

Falla Park Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108358
Local Authority	Gateshead
Inspection number	288076
Inspection date	21 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Denis Goodchild

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	250
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Alan Hall
Headteacher	Mrs Denise Thompson
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2002
School address	Falla Park Road Felling Gateshead Tyne and Wear NE10 9HP
Telephone number	0191 4334011
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average sized school. It serves an area of high social and economic disadvantage. Pupils are mainly from a White British heritage with only a few from minority ethnic groups, none of whom speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is well above average. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. A very small number of pupils have a statement of special educational needs. Attainment on entry to the nursery is much lower than that expected and pupils' communication and social skills are especially weak.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Falla Park is a good school, which enjoys the confidence of the overwhelming majority of parents. They agree that the school provides a welcoming and supportive environment in which their children are safe and well cared for. Very good relationships give pupils the confidence to know they will be listened to and that their views will be taken on board. Pupils work hard and behave very well in lessons because they like their teachers and know that they will receive help in their learning. Pupils are happy and enjoy their lessons, and this is reflected in their good attendance. Pupils' personal development is good because it is strongly promoted in the curriculum. They willingly accept responsibility and their work on the school council contributes well to the school community. A good range of activities and clubs adds enrichment to the curriculum and provides a wide range of different learning experiences.

Pupils achieve well. From low starting points on entry, they leave Year 6 with broadly average standards. In the Foundation Stage, they make good progress, particularly in the development of their social and communication skills. Pupils continue to make good progress and achieve well in Key Stage 1. Results in Year 2 were below average in 2006 but this represented good achievement because these pupils had well below average standards at the beginning of Year 1. Action taken by the school is raising standards. The school's data, supported by inspection evidence, indicate that currently pupils are working at levels higher than the Year 2 pupils gained in 2006. However, boys do not achieve as well as girls in reading. In writing, standards are similar to 2006 though a larger proportion of pupils attain the higher levels.

Pupils continue to make good progress in Key Stage 2. The results of the 2006 tests for English and science were broadly average. They were below average in mathematics and the school's target was not met, although results were slightly better than in 2005 and halted a two year decline. In all subjects, a below average proportion of pupils reached the higher levels. Inspection evidence and the school's own data show that initiatives in English and mathematics have improved standards in the current Year 6 and that the pupils are achieving well. Improved provision and targeted intervention ensure that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress.

Good teaching and learning makes sure that pupils make good progress as they move through the school. However, occasionally the pace of teaching is too slow and higher attaining pupils do not have enough opportunities to use what they have learnt.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher is well supported by the senior management team and, with the governors, has been successful in providing a safe and secure learning environment in which pupils can achieve well. In this, she has the full support of the parents. The management team is accurate in its self evaluation of the school's performance and has, therefore, been able to take appropriate action to raise standards. Improvement planning is appropriately informed by self evaluation but lacks specific targets and measurable success criteria so that progress can accurately be measured. The governors' effective financial management has brought about improvements but their role as a 'critical friend' is not fully developed. The school has made satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection. Accurate self evaluation, appropriate priorities and recent improvements indicate that the school has a good capacity to improve and gives good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Build on and extend initiatives to improve standards particularly for boys in reading in Key Stage 1 and more able pupils throughout the school, particularly in mathematics.
- Include specific targets and measurable success criteria in the school improvement plan so that progress can be accurately measured.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement is good and pupils of all abilities make good progress. Standards are broadly average by the time pupils leave school.

Provision in the Foundation Stage helps children make good progress from low starting points, especially in mathematical development and personal and social skills. In these areas, they are still below expected levels at the end of Reception and pupils' communication, language, and literacy skills are well below expectations.

Results in the national tests at Key Stage 1 in 2005 and 2006 were below average. This represented good achievement and progress through Key Stage 1 from a well below average starting point in Year 1. In 2006, there was a slight improvement in standards in writing and a good improvement in mathematics. This halted the decline in writing seen in the previous two years, though standards in reading were lower than in 2005. Inspection evidence and school data indicate that the action that the school is taking is raising standards. For example, current standards for mathematics show that a greater proportion of pupils attain the higher levels than they did in 2006; however, this is still below the national figure. There has been a significant improvement in reading standards this year and they are broadly in line with those seen nationally in 2006. However, boys do not achieve as well as girls in reading. Results in writing in 2007 were similar to those of 2006 although a higher proportion of pupils attained the higher levels.

Pupils continue to make good progress in Key Stage 2 and achieve well. The 2006 national tests results were broadly average in English and science. Mathematics results did not meet the expected targets and were below the national average. They were slightly better than in 2005 and halted a two year decline. In all subjects, a below average proportion of pupils reached the higher levels. Inspection evidence and the school's own data show that initiatives in English and mathematics are improving standards in the current Year 6 and pupils are achieving well. Overall standards are broadly average. Improved provision and targeted intervention ensure that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make the same good progress as their peers.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. Pupils demonstrate very positive attitudes and their behaviour is very good. Pupils say they like coming to school and enjoy their lessons and the range of activities on offer. Attendance is above average. Very good relationships contribute to the calm, orderly atmosphere in the school. Pupils are polite to one another and to adults and cooperate well in lessons. This contributes to the good progress seen in lessons. Pupils willingly accept responsibility and support one another as 'buddies'. Their work on the school council has

contributed to school improvements; for example, by introducing a wider range of food in the Breakfast Club. Through fund raising and participating in concerts, they contribute to the wider community. They have a good understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle and their basic and personal skills prepare them well for the next stage of learning.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Well prepared lessons help to promote enjoyment in learning. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils and have high expectations of behaviour. Pupils are, therefore, very responsive, work hard in lessons and make good progress. Typically, good teaching has clear explanations and demonstrations and pupils are well prepared to work independently. At times, teacher-led discussions slow the pace of learning and higher attaining pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to apply what they already know. Teachers are effective in showing pupils what they have to do to succeed. This, and very good marking, which gives pupils good advice on how to improve, contributes to the pupils' good achievement. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported by skilled teaching assistants.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Curriculum provision is good and meets all statutory requirements. The school effectively promotes pupils' personal and social development and children get off to a good start in the Nursery and Reception. Teachers modify their planning to meet pupils' differing needs. Links between subjects are identified and pupils have opportunity to use their basic skills across the curriculum. The school's work in reviewing and modifying the mathematics and English curriculum has helped to improve provision and contributes effectively to the standards pupils achieve and the progress they make. The curriculum is enriched by a good range of visits and visitors, which also adds enjoyment to learning. Out-of-school activities help to improve pupils' sporting, creative and musical skills.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care, guidance and support for pupils are good overall. Procedures for ensuring pupils' health, safety and well-being are thorough and child protection procedures are in place. Pupils feel safe and happy in school and value the 'buddy' system for supporting vulnerable pupils in the playground. They feel very confident that they have an adult they can approach should they feel troubled or need help. They are well supported in learning about the dangers in society. There are good procedures in place to identify those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and to provide the appropriate support. Pupils receive very good guidance on how to improve their work and they are encouraged to set their own personal targets. This has a positive impact on their achievement.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. School leaders have been successful in creating a very supportive learning ethos underpinned by very good relationships in which pupils feel secure and safe. In this, the headteacher has the overwhelming support of parents. She has provided clear direction and is well supported by an increasingly effective management team. The monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance accurately identifies those areas that need improvement. Action taken, with the support of the local authority, has improved provision and raised standards in mathematics and reading. Improvement planning is appropriately informed by self evaluation but lacks specific targets and measurable success criteria. The headteacher has the full support of the governing body. They contribute to school development and have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Their role as a 'critical friend' has still to be fully developed. Effective financial management has improved resources and the fabric of the school, and increased support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

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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?	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	2
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	3
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	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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.

Annex A

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	3
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

22 June 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Falla Park Community Primary School, Gateshead, Tyne and Wear, NE10 9HP

Thank you for making me so welcome during my recent visit to your school. You were very helpful to me and I enjoyed talking to you and watching you work very hard in your lessons. You told me that you really enjoyed school and that was clear in the lessons I saw in different parts of the school. You are good at attending school. Well done and keep it up! I was impressed by how very well behaved you were and how you cooperated with each other. You, your parents and I all agree that the adults in the school work hard to make sure that you are safe and well cared for.

The teachers also work hard to prepare interesting lessons and they clearly succeed because you tell me that you enjoy lessons. You say that the teachers are good at giving you advice on how to improve and I agree with you. Your headteacher and teachers have been successful in helping you to improve your reading and mathematics. I have asked your headteacher to build on what they are doing so that the younger boys' reading gets even better and more of you achieve even higher results, particularly in mathematics. Also, I have asked your headteacher to improve the school improvement plan so that the school can more accurately check on how good they are at helping you to improve. I am sure you will continue to play your part in helping to keep Falla Park the good school it is and work hard to make it even better.

Yours sincerely

Denis Goodchild

Lead inspector