



Walbottle Village Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 108448
Local Authority Newcastle upon Tyne
Inspection number 288102
Inspection dates 26–27 September 2006
Reporting inspector Rosemary Rodger

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	The Green
School category	Community		Walbottle Village, Newcastle upon Tyne
Age range of pupils	3–11		Tyne and Wear, NE15 8JL
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0191 2675320
Number on roll (school)	125	Fax number	0191 2640067
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Anthony Strong
		Headteacher	Mrs Maria Tarn
Date of previous school inspection	1 April 2002		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
3–11	26–27 September 2006	288102

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school serves an area that has some degree of social and economic disadvantage. This is reflected in the above average proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. Most pupils are of White British heritage. An above average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Sixteen children attend the Nursery full-time. There is an after school and breakfast club on site that is not managed by the school. The school has been a primary school since 2004 and this is the first time Year 6 pupils have taken the national tests. The headteacher has been in post for a short time.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Although the school's effectiveness is satisfactory, its performance in one respect is inadequate. Before its next Section 5 inspection, Ofsted inspectors may visit the school to monitor the progress it has made in remedying this weakness. The school would receive two to five days notice of such a visit.

The pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Some pupils would achieve more if the gains made by the end of Key Stage 1 were built upon throughout Key Stage 2. This is because pupils make inadequate progress in Years 3 and 4.

Attainment on entry is typical of three-year-olds. Quality and standards in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory. Standards in the national tests appear to be variable from year to year because of the low numbers of pupils in each year group. However, the pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 2, standards are generally above average. Pupils do not make enough progress at the beginning of Key Stage 2, but they pick up again later and by the end of Year 6, standards are average overall. However, this slow start in Key Stage 2 adversely affects pupils' learning in Years 5 and 6, particularly in writing and mathematics. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make the same progress as their classmates.

The pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Behaviour is also good and the pupils clearly enjoy school. Attendance has improved and is satisfactory. The weekly celebration assembly is effective in promoting positive attitudes and pupils' enjoyment. As one parent stated, 'Our children are over the moon when they receive an award'. Healthy lifestyles are promoted well. Daily 'wake and shake' exercises provide a lively start to the day and after-school clubs, such as aerobics and line dancing enrich learning and physical fitness. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall: it is good in Key Stage 1 but more variable in Key Stage 2 where there is some weak teaching in the lower key stage. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to the pupils' learning both in and out of the classroom. There are effective links with a range of agencies to help support pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Parents in the main are satisfied with their children's progress but they do not receive enough information about homework or how well their children are doing.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher knows what needs to be done to bring about improvement. School self-evaluation is realistic and accurate, although actions to check the quality of teaching are not rigorous enough and have not tackled the weaknesses identified by the inspection. The school has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of teaching for those pupils who are making limited progress, especially in writing and mathematics.
- Provide parents with information about their children's learning and clarify what the expectations are for homework.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

By the time pupils leave the school, achievement is satisfactory. Although the standards reached in the 2006 national tests suggest that achievement is better than this, there is inadequate achievement by the younger pupils in Key Stage 2. This is having an adverse impact on standards, particularly in writing and mathematics in the class of older pupils.

Many children start school with typical levels of attainment for three-year-olds. They make good progress in personal, social and emotional development and satisfactory progress in all other areas of learning. By the time they start in Year 1, standards are above those expected of a typical five-year-old in personal, social and emotional development and in line with those expected in all other areas of learning.

The results of national tests show considerable variation year by year because of the small number of pupils in each year group. Achievement throughout Years 1 and 2 is good and reflects the good teaching pupils receive. The achievement of more able Year 2 pupils has improved and they achieve well. Standards in Year 2 are above average in reading, writing and mathematics.

Achievement throughout Key Stage 2 is satisfactory. The current achievement of older pupils is improving now they are taught in separate year groups for English and mathematics. The achievement of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is as good as that of other pupils as a result of good support provided by experienced teaching assistants. There are no comparisons with previous years as the school has only ever had one group of Year 6 pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils appreciate the care and concern shown for their well-being and safety and they do feel safe. Fitness and healthy lifestyles are effectively promoted through daily 'wake and shake' exercises for the whole school. Pupils understand what healthy eating means. This is well exemplified by a parent's comment, 'Our children check the ingredients of everything they eat now'. Pupils enjoy school and participate with great enthusiasm in the after-school aerobics and line dancing clubs. Older pupils take responsibility well and debate topical issues with passion. They have a good understanding of their rights. Attitudes and behaviour are generally good in response to the school's clear guidelines and expectations, and positive behaviour rewards.

Attendance is improving, especially in Key Stage 1. Several effective actions, such as rewards for good attendance and regular contact with the few families whose children are persistently absent, are now in place with the support of the education welfare officer. In assemblies, pupils develop a sense of respect for themselves and others, fostering their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The children in the Foundation Stage unit settle quickly into school; they play well together and are developing independence.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall but ranges from good to inadequate. Pupils learn effectively when they are provided with clear, straightforward instructions and displayed learning objectives. They enjoy being asked to take part in demonstrations, especially involving the interactive whiteboard. Pupils work hard in lessons where there are high expectations of their behaviour. Pupils working with classroom assistants are well supported because they are challenged and make good progress.

Where teaching is inadequate, too little account is taken of the wide range of needs within a class and introductory sessions are too long so the pupils lose concentration. Occasionally there is a mismatch between what is planned and what the pupils are learning. Satisfactory use is made of assessment information to group pupils by prior attainment and some teaching makes good use of evaluations of previous learning to revisit misconceptions, for example in mathematics. Too little reference is made to what pupils are expected to learn and pupil targets are not displayed in some classes. Pupils' work is regularly marked, but rarely refers to targets or tells the pupils what they need to do to improve their work.

Teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Well planned play and sensitive intervention by all staff ensures the children make sound progress and settle quickly into the daily routines.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory with good features in the range of enrichment activities to promote personal well-being and especially healthy lifestyles. While most learners are well served and make satisfactory and good progress, there are some groups of younger pupils in Key Stage 2 whose needs are not well addressed and their learning is affected. A good priority is given to promoting basic literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills. This is beginning to have an impact on improving achievement in mathematics. Opportunities to apply basic skills across the curriculum, particularly in writing, have not yet been considered but this is already a priority on the school development plan and the school is tackling this. Links with the local community are well established. Pupils further develop their personal and social skills when they support and visit elderly residents in the village after the harvest festival.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Health and safety are well promoted. The arrangements to support, guide and advise pupils are inconsistent. The guidance to pupils on how well they are achieving is not in place yet, although there are plans to do this. Pupils say their support is improving since the celebration and awards assemblies were introduced. As a result, they feel valued. There are good links with a range of external agencies to support pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and to provide activities that promote physical fitness, such as judo. Parents are not always clear what the expectations are for homework and do not feel sufficiently informed about how well their children are doing. The arrangements to safeguard pupils meet requirements. All those working with pupils are subject to rigorous vetting procedures.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher knows what needs to be improved in school and has made a fair start. She is satisfactorily supported by subject leaders. Recent initiatives to improve the provision in the Foundation Stage and improve standards at the end of Key Stage 2 by increasing staffing levels have been successful. There are good plans in place to work in partnership with a nearby school to share and develop subject expertise, especially in writing. However, the actions to tackle the underachievement of younger pupils in Key Stage 2 have not been addressed with sufficient urgency. As a result, Year 3 and 4 pupils are not achieving as well as they should. While school systems are in place to check the quality of teaching and learning, recommendations for improvement are not always followed up. Governors are supportive of the school and several visit regularly to work with small groups of pupils. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory and the school provides satisfactory value for money.

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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?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
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	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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	4
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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

The Pupils

Walbottle Village Primary School

The Green

Walbottle Village

Newcastle upon Tyne

Tyne and Wear

NE15 8JL

28 September 2006

Dear Pupils

Thank you for helping me during the inspection. I enjoyed visiting your school and talking to you.

What is good about your school

- You are well behaved in lessons and around school.
- Your teachers make sure you are kept safe.
- You are encouraged to eat healthy foods and to keep fit.
- Most of you work hard.

What should be better about your school

- Some of you are not learning as well as you should be.
- Your parents would like to have more information about what you do in school and when you have your homework.

You can help by telling your teacher when you do not understand what you have to do. Also you can help by always telling your parents what homework you have to do and remembering to give them all the letters you take home from school. Thank you again.

Yours sincerely

Rosemary Rodger

Lead Inspector