



Wessington Primary

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 134532
LEA Sunderland
Inspection number 282603
Inspection dates 12 September 2005 to 12 September 2005
Reporting inspector Mrs Rosemary Rodger

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

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| Type of school | Primary | School address | Lanercost |
| School category | Community | | Washington |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 11 | | NE38 7PY |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed | Telephone number | 0191 2193715 |
| Number on roll | 232 | Fax number | 0191 2193718 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body | Chair of governors | Mrs Dianne Snowdon |
| Date of previous inspection | Not applicable | Headteacher | Mrs Pat Dutton |

| Age group | Inspection dates | Inspection number |
|-----------|--|-------------------|
| 3 to 11 | 12 September 2005 - 12 September 2005 | 282603 |

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

The school opened in 2004 following the amalgamation of two primary schools. This is the school's first inspection. It is an extended school providing before and after school childcare. A children's centre is being built on site and is due to open in 2006. The number of pupils claiming free school meals is above average. This reflects the socially disadvantaged area. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is below average. The majority of pupils are white British with three pupils from minority ethnic heritages, including two asylum seekers in the early stages of learning English. The languages they speak are Nbele and Swahili. These pupils are supported by the ethnic minority achievement grant service. There are a small number of vulnerable pupils.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school with some good features. It provides satisfactory value for money. Owing to the lack of any previous national test data, standards and progress are judged on the basis of the school's own assessment information to be satisfactory. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress and achieve the expected standards by the time they start in Year 1. More able pupils do not always achieve the standards of which they are capable and older pupils lack some of the basic skills, especially in numeracy. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. While most pupils enjoy school and have good attitudes to learning, a very few are inattentive and uninterested. The school encourages pupils to eat healthily and take regular exercise. Teaching is satisfactory and has good features. Together with the high level of resources available to the school, this enables pupils to make satisfactory progress. Pupils with additional learning needs are particularly well catered for. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. Moreover the headteacher has led the successful amalgamation of the two schools effectively. The school's self-evaluation is honest and accurate, but subject leaders do not have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching. The overall capacity for the school to improve is satisfactory.

not applicable

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise literacy and numeracy standards, especially of more able pupils, by improving teaching and making more use of assessment information so that pupils know what to do to improve their work.
- Improve subject leadership by monitoring learning in lessons and making use of the information to identify training requirements.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Children enter the school with typical attainment in the basic skills and standards remain broadly average throughout the school. Progress is satisfactory, but was not sufficient to enable pupils to meet their challenging targets last year, when standards, as indicated by the 2005 national test results were not as high as those expected for pupils of this age. This was owing in part to a high number of pupils with behavioural difficulties in both Year 6 classes and the fact that it was the first year of the newly amalgamated school. Teacher assessment results in Year 2 were above average. The low level of basic numeracy skills in the current Year 6 class is holding back their progress. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities and those who are learning English make good progress as a result of effective support.

The school's evaluation identifies the need to raise standards in Key Stage 2 for the more able pupils, and in mathematics and writing throughout the school. Actions to tackle this have not had time to make a marked impact on current standards, although

assessment data for mathematics shows that standards in Years 3, 4 and 5 are improving.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

The school satisfactorily promotes pupils' personal development and well-being. The inspection disagrees with the school evaluation that this is a good aspect of the school's work. Many developments are relatively new and have not had time to be fully embedded into classroom practices and around the school.

Most children are keen learners, work hard in lessons and behave well. Relationships are generally harmonious, although very few older pupils felt the school council did not take enough notice of their opinions. Pupils feel the two schools have come together successfully. Attendance is satisfactory for the majority of pupils. The school is doing all it can to follow up absences and is working with the education welfare officer on improving the attendance rates of a small group of pupils who are frequently absent. The school operates the 'every school day counts' programme to encourage good attendance.

Personal, health, social and citizenship education is given a high priority, with a lot of time given to the very challenging Year 6 classes last year. A variety of outside agencies have supported pupils and teachers so that, for example, work-related activities take place in the classroom. All pupils learn about the world of work through role play in the Foundation Stage, contributing to the 'wish tree' and playing 'what's my line'. The school encourages healthy eating, but pupils say they know what they should eat but still like to eat the less healthy foods.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall with some good teaching in the Foundation Stage and in Years 2 and 5. Features of good teaching include: firm discipline, high expectations, simple learning intentions shared with pupils, lively and challenging open questioning and a brisk pace to lessons. In those lessons, pupils enjoy learning and are very keen to contribute. When pupils are reminded of the learning intention at the end of the lesson, effective informal assessments take place.

Well-trained teaching assistants give good support, especially in Year 6 where their skills have the potential to provide additional support for more able pupils. Assessment procedures are very comprehensive. A wealth of data is gathered and analysed by the senior management team to identify areas for improvement, staff training needs and pupils who are likely to exceed or meet expectations. However, the use of this information by teachers is not consistent. Some do not make use of the data to identify pupils' particular needs, especially those of the more able. Assessment arrangements are good in the Foundation Stage, because the information gained from everyday

observation is used well to identify more able children. Generally pupils do not know what to do to improve their work. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities are well supported by well-trained teaching assistants. Parents are generally satisfied with what the school provides for their children. A useful amount of information keeps them abreast of what their children are learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum mainly meets the needs and interests of learners. Statutory requirements are met. As a result of the high priority given to improving provision for information and communication technology (ICT), provision is good. Pupils like their ICT lessons in the new computer suite and at the Stadium of Light. They also enjoy residential visits and their trip to sketch Durham cathedral. Due regard is given to health and safety with pupils having a good understanding of the dangers of smoking, alcohol and other substance abuse. Learning for pupils is more popular when they are practically involved. Some pupils in Year 6 did not enjoy their dull science last year. All forms of out of school sports, dance, swimming and physical education are popular. Personal development is given a high priority, but weaknesses in some basic literacy and numeracy skills suggest they are not given a high enough priority in all subjects. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. In particular the continuity between nursery and reception ensures the children have very similar activities and settle well.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pupils are well cared for and there are satisfactory procedures for health and safety. As a result, pupils are generally keen to come to school. The breakfast club and after school club are popular and provide additional care and support for pupils, the latter providing an incentive to get to school on time. Support for vulnerable groups is given a high priority and frequently involves liaison with external agencies. Pupils are well supported by effective child protection procedures. Teachers have detailed information about the individual needs of pupils and give a high priority to meeting those needs. In some groups ineffective use is made of information about the pupils' learning. They are not provided with a clear picture of what they have to do to improve their work, and this contributes to below average standards.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The school judges leadership and management to be satisfactory. The inspection agrees with this judgement. Further work needs to be done to raise standards for the more able pupils. The amalgamation of two diverse primary schools has been managed successfully in the view of staff, pupils and the inspection team. The headteacher sets a clear direction to promote quality of care and education. Equality of opportunity is satisfactorily promoted. There are secure procedures in place to tackle incidents of

discrimination that are reported termly to the governing body. The management of severe behaviour problems in Year 6 last year, involvement in meetings linked to the new children's centre and time away from school to fulfil other responsibilities have meant that too little attention has been given by the headteacher to raising standards. This weakness is clearly identified on the school evaluation, with appropriate priorities for development. The deputy headteacher is no longer class-based to enable her to support the headteacher in her management role, particularly in supporting and training staff and monitoring and evaluating learning in lessons. Subject leaders too are better equipped to carry out their roles more effectively through their improved use of assessment information. However, the monitoring of teaching has been patchy in the past year and is acknowledged as an area for development. Where monitoring has taken place, teachers are provided with detailed written feedback and points for development that are then followed up. The school also collects a considerable amount of assessment data that is not used well enough to set targets so that pupils know how to improve their work. Again the school's evaluation identifies this as a priority. The school has benefited from the extensive resources of the two amalgamated schools and overall provides satisfactory value for money. The governing body is newly constituted and the chair is well informed and supportive of the school's work. Based on the accuracy of the school evaluation, the inspection judges the capacity of the school to improve as satisfactory.

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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? | 3 | 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 | 2 | 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 | 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 | 3 | 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 | 3 | NA |
| How well learners enjoy their education | 3 | 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 | 3 | 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 | 3 | 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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14 September 2005

Dear Pupils

Thank you for helping during the inspection. We would like to tell you about our findings. We enjoyed being in your school, talking to you and watching you in lessons. The list below shows all the things we liked about your school.

Most of you work hard.

You like your teachers and the visits they arrange for you, especially the trip to Durham where you sketched the cathedral.

You enjoy all the games, dance and PE you do inside and outside school.

You like the new ICT suite and the visit to the Stadium of Light.

We have asked your teachers to look at the things on the list below to make your work even better.

The work that some of you do is too easy.

You do not know what to do to make your work better.

You need to learn your spellings, times tables and to read books more often.

We hope you will ask your teacher to give you a list of what you need to do to make your work even better so you can check how well you are doing by yourself or with a friend.

Rosemary Rodger

Lead inspector

Annex B