



Shotton Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 114152
LEA Durham
Inspection number 279324
Inspection dates 7 December 2005 to 8 December 2005
Reporting inspector Ms Christine Graham

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

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|------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Type of school | Primary | School address | Grange Terrace |
| School category | Community | | Shotton Colliery |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 11 | | Durham, County Durham |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed | Telephone number | 0191 5262006 |
| Number on roll | 420 | Fax number | 0191 5172198 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body | Chair of governors | Mr John Scullion |
| Date of previous inspection | 1 November 1999 | Headteacher | Mrs Anne Bradshaw |

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Shotton Primary School is a large primary school serving the former mining villages of Shotton and Haswell. Both villages are areas of economic deprivation; the percentage of pupils who claim free school meals is much higher than the national average. Almost all pupils are white British. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is in line with national averages, but the number of pupils with statements of special educational need is significantly higher. The school has nursery provision and an arrangement with a local, private, day care provider, which arranges care on site after school.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school judged overall effectiveness as good. Inspectors found it to be good with some outstanding features. The school has a caring and supportive ethos which provides a good foundation for teaching and learning. Pupils' behaviour is excellent. The quality of teaching is good. Pupils enter school with below average levels of attainment. Good teaching in the Foundation Stage enables pupils to make good progress. This good progress continues during the early years of school and, as a result, attainment is in line with national averages by the end of Year 2. Results at the end of Year 6 are still below national averages; however, work seen during the inspection indicates that pupils make good progress.

The curriculum is good and considerably enriched by extra curricular activities, visits and events. Care and support for pupils is strength of the school but marking currently provides too little guidance for pupils on how to improve the quality of their writing. Leadership and management are good with significant strengths, notably the leadership of the headteacher. The Governors are well informed and effective. The school has successfully addressed the issues raised in the previous inspection; capacity for further improvement is good. The school provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of pupils' writing across the curriculum by focusing on spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and improving. The last inspection report judged teaching to be good but pupils learning and standards as requiring some improvement. The new headteacher and staff recognised this and have put in place effective strategies to improve learning. Children enter nursery with standards below those expected for their age. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage due to good teaching and an effective curriculum. This good progress continues and by the end of Key Stage 1 standards are in line with national averages. Pupils in Key Stage 2 continue to make good progress but the attainment of the oldest pupils is affected by weaknesses the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. As a result, although this much better progress is raising standards in Key Stage 2, its impact is not yet fully reflected in achievement in national tests at the end of Year 6. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress due to good teaching and the effective support provided by staff.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Provision for personal development is outstanding. Pupils enjoy coming to school and make the most of all that it offers. Their behaviour in and outside of lessons is

exemplary. Attitudes to learning are very positive. Pupils know their opinions are listened to and know who to talk to if there is a problem. This helps them to get a long with each other very well.

The greater majority of pupils attend school regularly and are very punctual. The school works hard to encourage the small minority who are frequently absent.

Pupils value opportunities to participate in the running of the school. The very new school council are well trained and enthusiastic about their role. Pupils know this is a school where every child matters and people listen to each other. Pupils are developing valuable skills for the future, for example, they write a letter of application and are interviewed if they wish to become a 'Buddy'.

The provision for personal, social and moral education is good. The programme for cultural development is improving, with good plans to widen pupil experience of other lifestyles. Staying safe and healthy eating is promoted in a number of ways. Pupils appreciate the range of clubs and extra activities on offer.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching is usually good and sometimes better. Many staff are new to the school since the last inspection. Careful induction and training ensure that all staff fully understand the importance the school's leadership places on pupils' learning and the ways in which this should be developed. In the best lessons, teaching is engaging and dynamic. Appropriate and exciting resources, including information and communication technology (ICT), are used effectively to make learning more meaningful to pupils. Teachers plan lessons carefully and the developing use of assessment ensures that learning meets individual needs and that activities are interesting and relevant. Teaching assistants provide good support to pupils. The caring and supportive ethos in school provides a good basis for learning. Pupils are confident that any problems they have with their work will be quickly sorted out. Pupils are keen to learn and work hard. They are given frequent opportunities to work independently, in pairs or as part of a group. Older pupils are learning to evaluate the quality of their work and improve it. Although teaching and learning is now good, some pupils have gaps in previous learning which are preventing them progressing as well as they could. Marking of pupils' work gives clear direction on how to further improve current learning but too little attention is currently given to correcting weaknesses in grammar, spelling and punctuation.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a good curriculum for pupils of all ages. It covers all statutory requirements and ensures that pupils' personal, social and health education is well promoted. There is a wide range of sporting activities and the curriculum is enriched

by a good range of extra-curricular activities. The very popular 'Golden Time' is planned to meet the needs and interests of pupils and enrich the curriculum

The use of curriculum time is well matched to the needs of individual subjects. A recent decision to increase the amount of time given to the teaching of reading has been very successful in raising attainment across the school. Good early work on developing the links between subjects in order to provide a more flexible and creative way of teaching the curriculum is an appropriate and positive development.

Changes to the curriculum have been supported by the provision of good quality, exciting resources. The school building has been extensively refurbished to maximise learning opportunities. Small practical or individual learning areas are used effectively by staff and pupils to meet learning needs. Lessons are enriched by educational visits and visitors to the school. ICT is used well in all subjects.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school cares for, and supports, its pupils very well. Procedures for health and safety, risk assessment and child protection are very thorough. Pupils learn in a safe and secure environment. They recognise and value this. Parents' surveys are also very positive both about the care provided for children and about the support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school works in partnership with a number of other agencies and has a developing programme of parents' courses and events.

The staff team work hard to develop this distinctive and caring ethos. They create a very positive environment for pupils both in terms of their learning and their social and emotional development. The 'Place to Be' mentor and other support staff make a considerable contribution to pupils' welfare, helping them to feel safe and secure. As a result of this high level of care, there are few incidents of bullying or poor behaviour and those that do occur are taken seriously and dealt with quickly and effectively.

Teachers give helpful advice and support to help pupils overcome difficulties. Pupils notice this and feel staff really help them to understand. The good relationships within school produce confident learners who are happy to explain their ideas or ask for help with problems. However, although pupils' work is carefully marked to take account of the main learning in the lesson, too little attention is currently given to correcting weaknesses in the basic skills.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The quality of leadership and management is good with some very good features. The headteacher, in partnership with the effective deputy headteacher, provides outstanding leadership.

The headteacher is a very dynamic leader. She has a very clear focus on pupil attainment and continuous improvement. Since her appointment, she has successfully steered the school through a period of great change in order to place pupil learning at the forefront of the school's work. There have been major changes to teaching and learning, curriculum and staffing. These have been very well managed, based on rigorous monitoring and evaluation and appropriately supported by an effective programme of staff training and development, the appointment of new and appropriately qualified staff and the provision of good quality and effective resources. These changes are part of her long term plan for the school and their success can be seen in the much improved achievement at Key Stage 1 and the good and improving progress at Key Stage 2.

This period of change has at times been difficult, but the effective communication of ideas and values together with secure induction procedures for staff new to the school have ensured that the whole team now share the headteacher's desire for continuous improvement.

School self evaluation procedures are rigorous, effective and clear to all. They are appropriately focussed on further improving the quality of learning and raising attainment.

- Middle managers know their subjects well. They plan and deliver effective improvements to the curriculum and are clear about the strengths and weaknesses of their subjects. However, they are currently given too few opportunities to measure the impact of their work on pupil attainment.

The governing body has a good understanding of the school. Governors are well informed about all aspects of school life including curriculum. Although supportive of the leadership team, governors contribute fully to decision making and keep a critical eye on how the school is performing, placing learning and care for children at the heart of decision making. Effective strategies are in place to support governors new to the role.

The school is well managed. Improvements to the building have significantly extended learning opportunities. The school gives good value for money.

The capacity for further improvement is good.

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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 |
|--|-----------------------|--------------|

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? | 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? | 3 | 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 | 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 | 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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8 December 2005

Dear Children

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. We really enjoyed our visit.

We thought your behaviour was excellent. You enjoy learning and listen very carefully to your teachers who provide very interesting lessons. You are very sensible and enjoy doing jobs around the school. You know a great deal about how to stay healthy and keep safe. Your school looks after you very well and provides lots of help when you have a problem or feel a little upset. You told us you are very proud of your school and we agree with you. It is a school to be proud of. Lots of your parents replied to our questionnaires and they told us that they think the school gives you a good education.

Mrs Bradshaw is a very good headteacher. She works hard to make sure you learn as much as possible. All the teaching in your school is good and because of this you make good progress. Although you all enjoy learning, some of you are too careless when you are writing. You do not always remember spelling rules and patterns, your handwriting is often very badly formed and some people put capital letters in the middle of words. Your writing is very interesting but sometimes very hard to understand because you forget to use punctuation. We think you can do much better than this and we have asked your teachers to show you where you make these mistakes and help you to put them right.

Although we are sure that you all enjoy coming to school, a very small number stay away from school too often. Children who miss school get behind with their work and miss very important learning. We would like you all to come to school as much as possible. Thank you for talking to us and helping us find out about your school.

Best Wishes

The Inspection Team