



Linthorpe Community Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 134259
LEA Middlesbrough
Inspection number 282514
Inspection dates 13 June 2006 to 14 June 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Geoffrey Cooper

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Roman Road
School category	Community		Linthorpe
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		Middlesbrough, TS5 6EA
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01642 885222
Number on roll	558	Fax number	01642 885222
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Cllr Stephen Bloundele
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable	Headteacher	Mrs Carolyn Newton

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
3 to 11	13 June 2006 - 14 June 2006	282514

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Linthorpe Community Primary is a large school formed from the recent amalgamation of separate infant and junior schools. Most pupils join the school from the Linthorpe area of Middlesbrough although about 30% come from further afield. Pupils join the school from a wide range of social and economic context, characterised by neither significant educational privilege nor lack of it. About 20% of pupils are entitled to a free school meal, which is broadly average. A similar proportion has identified learning difficulties and/or disabilities. While most pupils are White British, about 25% come from a minority ethnic background. Most of these pupils come from the local Pakistani community. A few come from a refugee background. About 6% of pupils are at an early stage of English language acquisition. Attainment on entry to the Nursery is below average overall. There is a particular weakness in the development of their English language skills. The school serves a very stable community but its popularity has seen a recent increase in the arrival of new pupils.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Overall effectiveness is good with outstanding features. The school's accurate view of its effectiveness is confirmed by inspection evidence and by the overwhelming opinion of parents. The recent amalgamation of two schools has gone very successfully due to the excellent leadership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher, well supported by the staff and governing body. Very good management structures mean there is a secure foundation of good achievement and above average standards. This is because teaching, the curriculum and the care and guidance for pupils are good with some exemplary features.

Children get off to a flying start in the Foundation Stage. Frequently, quite complex barriers to learning are overcome because the good teaching is underpinned by good lesson planning. This is based on the tracking of children's progress, which is excellent. Therefore, teachers know very precisely what children need to learn next. Throughout the rest of the school, pupils continue to make good progress as a result of good teaching and learning. Pupils are clear what they have to learn and because of this remain very focussed throughout lessons. Marking of pupils' work is good so they know what they have to do to improve their work and reach an even higher standard. Pupils' enjoyment of learning is clear from the way they relish the work they are given and the pride they take in their work. Standards in mathematics and science were not as strong as those in English in 2005 but the school knows that its interventions and development priorities are well on course to rectify this.

Staff maintain a very watchful eye on the progress of individuals. Information is used efficiently to ensure that pupils make the progress necessary to achieve their potential. The procedures ensure that all pupils become confident learners. This includes pupils who find learning difficult and who are learning English as a new language. The school is skilled at ensuring pupils quickly become confident in the language of the classroom. By the time they are 11, pupils from the diverse range of backgrounds achieve equally well.

In the outstanding curriculum, innovative planning links subjects in learning themes, allowing pupils to apply their creative, reasoning and literacy skills very effectively. Pupils who find learning hard and who speak English as an additional language have special learning sessions tailored to their needs.

The success of the school is very securely underpinned by its excellent quality of care. Policies and procedures are effective for child protection and for health and safety. Pupils have a good understanding of what the school does to care for them and they understand their own part in staying safe and healthy. Attendance is an area of concern because the attendance rate has fallen, mainly because of extended holidays and attendance at faith festivals. The very positive relationships that exist between pupils and adults are reflected in the high quality of relationships among pupils. Pupils have good opportunities to demonstrate maturity and responsibility. This is a valuable complement to their learning skills, equipping them well for the future. All of this is made possible because the school has very efficient systems to ensure that it runs

smoothly. It is calm and orderly on a day to day basis. Its daily rhythm is well supported by very effective management and financial systems.

Leadership has established a very clear sense of direction, very well supported by the team work and commitment of staff. Equally supportive and committed governors have a full understanding of the school's strengths and monitor the progress of priorities for development. Pupils' good achievement testifies to their enjoyment of school. They have a strong voice in its life and work. They are very well prepared for the rigours of the next stage of education.

Taking account of the school's considerable strengths, its rapid, effective development and the very positive views of parents and pupils, it provides good value for money and has excellent potential for further improvement. The school's mission statement begins, 'At our school every child matters', and this is very visible in all it does.

What the school should do to improve further

- Strive to improve attendance rates.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well by the time they leave the school. They attain standards that are above the national average. Pupils make good progress in lessons. By the end of Year 2, standards are broadly average and above average by the end of Year 6. The school's strength in test results in 2005 was the number who gained average levels throughout the school and the number gaining higher levels in English by the end of Year 6. Many more pupils are now working at higher levels in Year 2 and many more work at a higher level in mathematics in Year 6. Very good tracking and intervention strategies ensure that potentially vulnerable pupils, including those who find learning difficult and those learning English for the first time, make good progress. Challenging but realistic targets are set and achieved. A particular attribute of pupils' good achievement is their very effective learning skills; in listening, answering, asking and thinking. The school has worked hard to cultivate these important features of learning.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development, including pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Good behaviour and positive attitudes create a harmonious community where everyone feels valued and respected. Pupils' understanding of the need to be safe both physically and emotionally and to stay healthy is outstanding. This begins when children first start school; they make rapid gains particularly in building confidence, self esteem and independence, providing a firm foundation for later learning.

Pupils relish the many opportunities they have to contribute to school improvement, fostering a real sense of team spirit across school. Attendance is satisfactory overall

but currently remains below the national average; there remains scope for further improvement.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good in all age groups leading to good learning. Skilled teaching in the Foundation Stage ensures that children have an exciting range of experiences to fire their curiosity and imagination and to develop their skills of independent learning. The very strong emphasis on language and personal skills leads to excellent learning in these areas. Typical teaching strengths throughout the school lie in overall planning and the positive relationships between adults and learners. Teachers and well informed teaching assistants, often supported by outside experts, have a good range of expertise to support pupils who find learning difficult. Progress is constantly assessed and the information well used. Pupils know how to extend their learning because teachers give them good guidance. Teachers insist on high standards of work and presentation and most pupils respond very positively.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding, including exceptional opportunities for pupils to develop their talents and interests through visits, visitors and out-of-school activities. The quality of the curriculum is recognised through the national Artsmark Gold and Activemark awards. The emphasis on active learning supports the development of independent study. Pupils are expected to think for themselves and to make sense of their experiences. New planning has improved the continuity of active learning between Reception classes and Year 1, benefiting those who are not ready for the work that pupils usually do in Year 1.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support for pupils are outstanding. Parents are overwhelmingly confident that their children are well looked after. Extremely effective guidance for academic development is provided. Pupils are strongly aware of what they need to do to improve. The needs of every child are taken very seriously so that they can achieve as well as possible. Excellent communication between staff, parents and other agencies ensures that the needs of all pupils are addressed. Procedures for risk assessment and health and safety provide the basis for a safe, secure place for pupils to work and play in. Pupils say their teachers know them well; they have no hesitation in seeking the help and support of an adult. The support structure is complemented extremely well by older pupils who take very seriously their roles as 'friendship squaddies' and 'peer mediators'.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good with some outstanding features. Rapid success has been made of amalgamation, because of the excellent work of the headteacher and deputy headteacher. Their sense of purpose are shared with and supported by all adults working in the school and by governors. Parents believe 'the school is buzzing'. Good delegation of leadership roles is a strong feature of staff development. An atmosphere of confidence and high morale is transferred readily to pupils with considerable impact on the above average standards they achieve. Very effective strategies weigh up school strengths and development priorities; knowing itself well the school is quick to improve provision. Consequently, teaching is good and improving; innovative developments provide an outstanding curriculum and exemplary care and guidance for pupils. By the time they are ready to leave the school pupils have matured a great deal because of the outstanding provision for their development.

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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?	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?	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	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	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?	2	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?	2	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	2	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	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

Alexandra House

33 Kingsway

London

WC2B 6SE

T 0207 421 6800

F 0207 421 6707

Ofsted helpline

08456 404045

To the pupils of:

Linthorpe Community Primary School

Roman Road

Linthorpe

Middlesbrough

TS5 6EA

13 Jun 2006

Dear Pupils,

The three inspectors had a really enjoyable time in your school. It is a good place to be. Thank you for everything you did to make us feel comfortable and welcome. You told us yours is a good school and we agree. That is also the view of your parents. They are right to have confidence in the school. It is a good school because you are doing well: in your learning about yourself and in the way you learn the skills that you will need as an adult. By the time you leave school, we know you have made good progress and the school has ensured that you speak, read, write and understand mathematics as well as possible and just as important, that you know how to use the skills you have learned.

This doesn't just happen because you work hard. You are taught well, have rich opportunities to learn and your school is particularly good at making sure you make the progress of which you are capable. It is also because you are happy in school. You said so and we agree. It is clear in the classroom, outside school and in the way you talk to teachers and each other. A door was held open for a boy struggling to manage a music stand. 'Thank you,' he said. 'I'll do the same for you some day'. That is typical of the fine way you relate to each other. This doesn't happen by accident. Your teachers have worked extremely hard to make sure you are well cared for. Your school is well led and managed. It has come a long way since the infant and junior schools joined together. A lot of thought has gone into ways in which the school can be made good for you – and Mrs Newton and all the adults working with you continue to plot and plan improvements very thoughtfully.

You need to continue to work hard. You know your school will keep you trying hard. There is one thing we have asked the school to do on your behalf; to make attendance better. Most of you already attend well. It would help school to improve progress further if everyone attended as well as most.

Thank you for all your help and for your interest in what we were doing.

Geoff Cooper (Lead inspector)