



Emmaville Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 108339
Local Authority Gateshead
Inspection number 288070
Inspection dates 18–19 October 2006
Reporting inspector Derek Neil HMI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Main Street
School category	Community		Crawcrook, Ryton
Age range of pupils	3–11		Tyne and Wear, NE40 4ND
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0191 4132460
Number on roll (school)	231	Fax number	
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Bill Purvis
		Headteacher	Miss Avril Armstrong
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected		

Age group 3–11	Inspection dates 18–19 October 2006	Inspection number 288070
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Emmaville Primary School is situated in the Crawcrook and Greenside ward of Gateshead. The attainment of children when they start school in the Nursery and in Reception is about average and the number eligible for free school meals is average. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. Almost all pupils use English as their first language. A new headteacher took up post in September 2006.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school with some outstanding features, which gives good value for money. It provides a happy and caring environment and prepares its pupils well for the next stage of their education. The overwhelming majority of parents appreciate the school's many strengths, particularly the very high level of care and support the staff provide. As one wrote, expressing the views of many others, 'the staff are enthusiastic and encouraging, which makes this an excellent place for children.'

Children's achievement in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Their literacy skills are less well developed than their ability in other areas of learning, because there has been too little emphasis on this aspect of the curriculum. Throughout Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils achieve well and attain high standards because of good teaching and an innovative, well planned curriculum. Teachers plan challenging and exciting lessons, in which pupils make good progress. Work is pitched at the right level for each pupil, except in English, where sometimes the low attainers find it difficult to grasp some of the concepts they are being taught. Pupils also thrive because of the guidance they receive from staff and the opportunities they get to help them mature into responsible citizens. They have a good awareness of environmental issues, for example, and their knowledge of how to stay healthy is outstanding. Although teachers know their pupils well and give them suitable targets for development, the school does not systematically track the progress of each pupil so that it can identify and tackle underachievement.

The high standards and the good teaching are the result of effective leadership and management. The new headteacher has quickly settled into the post and has a detailed and accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. She has drafted a realistic and relevant plan to improve this successful school even further. She is supported by a capable staff, who have responsibilities for coordinating various aspects of the school's work. These are not all carried out as effectively as they should be. This is because the roles of the Foundation Stage coordinator and of the subject coordinators are not sufficiently clear, nor have their leadership skills been well developed. Nonetheless, this is a committed and hard-working staff who have a shared understanding of what the school needs to do next, so the capacity for improvement is good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the planning in the Foundation Stage so pupils begin Key Stage 1 with higher standards of literacy.
- Introduce a system for tracking pupils' progress throughout the school.
- Develop the roles of the Foundation Stage coordinator and of subject coordinators.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. The youngest pupils make less progress with their literacy than in other areas of learning because there are too few opportunities for them to develop their skills in writing. Consequently, when they start in Key Stage 1 their attainment is average. They make good progress in Key Stage 1 and by the time they are seven the proportion attaining the expected standard is above average, although few pupils reach higher levels, particularly in writing.

In Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make good progress and by the time they are eleven the proportion reaching the expected standard is above average. The number who attain higher levels is regularly greater than the national average. These high standards, which have been rising every year, are due to good teaching and the well planned curriculum. The school recognises the need to improve standards still further in English, which, though above average, are less high than in mathematics and science. Pupils produce a variety of different types of writing, but many do not spell or punctuate accurately when they are writing at length. Although they write neatly, they do not use a pen until their final year in school. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress, although lower attaining pupils sometimes struggle to understand some concepts in English lessons.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils behave well and show consideration for each other in lessons and in the playground. They love school because their lessons are interesting and they enjoy, in their own words, 'finding out new things.' They develop good levels of independence from an early age because teachers trust them to do things for themselves and expect them to act responsibly. Pupils' attendance is in line with the national average and they arrive at school in good time.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Their knowledge and understanding of their own culture is good, but their understanding of other cultures is less secure. They know how to stay safe and who to ask for help and advice. Their awareness of healthy living is excellent; they eat healthily and take plenty of exercise, for example, in the many out-of-school sports clubs. The school council is highly effective in responding to pupils' concerns and requests for improvements. It was instrumental, for instance, in introducing a recycling scheme into the school. Through exciting enterprise activities, pupils learn important life skills such as how to work in a team. Year 6 pupils, for example, learn through an imaginative project how to manage budgets and raise funds, which they donate to the school for future improvements. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are well equipped for the next stage in their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good throughout the school. Lessons are well planned and this contributes to the smooth running of each class. No time is wasted; the work is challenging and the pace is brisk. Pupils concentrate in lessons and try hard to do well. When working independently, they show maturity and confidence; for example, pupils in one class planned and produced a collage with little supervision from the teacher. Relationships are very good; the enthusiastic teachers use praise and encouragement very effectively to spur pupils on and help them make progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are ably supported by teaching assistants, who are well briefed by the class teacher. The staff's high level of confidence in teaching mathematics means they can introduce a topic to the whole class and then set related work that is well matched to groups with different abilities. In English, however, they sometimes expect too much of lower attaining pupils. Teachers know their pupils well and give them clear and helpful advice on how to improve their work. The school does not systematically track the progress pupils make towards their targets, so is not able easily to identify individuals or groups who might be underachieving.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Teachers plan very well to help pupils make progress in English and mathematics. Planning for other subjects is excellent. Pupils greatly enjoy lessons in which they work through a variety of activities united around a common theme. This imaginative approach makes very effective links between subjects, consolidates basic skills and leads to high quality work from pupils of all abilities. Personal, social and health education makes a strong contribution to pupils' well-being and knowledge of the world. Planning for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities takes good account of their individual needs.

Pupils of all ages have many opportunities to enhance their learning through regular visits to places of interest. A good range of lunchtime and after-school clubs gives them the opportunity to develop new interests and talents, such as cooking. These are very popular and are well attended throughout the year.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils are very well cared for. Rigorous procedures, including risk assessments, child protection procedures and health and safety checks, ensure that the children are free from harm, in an organised and well supervised environment. Good relationships throughout the school create a warm and welcoming atmosphere that adds to pupils' sense of security and well-being. For example, pupils are confident that teachers will resolve the rare instances of bullying or threatening behaviour that occur. Parents of

the youngest children are pleased with how they and their children are supported at the start of the year and recognise how well this has helped them settle into school. Support and guidance for pupils' personal development are good. The staff know the children well and closely monitor their behaviour and attitudes to ensure that high standards are maintained and support is provided when it is needed. Support and guidance for pupils' academic progress are also good; staff are determined to help pupils of all abilities to meet challenging targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The new headteacher provides good leadership in what was already a successful school. Staff, parents and pupils appreciate the way she listens to their views and concerns. In a short time, she has developed a clear and well informed view of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and has used this as a basis for a realistic improvement plan. Although the plan is still in draft form, staff fully understand the direction the school needs to take. Senior managers conduct a thorough analysis of pupils' work, including their performance in national tests. They use this to identify areas in English and mathematics, which could be better. The roles and responsibilities of subject coordinators and of the Foundation Stage coordinator are not sufficiently clear and some staff have not developed the leadership skills to make them fully effective in these areas. For example, subject coordinators prepare detailed action plans, but these are not based on a rigorous evaluation of their subject. The school has made good progress in many respects since the last inspection; for example, it now teaches joined handwriting in Key Stage 1. It has not completely eliminated the difference in standards between English and other subjects, largely because of the lack of staff development in recent years and a shortage of structured opportunities to improve pupils' writing in the Foundation Stage. It has, however, begun to tackle these issues and its actions are beginning to have an impact on the progress pupils make in lessons. Governors provide good support and statutory requirements are met. The school is very well resourced, particularly in information and communication technology, and its very good facilities are used well. It provides good value for money.

Document reference number: HMI 2507 01 September 2006
Inspection Report: Emmaville Primary School, 18–19 October 2006
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Inspection judgements

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

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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

The Pupils

Emmaville Primary School

Main Street

Crawcrook

Ryton

Tyne and Wear

NE40 4ND

18 October 2006

Dear Pupils

Thank you for welcoming us so warmly into your school. We enjoyed watching you in lessons and at play; talking about your school with you and your teachers; and looking at your work. Now we want to share with you what we thought.

Here are some of the many things we liked.

- You told us you like coming to school and feel safe there.
- We saw that you were clearly enjoying your lessons. You obviously like the 'rotation activities' very much, and because of this you produce some really good work.
- Your behaviour is good. You listen carefully to the teacher in class and you walk around the school in a sensible way, showing consideration and respect for others. You should be proud of this.
- Your teachers and other staff take good care of you while you are at school.
- You are rightly very proud of your school council. It gives you a valuable opportunity to make the school a better place.
- You all know how important it is to eat healthily and take plenty of exercise.
- You try hard in lessons, even when the work is very difficult, and because of this you are making good progress.

We think you and your teachers could make the school even better and this is what we would like to happen now.

- Although your work in English is very good, we think it would be even better in future if the very youngest children got more practice at writing.
- Your headteacher is working very hard to make this such a good school and we have asked her to show other people how they can help her.
- We have asked your teachers to set up a system that will show them clearly that all of you are doing as well as you can with your school work.

We hope you continue to enjoy the many good things about your school.

Yours sincerely

Derek Neil

Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools