

Dunston Hill Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108338
Local Authority	Gateshead
Inspection number	288069
Inspection date	26 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Geoffrey Cooper

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	450
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Mark Armstrong
Headteacher	Mr Bill Foreman
Date of previous school inspection	1 July 2001
School address	Dunston Bank Dunston Gateshead Tyne and Wear NE11 9PY
Telephone number	0191 4334021
Fax number	0191 4202440

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Dunston Hill Primary is much larger than most primary schools. Most pupils come from a White British background but a very small proportion come from minority backgrounds. The great majority of pupils speak English as their home language but a very small number are learning English as a new language. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average and an average proportion of pupils are entitled to a free school meal. Children's attainment is below that which is typical for their ages when they first enter school.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Dunston Hill is an outstanding school. It is a happy and secure establishment where everyone, staff and pupils alike, feels valued and included. This confirms the overwhelmingly positive views of parents, who typically said, 'This is a very capable school with a desire to do what is best for each child'.

Pupils' achievement is excellent and standards are significantly above average. Pupils make excellent progress. From a relatively low starting point, children in the Foundation Stage make excellent progress, particularly in their language development, and achieve the levels expected of them by the time they enter Year 1. The annual assessments of Year 2 pupils show that standards are consistently and significantly above the national average and rising. The end of Year 6 national test results are generally significantly above average although they were lower than usual in 2006 and were average; nevertheless, these pupils achieved well. The dip in the test results occurred because, in this particular Year 6 group, more pupils than usual had learning difficulties. Also, fewer pupils than usual exceeded the level expected of an average child in English. The provisional results of Year 2 assessments in 2007 show that high standards have been maintained, and the school's assessment data, supported by inspection evidence, show that pupils have done even better than last year and the school rightly predicts challenging targets will be exceeded this year.

Pupils' progress is outstanding in developing their personal and social skills. They attend school regularly and are very well behaved. They are eager learners. They know how well they are achieving and enjoy lessons and this has given them confidence in their sense of personal health, security and well-being. The pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education because of their positive attitudes and social development and their good basic skills of literacy and mathematics.

The teaching and learning are outstanding and account for pupils' excellent overall progress. The curriculum is excellent. It is full of interest for the pupils who expressed their appreciation of the way it is enriched by activities such as sport and drama. The care, support and guidance for pupils are outstanding and the arrangements for safeguarding the pupils are effective. Pupils' progress is monitored accurately, which helps staff to intervene and provide support when pupils are not doing as well as they should.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher is very ably supported by the work of all staff. Successful leadership at all levels has piloted the school through recent years and has been recognised by many national awards. As one governor said, 'This is a school that is always developing. It never stands still.' Governors play a full and important part in the school's development. The school has a good record of improvement, as shown in the standards achieved by the pupils. Its self-evaluation is accurate and shows that it has an excellent capacity to maintain its strengths and to improve further. It gives excellent value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- There are no significant areas for improvement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Standards are generally significantly above average and pupils achieve extremely well. All pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those from minority ethnic backgrounds, make excellent progress.

When children start school, their attainment is below that which is typical of children of their age. The children make rapid progress in the Foundation Stage, especially in their language development, and meet the national expectations for their age by the time they join Year 1. Pupils make very good progress in Key Stage 1. During the past five years, the results of Year 2 tests and assessments have been consistently and significantly above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics and are rising. Pupils continue to make good progress in Key Stage 2. Standards were uniformly and significantly above average until 2006, when the test results fell to average. The dip in results was mainly because of a much higher than usual proportion of boys with learning difficulties in this particular year group. The English results, though average, were lower than those in mathematics and science and the boys' results were lower than those of the girls, who did well, and fewer pupils than usual exceeded the expectation for their age in English.

The school sets itself challenging targets, which are met or exceeded. The results of Year 2 assessments and Year 6 tests for 2007 show Key Stage 1 high standards have been maintained and the school is on track to exceed its targets for Key Stage 2 and attain standards similar to those prior to 2006.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is outstanding. Spiritual awareness is fostered well by the strong messages during collective worship. Pupils are out-going, friendly, mature, and well able to take responsibility and show initiative. Attendance has risen this year and is above the national average. Pupils and parents agree that behaviour is good and behaviour seen in lessons during the inspection was exemplary. Pupils relish their learning activities. There is a consistent atmosphere of purposeful fun, which helps them to achieve well. They are quick to point out how they stay safe and how to look after the safety of others. They are very aware of school health and safety provision. The pupils know all about healthy diet and leading a vigorous and active life. The school council, playground 'buddies' and enterprise teams characterise how pupils make a strong contribution to school life. As one parent said, 'The school is at the heart of the community, supporting its development through the involvement of children and their families'.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

The quality of teaching is outstanding. Its strength lies in the consistency that ensures pupils know how to develop as effective learners, through shared objectives, understanding how to be successful in their work and through very effective teacher and peer marking of written work. Relationships are always positive and pupils ensure that their behaviour makes best use of available working time. Teachers use their subject knowledge well to interest the pupils.

Questioning is used well, often adding pace and liveliness to the lesson. Taken together, these consistent strengths across the school motivate pupils to learn and develop their skills of listening, concentration and their willingness to think and explain, and to work hard.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is excellent. It fully meets requirements and responds well to national and local initiatives, especially the national strategy for promoting basic skills. It caters well for the broad range of prior learning. The curriculum provides well for pupils' personal and social development. With great enthusiasm, pupils tell of interesting out-of-hours clubs, of well-informed visitors and stimulating visits out of school, which collectively provide good enrichment to the curriculum. The school is finding creative and innovative ways to make links across subjects and to use its available time well; for example, the use of specialist subject knowledge to manage planning and preparation time for mainstream staff. In order to do this, the school buys in the services of specialist teachers and instructors to extend the range of pupils' skills and talents; for example, in music and sports.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The care, guidance and support of pupils are outstanding. The school successfully makes arrangements to care for and support pupils. All staff work tirelessly together to provide well-informed and supportive role modelling. Pupils' personal development shows clearly the impact this has on them. National requirements for safeguarding pupils are met. All necessary health and safety requirements are effective and are checked by the governing body. Risk assessments are carried out by the governors as necessary. The pupils' personal development is carefully monitored and any concerns are recorded and dealt with. The tracking of the pupils' academic progress is rigorous and precise. Staff know exactly how well each pupil is progressing against set targets and, where intervention is needed, it is quick and effective. As a result of the strengths of the academic and pastoral care, the pupils feel included and valued.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding and ensure the pupils' outstanding academic and personal achievement. The working atmosphere of the school is warm, giving confidence to pupils and their parents. The school does a great deal to ensure equality of opportunity. This is clear in the confidence of the more vulnerable pupils. Pupils say they feel valued and included; staff say they feel this way, too. The fact that staff say their morale is 'sky high', stems from a sense of security engendered by the headteacher and senior leaders and from the school's well-thought-out policies and established systems. Procedures for evaluating the school's effectiveness are excellent. They are rigorous and lead to clear plans for improvement. Governance is excellent. The governors make a strong contribution to the success of the school.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

27 June 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Dunston Hill Community Primary School, Gateshead, NE11 9PY

Thank you for the lovely day I had in school recently. It is a school of ready smiles and many welcomes. You have a special gift for making everyone feel valued and included.

Yours is an excellent school with some very special qualities. You told me this yourself and I agree completely with you. Your parents also think it is a fine place for your education and they are right because you have maintained your really good achievement over many years. You are growing and developing into fine young people. Your attendance is good and has improved recently. The behaviour seen in lessons was excellent in the inspection. You make such good learners! You know precisely what you have to do and how to be successful. You are also very properly self-assured about how to stay safe and healthy. The work of the school council, of 'buddies' and enterprise teams is splendid. I hope the enterprise team that went off to their presentation at Newcastle United football ground had a successful time.

You are making excellent progress because your school provides extremely well for you. Lessons are at least good and sometimes excellent and give you much to enjoy and learn. There is an extremely good range of things for you to do to help your learning. You are excellently cared for and I think that is why you are so confident in the welcome you give to others. All the staff work really hard to help you achieve well in many different ways. Your school is outstandingly well led by your headteacher and the other teachers who work with you.

Once again, thank you for my interesting day.

Yours sincerely

Geoff Cooper

Lead inspector