



Prudhoe West First School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 122220
LEA Northumberland
Inspection number 281196
Inspection dates 14 February 2006 to 15 February 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Andrew Scott

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

Type of school	First	School address	West Road
School category	Community		Prudhoe
Age range of pupils	3 to 9		Northumberland, NE42 6HR
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01661 832288
Number on roll	327	Fax number	01661 830825
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Neil Paxton
Date of previous inspection	1 June 2000	Headteacher	Mr Alan Keenleyside

Age group 3 to 9	Inspection dates 14 February 2006 - 15 February 2006	Inspection number 281196
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a large first school which serves a community with average socio-economic circumstances. Nearly all pupils come from white British families, although a few pupils do not have English as their first language. The attainment of the pupils when they join the Nursery is a little below average and the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The school provides sports facilities for its community and hosts arts and theatrical events.

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. This judgement matches the school's own accurate evaluation of its effectiveness. The provision is excellent in the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception classes); the children make very rapid progress and most of them exceed the standards expected for their age. Pupils continue to make very rapid progress throughout Years 1 to 4, as a consequence of exemplary teaching, and reach exceptionally high standards by the time they are ready for middle school. The older pupils' written work is very good but it could still be improved because it is not as good as their reading or their mathematics. Although the teaching is excellent, the marking of written work does not always show the pupils how to improve. The pupils are cared for, guided and supported so that their personal development is excellent. The relaxed yet disciplined atmosphere around the school makes for happy, considerate and confident pupils. They benefit from an outstanding curriculum. The leadership and management of the school are excellent. In particular, the headteacher provides exceptionally clear vision which is shared by the teaching staff. As a result, the school has sustained its high standards since the last inspection and shows that it is capable of continued improvement. It provides excellent value for money.

not applicable

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards further in writing in Years 3 and 4.
- Ensure that the marking of pupils' written work always shows them clearly how to improve.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Pupils' overall achievement is excellent. They make very rapid progress throughout the school and overall standards are very high. On entry to the Nursery, the children's attainment is slightly below average but, by the time they enter Year 1, most of them have exceeded the standards expected for their age.

By Year 2, standards are well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. In Year 4, standards are very high in reading, mathematics and science. Standards in writing are well above average but not quite as high as in reading or in mathematics and science.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those learning English as an additional language make the same excellent progress as other pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Pupils make great strides in their personal development, develop an acute awareness of right and wrong, and their behaviour is exemplary. As a result the school is a friendly, happy and safe place. Pupils have an excellent rapport with all staff and with one another; thoughtful cooperation and self-reliance are features of most lessons. Pupils love coming to school, and thoroughly enjoy learning because they find lessons interesting and because teachers 'make them fun'. This helps to explain the above average attendance.

Pupils have a wide range of cultural experiences to help them understand the diverse world outside, for example, the study and painting of African landscapes. They acquire a strong sense of community. They fundraise for charities, take their responsibilities as playground buddies very seriously and, through the school council, significantly influence the school's development.

Pupils learn the basic skills necessary to succeed in life. They gain a great deal from the people they meet on educational visits or who visit the school. They have an excellent understanding of personal safety and what constitutes a healthy lifestyle through the constant emphasis on sensible eating and physical exercise.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching and learning are outstanding overall and particularly so in the Reception and Year 4 classes. Classrooms are vibrant places in which to learn. The knowledge and enthusiasm of teachers inspire pupils to pay close attention and motivate them to learn. High expectations of work and behaviour mean that pupils knuckle down responsibly to their tasks and take a genuine pride in their work. Teachers present new work skilfully, using resources such as interactive whiteboards effectively to reinforce learning.

Teachers' planning is very thorough, ensuring that pupils build methodically on their previous learning by matching work closely to the needs of individuals. The teaching of pupils with learning difficulties is excellent, with effective and sensitive support from teaching assistants. However, the teachers' marking of written work does not always show pupils exactly how they can improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding. The overall framework provides excellent continuity of learning in all subjects. There is a constant focus on the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology, and these skills are extremely well

developed through other subjects. In addition, the curriculum is very well enriched with exciting experiences that motivate pupils, such as an Ancient Greek Day. There are many activities after school that pupils appreciate, especially in the recently built sports facility.

The curriculum is designed so that all pupils benefit equally. Teachers work very hard as a team to ensure equal provision for all pupils in a particular year group. Individual learning plans for pupils with learning difficulties match their needs very well and the most able pupils usually have more difficult work than other pupils, which extends their learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school provides excellent care, guidance and support for pupils. Pupils appreciate that staff take a great interest in them and that their views are valued. They say that the staff are always helpful and that this is what makes such a very good school. There are comprehensive systems for child protection and to ensure health and safety. All school policies are followed rigorously, actively supported and monitored by governors. Potential risk in activities is carefully considered before allowing pupils to participate, as in the very sensible arrangements for safe play during breaks and at lunchtime.

Regular and accurate assessment enables the staff to set pupils individual targets and pupils' progress towards them is monitored closely. Learning difficulties are quickly identified and very good support is given to pupils to help them to do as well as they can. The school reports frequently to parents and works very closely with other agencies to ensure pupils' personal and educational needs are fully met.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher's enthusiastic, astute and dynamic leadership inspires his colleagues and ensures a high quality education for all pupils. All staff share his commitment to high achievement, especially the deputy headteacher whose personal teaching provides an example for other teachers to emulate. This excellent partnership has ensured that the teaching staff continuously update and improve their professional practice. This has meant that the high performance seen at the last inspection has been sustained.

Even in an excellent school such as this, there are still things which could be better and this school has a very clear understanding of its strengths and areas requiring attention. The teaching staff are well aware, for instance, that pupils' writing, though well above average, could still be further improved. Again, the marking of written work, though good overall, could still be improved. Action plans to tackle these issues are extensive and are based on the school's thorough monitoring of lessons. Teachers' individual performance targets are tightly linked to whole-school priorities so that there is a cohesive approach to bringing about change.

The school values the views of pupils and parents highly and uses them to shape its strategic planning. Governance is exemplary and the governors make an outstanding contribution to the life of the school. They have a very good awareness of the school's strengths and weaker points and provide very effective challenge and support to the headteacher and staff. Finances are expertly managed and the headteacher is particularly successful in attracting funding for specific projects such as its excellent new sports hall. The school's record of development shows clearly that it is in very good shape to develop even 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?	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	1	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	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?	1	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	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	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	1	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1	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?	1	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	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	1	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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Mr Alan Keenleyside

Prudhoe West First School

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Northumberland

NE42 6HR

15 February 2006

Dear children

Thank you for the part you played in the inspection of your school. My colleagues and I very much enjoyed meeting you and getting to know your school.

Like you, we think your school is a special place. We especially liked the fact that:

you work very hard and make such excellent progress

you are very sensible, thoughtful and get on extremely well together

your teachers expect the best from you and set you challenging work

lessons and other activities are often fascinating and full of new information that help you to learn

the staff take excellent care of you and make sure you are healthy and safe.

However, your school would be even better if:

you improve your writing

the teachers always show you clearly how to improve when they mark your written work.

I wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Scott

Inspector