



Corporation Road Community Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 134075
LEA Darlington
Inspection number 282447
Inspection dates 13 July 2006 to 14 July 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	Corporation Road
School category	Community		Darlington
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		County Durham, DL3 6AR
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01325 244940
Number on roll	310	Fax number	01325 376702
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Carole Tuckey
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable	Headteacher	Mrs Joyce Jones

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
4 to 11	13 July 2006 - 14 July 2006	282447

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Corporation Road Community School is a large primary school in Darlington. It was formed in April 2003 by the amalgamation of separate nursery, infant and junior schools on the same site. A major building programme has been completed to link the schools together and a second phase is due to start soon. The area is socio-economically below average so an above average proportion of pupils are eligible for free school meals. Most pupils are White British, but about a quarter are from other ethnic backgrounds, mainly Bangladeshi. For many of these pupils, English is their second language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. The headteacher who was appointed to oversee the amalgamation is due to retire in August of this year and from September the deputy headteacher will be the acting headteacher until the newly appointed headteacher takes up post in January 2007. The school is part of an Intensive Support Programme provided by the local authority. The school was recently awarded the Artsmark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

This school has strengths, but does not provide an adequate education for all its pupils so that achievement overall, relative to pupils' starting points, is not consistently good enough.

Consequently, in accordance with Section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required to the standards and provision in the Foundation Stage, pupils' attendance, pupils' progress in English and the role of subject leaders in leading aspects of school improvement.

However, there are signs that the school is beginning to improve. Pupils' achievement in mathematics and science has improved since 2003. Although there is a small but significant group of pupils who create problems in classes and around school for other pupils, behaviour has begun to improve this year with a considerable fall in exclusions. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, but variable. In some classes teaching is good and pupils make good progress. However, the management of pupils' behaviour and teachers' use of the assessment information is not consistent enough to ensure that activities are always accurately matched to the full range of ages and abilities in each class. In addition, pupils do not have enough opportunities to use their basic literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills in other subjects. There is also a group of pupils whose attendance is well below average. As a result, a significant number of children do not make sufficient progress in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 to 6, particularly in English, so that standards in Reception, Years 2 and 6 are below average. Since the school was opened the headteacher and the deputy headteacher have worked tirelessly to create a whole school ethos. They have successfully established good systems for evaluating the day to day work of the school and in assessing and tracking pupils' progress. However, until recently subject leaders have not been involved enough in school improvement. This is changing because they are now taking on a more proactive role. The school has the capacity to improve due to the clarity of vision of the deputy headteacher, the governors' good understanding of the school and the strong support programme being provided by the local authority to assist the school until the new headteacher takes up post. The school does not provide value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' progress in English by using assessment information to involve pupils more in their own learning and to ensure that work consistently reflects the range of abilities in each class.
- Extend the role that subject leaders play in leading aspects of school improvement.
- Ensure that teaching strategies in the Foundation Stage are better matched to the way that young children learn.

- Plan more opportunities for pupils to use their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in other subjects.
- Implement more rigorously the procedures for improving attendance.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Pupils' achievement overall is inadequate. Pupils start school in the Nursery with standards well below average, particularly in their language skills. Most children make steady progress in all the areas of learning, but about a third do not make the expected progress in communication, language and literacy and mathematics so that standards are below those expected at the end of Reception. As a result, teachers in Years 1 and 2 have too much to do to make up the lost ground so that although pupils make steady progress, standards in Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics are below average. Standards in Year 6 have been below average in 2004 and 2005, but the school's results show that pupils achieved satisfactorily in mathematics and science. In English, the picture is less encouraging. Standards have been below average for the last two years, and in 2005 pupils' progress declined sharply on 2004 to be below average. This year, the school's own assessment data shows that about a quarter of pupils in Year 6 have not achieved well enough since Year 3, particularly in reading, so standards in English are again below average. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress due to the additional support they receive.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' personal development including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. The youngest pupils are keen to explore new learning and those in Years 1 to 6 say that lessons are generally interesting. Their favourite activities are often those that take place after school and educational visits. A planned programme of work helps pupils know which foods are healthy and about the importance of exercise and being safe outside of school. Almost all pupils say that they enjoy school and most parents agree with this. However, attendance is below average because a few parents fail to bring their children to school regularly enough. The vast majority of pupils behave well in lessons and try their best. There is no evidence of racial tensions in the school, but there is an amount of poor behaviour in school among a small group of mainly older pupils, including some bullying, which has resulted in the relatively high number of exclusions. Pupils are given opportunities to contribute to the work of the school, largely through the school council, but the council are not sure that their ideas are always taken on board by the school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. In the classes where teachers have high expectations of pupils and provide well matched tasks, pupils make good progress, but this is not the case in all classes. As a result, pupils' progress, particularly in English, as they move through the school is inconsistent which, over time, results in a group of pupils not achieving well enough. Lessons are normally appropriately paced and structured and teachers generally share the objectives with pupils at the start so they know what they will be learning about. There is little major inappropriate behaviour, but teachers' management of low level disruptive behaviour is inconsistent. In addition, questions are not always used well enough to involve all of the pupils or to extend pupils' understanding. As a result, pupils are not always sure about what is expected of them so the flow of class discussions is broken by some pupils calling out answers and others take a backseat or lose concentration. Teachers use assessment information to group pupils but not all use it well enough to ensure that activities always reflect the needs of all the pupils of different abilities. For example, in some classes, too many similar work sheets are used and not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to work on their own to extend their skills. This is particularly the case in the Foundation Stage where activities, particularly those to develop pupils' language and literacy skills, are not always appropriate to meet the learning of young learners. Throughout the school, teachers' marking is not always rigorous enough to tell pupils what they need to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. It is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. However, not enough use is made of linking subjects together to give pupils opportunities to use their basic literacy, numeracy or ICT skills in different contexts. In addition, ICT is under resourced which means that pupils' progress in developing their skills as they move through the school is inconsistent. The school has a good programme to develop pupils' personal, social and health education which is particularly successful in developing pupils' understanding of different cultures and traditions. For example, during the inspection, a whole afternoon for pupils in Years 3 and 4 was about Bangladesh and helped all pupils appreciate the richness of the culture from which a large group of pupils come from. A wide range of visits, visitors and after school activities extends and enriches pupils' learning experiences. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with English as an additional language is satisfactory.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The quality of care and guidance provided by the school is satisfactory. The care taken of pupils is good. All relevant procedures for safeguarding pupils and ensuring their health and safety are in place. Teachers know their pupils and families well and provide the help and advice needed for most pupils to enjoy school. Good arrangements for pupils who have emotional and behavioural difficulties enable them to be fully involved in many aspects of learning. Procedures for improving behaviour are having a positive effect. There have been a few exclusions this term, but this has fallen dramatically of late. However, not enough is being done to improve attendance figures. Strategies exist but are not carried out consistently enough to succeed in getting some parents to bring their children to school regularly. The school has good systems for tracking the progress of pupils from one year to the next but the information is not yet being used to discuss with pupils their own learning targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall, but until recently the headteacher and deputy headteacher and governors have taken the leading roles. Together they have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and have identified the right priorities for further development. Although their overall evaluation of the school as a satisfactory school is not confirmed by the inspection, this is mainly because the school misjudged the degree of underachievement in the Foundation Stage and in English. Faced with the task of bringing the staff of three schools, each with their own styles and philosophies together, they have brought the school a long way and the changes they have implemented are beginning to have a positive effect. However, subject leaders have not been involved enough until the last six months. To address this the school has provided a programme of staff development to improve subject leaders' understanding of the role and their skills as subject leaders and some are beginning support senior managers in raising standards and in driving through school priorities. Nevertheless, the school has the capacity to improve because of the skills of the deputy headteacher, the involvement of governors and the fact that key staff are now involved in developing their subjects. The school is also being aided by a strong package of intensive specialist support provided by the local authority which will help to maintain the pace of change until the new headteacher takes up post in January 2007.

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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?	4	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	4	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	NA	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4	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?	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	NA
The behaviour of learners	3	NA
The attendance of learners	4	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	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?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	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	4	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	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	4	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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The Pupils of Corporation Road Community Primary School

Corporation Road

Darlington

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DL3 6AR

13 July 2006

Dear Pupils

Thank you for welcoming us to your school this week and helping us with the inspection. We enjoyed talking to you and looking at your work. However, after collecting lots of different sorts of information we have decided that your school is not providing all of you with a good enough standard of education. This is because you are not given a good enough start in Nursery and Reception and teaching in the rest of the school varies too much from class to class.

Information the teachers have about your work is not used well enough to make sure that the activities you are given in lessons help all of you do as well as you can. In addition, a few of you miss too much school. As a result, a good number of you do not make the progress you should, particularly in English. However, your senior teachers and the governors know what needs to be improved and they will have the help of the local authority to do it, so we feel that your school can get better quickly. We have asked your headteacher and the governors to:

improve the quality of work in Nursery and Reception

improve the way that teachers use assessment information to make sure that activities lessons are well matched to your abilities, particularly in English

provide more opportunities for you to use your basic literacy, numeracy and ICT skills

improve attendance.

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

Yours sincerely

Andy Margerison Kari Manning Denis Goodchild

(Lead inspector)(Team Inspector)(Team Inspector)