



Waterville Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 108571
Local Authority North Tyneside
Inspection number 288130
Inspection dates 15–16 November 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	Waterville Road
School category	Community		North Shields, Tyne and Wear
Age range of pupils	3–11		NE29 6SL
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0191 2006351
Number on roll (school)	238	Fax number	0191 2005036
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs Dawn Kerr
		Headteacher	Mrs Jill Forster
Date of previous school inspection	1 March 2003		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
3–11	15–16 November 2006	288130

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Introduction

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

Description of the school

Waterville Primary School is situated in the Riverside ward of North Tyneside, an area of high social disadvantage.

The attainment of pupils when they start school in the Nursery and in Reception is very low. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals and of those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above average. A small number of pupils do not use English as their first language. The school houses a communication support base for ten pupils with communication and speech difficulties.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school. It provides an excellent education for all its pupils, and gives very good value for money. The overwhelming majority of parents appreciate its many strengths, particularly the very high level of care and support the staff provide for their children and the strong leadership of the headteacher. As one wrote, expressing the views of many others, 'as a result of dynamic leadership and the dedication of the staff the pupils thrive here.'

Pupils' achievement is very good in all key stages. In the past, their progress in the Foundation Stage was relatively slow in literacy and numeracy, but this has been successfully tackled by the school and now pupils enter Key Stage 1 with average levels of attainment. This improvement has not yet had an impact on attainment at the end of Year 2, where standards are currently about average. Pupils make excellent progress in Key Stage 2 and reach standards that are above the national average. These impressive results are due to good teaching, a culture in which success is expected and rewarded, and an exciting and innovative curriculum. All pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those in the communication support base, flourish because of the care and support they receive from staff and the excellent range of opportunities they get to help them mature into responsible citizens. They make an outstanding contribution to the school and to their local community. Despite these successes, the ambitious staff refuse to rest on their laurels. They have recognised that pupils' writing could be improved if it was more imaginative, so they have introduced more varied and interesting experiences to stimulate pupils' thinking to help them produce work of better quality. Teachers mark pupils' written work with lots of encouraging comments, but pupils do not always understand what they have to do to improve it.

The headteacher provides very strong leadership and, as a result, the school has improved immeasurably since the last inspection. She has enabled the staff and governors to play a full part in managing the school. She has a detailed understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and inspectors agreed completely with the school's self-evaluation. Everyone has a clear view of what the school needs to do to improve further and a strong commitment to make life even better for the pupils. The capacity for further improvement is therefore extremely good.

What the school should do to improve further

The school should:

- make sure all pupils understand what they have to do to improve their work
- help pupils make their writing more imaginative.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Pupils achieve very well in the Foundation Stage because of the well planned opportunities for them to develop their skills in all the areas of learning. Consequently, when they start Key Stage 1 their overall attainment is close to average. They make good progress in Key Stage 1. By the time they are seven, the proportion attaining the expected standard in English and mathematics is slightly above average but few pupils reach higher levels. This is because in the past their communication and calculation skills were not developed in the Foundation Stage as well as they are now.

In Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make rapid progress and by the time they are eleven, the proportion reaching the expected standard is above average. The proportion who attain higher levels is also greater than the national average. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make very good progress because of the high level of well informed support they receive.

These high standards, which have been rising every year for some time now, are due to the good teaching, the exciting and imaginative curriculum, and the very strong emphasis on the importance of having high aspirations and being successful.

The school recognises the need to raise standards still further. Pupils produce a variety of different types of writing, in neat, well-formed handwriting. However, their ideas and their vocabulary are sometimes unimaginative. Teachers are tackling this weakness by making sure their lessons have lots of opportunities for pupils to listen and speak to each other, and by giving the pupils many varied and interesting experiences.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils display outstanding attitudes towards their work. They are very polite to others and are immensely proud of their school. The very good progress they make means they are reaching standards that have raised their aspirations beyond those usually evident at this stage in their education. For example, older pupils are already considering higher education. Their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good, although the school does not make the most of opportunities to enhance their spiritual development. Pupils willingly take on additional responsibilities to help with the smooth running of the school. The very active school council, for example, organises fundraising and has brought about improvements to the playground. Pupils also make a valuable contribution to their local community; for example, they have improved the environment in a run-down area close to school. They behave well in and out of class and relationships are very good. They feel safe and enjoy lessons very much. They are very aware of health and safety issues. For example, pupils in a Year 4 science lesson explored how they might safely take the temperature of a liquid at home. Pupils eat healthily and take regular exercise. Their attendance is good; this has improved significantly since the last inspection because of the intensive work the school has carried out with pupils and parents.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good throughout the school, with pockets of excellent practice, particularly in the Foundation Stage and in the communication support base. Lessons are well planned. The teachers explain clearly to the pupils what is to be learned, and use a well sequenced range of imaginative activities to ensure that their objectives are met. They use resources such as the interactive whiteboard effectively to motivate pupils and to assess their progress. Pupils respond well to the teachers' high expectations of their behaviour and welcome praise and encouragement. They concentrate very well and are keen to succeed. They show particular enthusiasm for activities, which encourage them to listen and talk to each other about their work. In most lessons, work is matched very well to the different levels of ability. The flexible use of additional teachers and of well trained support staff means that pupils are sometimes taught in small groups and get high levels of individual support when needed. Written work is marked thoroughly by the teachers, who often explain clearly to the pupil what they need to do to improve. In many cases, the teacher makes sure the pupil responds to this advice. Teachers regularly set targets for pupils in English and mathematics, but pupils do not remember them or understand what they mean.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is very well planned to enable pupils to make excellent progress. Its high quality has been recognised through an impressive number of national awards. Pupils' learning is greatly enriched by visits and visitors, performances and special events, such as a theatrical production during the inspection which the whole school greatly enjoyed. Educational visits are planned carefully to take full account of the learning needs of pupils. The school has been involved in a rich variety of interesting projects; for example, pupils in the Foundation Stage developed a range of skills through activities in a local woodland area. The school places a high priority on matching its curriculum to the needs of its pupils. For instance, it introduced more opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills after seeing that this was something the pupils needed. The school makes good use of the specialist skills of teachers and support staff during and after the school day. Pupils enjoy a wide range of out-of-school activities, including some requested by parents for younger children.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

This is a major strength of the school. 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. Pupils feel safe and secure, and know who to turn to if they have problems or concerns. Bullying is rare

and is always dealt with effectively by the staff. Teachers know pupils and their families very well which, together with the school's excellent links with specialist outside agencies, ensures that pupils' particular needs are very well provided for. Teachers use extensive information about pupils to guide them to work hard and aim as high as they can. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are fully involved in all aspects of school life. They are greatly helped by some able support staff including a highly valued learning mentor. Those pupils in the communication support base are prepared very well for their re-introduction into mainstream schools.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The headteacher provides very strong leadership, setting a clear direction for the staff, and enabling all members of the school to play their part in contributing to its success. The school has improved significantly under her leadership since the last inspection. She has very high expectations of staff and pupils. The headteacher and the recently formed leadership team are committed to ensuring that the school continues to improve. They have developed very effective systems and high priority has been given to the training and development of senior and middle managers. The school knows itself very well. Its key priorities for improvement are shared effectively with pupils, parents and governors. All staff have been involved in drawing up a comprehensive and highly detailed improvement plan. This approach to planning has encouraged a strong sense of teamwork and a shared commitment to raising standards. The budget is managed with great care. The headteacher, in her drive to improve the school, has skilfully attracted funding to increase resources and enhance accommodation. Governors are well informed and highly supportive of the school, and ensure that it meets statutory requirements. They closely monitor the school's performance and challenge it to improve further. It gives very good 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?	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	2
The behaviour of learners	2
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?	2
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.

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

Waterville Primary School

Waterville Road

North Shields

Tyne and Wear

NE29 6SL

15 November 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.
- The school gives you lots of interesting things to do, people to meet and places to visit. You told us, for example, how much you enjoyed the production of 'Robin Hood,' which you watched during our visit.
- We saw that you were clearly enjoying your lessons. You really like talking to a partner to think of answers to the teacher's questions.
- You work hard in class and because of this you are making excellent progress. For example, pupils who take tests at the end of Year 6 get very good results indeed.
- Your behaviour is good. You listen carefully to the teacher and you walk around the school in a sensible way, showing consideration and respect for others. You should be proud of this.
- Your attendance is good and you arrive punctually in the morning. Keep this up!
- Your teachers and other staff take very 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 told us about the improvements it has made to the playground, and you have more ideas for it in the future.
- You all contribute to the life of the school in some way and many of you have helped in the local community. You told us of the very good work you have done to improve the 'Triangle' area near the school.
- You all know how important it is to eat healthily and take plenty of exercise.
- The school is encouraging you to be ambitious and to be successful. Many of you told us you were interested in going to university when you are older; if you keep working hard you will get there!

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

- Although your writing is very good, we think it would be better if your stories had more imaginative ideas and you used more interesting words.
- We have asked your teachers to make sure you all understand what you have to do to improve your work.

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

Yours sincerely

Derek Neil

Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools