



Byerley Park Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 114189
LEA Durham
Inspection number 279331
Inspection dates 16 May 2006 to 17 May 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Andrew Margerison

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Greenfield Way
School category	Community		Newton Aycliffe
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		County Durham, DL5 7LE
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01325 300598
Number on roll	249	Fax number	01325 311560
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Ian Banks
Date of previous inspection	1 September 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Alison Gargan

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
4 to 11	16 May 2006 - 17 May 2006	279331

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Byerley Park Primary School is situated in Newton Aycliffe near Durham. It is similar in size to most primary schools. The local area is generally socio-economically above average. As a result, the proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is below average. When children start at the school, their attainment has been above average, but the profile of the intake is gradually changing, and this year pupils started school with broadly average skills. The number of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. Most pupils are of White-British origin and very few have English as an additional language.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school giving good value for money. The inspection endorses the view of most parents that pupils achieve well academically and personally. This is because pupils are generally taught well and provided with a good range of opportunities and experiences to develop their skills. Lessons are well organised with a strong focus on developing pupils' basic skills and teachers use questions well to involve pupils in lessons. They are well cared for and supported in their work. As a result, pupils have positive attitudes to learning and their behaviour is excellent. Consequently, they learn at a good pace and reach above average standards in Years 2 and 6. Led by the headteacher and governors, the school has recently begun to fundamentally revise its approach to teaching, learning and leadership based on good systems to evaluate its own work. As a result, the school, working closely as a team, has generally identified its strengths and weaknesses accurately. Although these initiatives are largely in the early stages of implementation, they have already begun to have a positive effect on the way that pupils learn. However, there is more scope to monitor their impact on pupils' achievement and teaching as there are inconsistencies in the way that these initiatives have been adopted in different classes across the school. Teachers, particularly in Key Stage 2, do not always mark pupils' work rigorously enough to help them improve their work, or expect high enough standards of spelling, grammar and punctuation. In addition, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to practise the full range of their writing and reading skills in all subjects. As a result, not all more able pupils reach the higher levels in reading and writing in Year 6. Nevertheless the school is well placed to continue to develop further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the progress of all more able pupils in reading and writing in Years 3 to 6.
- Develop procedures to monitor the effect of new initiatives on teaching and learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well to reach above average standards in Years 2 and 6. In the Foundation Stage pupils make good progress in all the areas of learning. Most pupils reach the expected levels and a few exceed them. In their personal and social and mathematical development the majority of pupils exceed the expected levels for their age. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make good progress so that standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Virtually all reach the expected levels, with an above average proportion of pupils reaching above the expected levels in reading and writing. This continues the pattern seen over the last five years in the national tests for pupils in Year 2. Since 2001, standards have also been above average in English, mathematics and science in Year 6. Test results showed that the school met its challenging targets.

Standards in science in 2005 were above average, but were below in English. This was primarily due to a number of pupils who reached the higher levels in Year 2 not reaching above average standards in Year 6. However, inspection evidence now shows that, almost all pupils achieve well and make good progress in Years 3 to 6, so that standards are again above average in English, mathematics and science. A minority of potentially above average pupils, who, despite making steady progress overall, could do better in reading and writing. However, their speaking and listening skills are good and the proportion of pupils working at the above average level in science is very impressive. Pupils with learning difficulties are well supported by skilled teaching assistants so they make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Their behaviour is excellent in class, around school, and at play. Because of this, all the school's activities flow smoothly and lessons are uninterrupted. This has a positive effect on the quality of learning. Pupils have good attitudes to their work, shown in their clear enjoyment of and commitment to learning tasks. A visiting instructor as part of the school's Health and Safety Week commented, 'Aren't these great children to work with?' In the many varied activities taking place, pupils from reception to Year 6 showed how well they concentrate, conduct themselves sensibly, and cooperate well with others. They learn to act safely and understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle on their overall well-being. To recognise its work in this area, the school has been recommended by the local authority for a Healthy School award. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Older pupils take responsibility seriously, and the School Council feel that helping others through improving the school makes them feel good about themselves. However, there is more scope for a wider range of pupils to be involved in day to day responsibilities. Attendance is above average, and this also contributes to pupils' good achievement.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. In all classes, teachers have very clear expectations of pupils' behaviour and their instructions are clear and explicit. As a result, lessons are very orderly and calm. Teachers also use questions well to involve pupils in discussions, to check their learning and to encourage them to expand upon their ideas. This makes a positive contribution to pupils' good speaking and listening skills. Activities in English and mathematics have a strong emphasis on developing pupils' basic skills and challenge pupils of different abilities and extend their learning well. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good and provides pupils with a good range of interesting activities in all the areas of learning. Together, these are key contributory factors to the consistently good standards pupils reach. In order to improve pupils'

progress the school revised its approach to the marking of pupils' work in 2004. Although there are some good examples where teachers' marking really helps pupils improve their work, this is inconsistent, particularly in Key Stage 2. In addition, teachers' expectations of spelling, grammar and punctuation are not always high enough in all subjects. As a result, some more able pupils become careless and the quality of their work does not always reflect their ability so that they do not reach the standard they should in English.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is well matched to the needs of learners of all ages, and meets statutory requirements. It focuses well on the development of pupils' basic literacy, numeracy, science and information and communication technology (ICT) skills. Recently, teachers have been encouraged by school leaders to make more use of all subjects for pupils to write in different styles and to practice the basic skills they have learnt in English lessons. However, there is more scope to exploit these opportunities to extend pupils' reading and writing skills further and to link subjects together to give the curriculum more coherence. The school effectively promotes a healthy lifestyle through a range of enrichment activities and the curriculum is being adapted to give greater attention to developing pupils' personal, social and health education. Pupils enjoy a wide variety of outings. Theme weeks and visitors to school enhance pupils' learning well. However, the leadership team have rightly identified there is more scope to develop the provision for gifted and talented pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, support and guidance are good and pupils are well cared for. Staff are vigilant in ensuring that pupils adopt safe practices, and in planning systems to ensure their protection. A number of parents commented positively on how well the school looks after their children. All required statutory procedures are in place, and staff monitor pupils with potential health problems carefully. For example, when pupils took part in activities on the newly-cut grass, staff made sure that those who suffer from hay fever had access to appropriate medication. The staff use the reward system well to encourage pupils to do their best, and regularly discuss with them how to improve their work. However, guidance through marking of pupils' work, whilst satisfactory overall, is inconsistent between classes.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school is well led and managed. The governors, headteacher and senior managers have a clear vision for the school. In the last five terms they have implemented a new leadership structure and a range of other initiatives designed to improve the progress pupils make whilst maintaining the good standards that have been a notable feature

of the school since the last inspection. This vision is based on effective school review procedures that involve all staff, pupils and parents. As a result, the school's view of itself is generally accurate, although inspectors feel that the school has been too modest in its overall grading of its own performance. Overall, the new approaches the school has introduced have begun to be effective in improving pupils' progress, particularly in Years 3 to 6. However, the school has not established a rigorous process to monitor how these initiatives have been implemented across the school. As a result, there are inconsistencies in the thoroughness that individual staff have adopted them which has lessened their impact on the progress that some pupils make. Overall, the headteacher has developed a shared sense of teamwork among staff that is focused on raising standards so that the school is well placed to improve further.

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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	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?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	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

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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The School Council

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16 May 2006

Dear Pupils

Thank you for welcoming us to your school this week for the inspection. Thank you for lending us your books, talking to us and letting us join in with some of your lessons. We would particularly like to thank the school council, who gave us a very good insight into their work and how you contribute to the work of your school.

We agree with you and your parents that you go to a good school. We were particularly impressed by your attitudes to learning, your excellent behaviour and the standards you reach in reading, writing and mathematics. We think that you are taught well and that Mrs Gargan, the senior staff and governors know what your school does well and how they can improve it more.

However, we have asked them to make sure that you all do as well as you can in reading and writing, particularly in Years 3 to 6, and develop ways of checking that any new ideas they introduce are adopted fully by all the staff.

Thank you again for helping us and best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Andy Margerison Eric Jackson

(Lead inspector)(Team Inspector)