress and achievement is satisfactory and

good in mathematics. Over 50 per cent of the Year 6 children had learning difficulties and during the year had several teachers because of problems beyond the control of the school. Nevertheless, the results were better in English and mathematics than in 2004 because of a strong focus on these subjects. The results in science showed that children had not made the expected progress. A lower percentage reached the nationally expected standards than in most schools. Achievement is satisfactory, but in mathematics is good because of the lower starting point. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make similar progress to other children because they are identified early and given good help. The school has put strategies in place to raise standards and most children have made good progress recently.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The personal development and well-being of all children is good. Children demonstrate a mature approach. They talk confidently about how they enjoy school. Attendance is broadly average. Children are well informed about how to stay safe and lead healthy lifestyles. The School Council, supported by other people, was successful in requesting the local council to provide traffic calming measure outside the school. The members of the School Council are proud of their role and how they represent the views of others. Children take their roles seriously, particularly when helping other children via the 'buddy' system.

The school prepares the children 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 well together and independently and become familiar with a range of information and communication technology equipment. Bullying and racial harassment are not problems. Behaviour is good though a small minority of children with emotional and behavioural difficulties occasionally cause problems. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. A termly 'Arts' weeks, on particular themes, such as China, makes a good contribution to their understanding of other cultures.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning, on the evidence of planning, children's work and the lessons seen, are satisfactory. In some lessons teaching and learning are good and children make good progress, but this has not yet had time to improve test results. In good lessons the pace is brisk and teachers plan interesting activities that are matched carefully to the different groups and fully engage the attention of all learners. Teachers also make good use of recently acquired interactive whiteboards to promote learning, for example, when teaching the properties of 2-dimensional figures in a Year 5 / 6 class. In all lessons teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to teaching and learning. All teachers expect high standards of behaviour and this contributes to

children's satisfactory progress. Marking is satisfactory and helps children to know what they have learned, but there is insufficient guidance on what children need to do to improve. Also, teachers do not always write in the style the school teaches so do not provide examples for children to emulate. Planning is satisfactory, but there is a need to plan more opportunities for speaking, listening and writing in other subjects to help raise attainment in English.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum, which fulfils all statutory requirements, is good. It meets the needs of all children, including those in the Foundation Stage. The emphasis on personal development in all activities, not just specific lessons, reflects the school's determination to drive up standards by enabling children to become good learners. The planned curriculum does not identify clearly enough where skills learned in one subject should be practised and extended in another subject. The curriculum is enriched well by a wide range of visitors and visits, including residential experience, which enhance learning. The 'Arts' weeks are a strong feature of the enrichment. Children also benefit from outside expertise, for example, the range of sporting activities provided by a professional football club and the links with a local secondary school. The curriculum helps to prepare children well for life after they leave school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides good care, guidance and support for all children. The school has good procedures to ensure that staff and children are safe, exemplified well by the precautions taken during the current refurbishment of the buildings. Children know that if they have any worries they will be taken seriously so they have the confidence to ask for help when they need it. Child protection systems are appropriate and staff undertake regular training.

Children who may be vulnerable or who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities or join the school after the reception year receive good help. The school exceeded its challenging target for English in 2005 and came close to meeting the target for mathematics. The appointment of a learning mentor is a recent example of additional support for children to help them achieve as well as possible. The Family Learning Project enables parents to help their children at home.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Under the perceptive guidance of the headteacher, the newly appointed deputy headteacher and all other staff are working well together to raise standards. The headteacher saw the need for better planning that matched activities more closely to prior learning and strategies to improve children's behaviour. As a result most children have made good progress recently,

partly because behaviour is good. Three of the four teachers are new to the school. They have concentrated on their class teaching responsibilities, but are gradually taking on the roles of subject leaders. The school promotes equal opportunities and deploys teachers and teaching assistants to help raise achievement. This is well illustrated by the involvement of all Key Stage 1 staff in guided reading activities in Key Stage 2 when children in Key Stage 1 have gone to lunch.

Most of the shortcomings identified by the previous inspection have been addressed, illustrating the school's capacity for further improvement. The main improvement is in the percentage of children who attain the nationally expected level 4 or higher in English. The school's aims are now clearly focused on raising achievement. Activities are more closely matched to pupils' prior attainment and what children should know or be able to do by the end of the lesson is made clear.

Governors know the school well and contribute to discussions about standards. Systems for self-evaluation are well established and take account of the views of parents and pupils. Governors manage the school's finances carefully and follow up spending decisions to ensure 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?	3	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	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	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?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	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	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	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?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	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	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	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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6 March 2006

Dear Children

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

I can see why you are proud of your school and enjoy coming because:

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 lot of extra activities, including visits

your teachers and other adults in the school work hard to help you to do your best

your headteacher knows what the school should do to help you to do better and the other teachers and adults fully support her in this.

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

help you to do better in science by giving you extra help

help you to do better in English by giving you opportunities to practise your speaking, listening and writing skills in other subjects

tell you what you need to do to improve when marking your work

Thank you again for making me welcome. Keep trying to do your very best at all times.

Yours sincerely

Mr Allison

The inspector