



# Fulwell Junior School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 108763  
**Local Authority** Sunderland  
**Inspection number** 288182  
**Inspection dates** 9–10 November 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Geoffrey Cooper

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Sea Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Fulwell, Sunderland
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11		Tyne and Wear, SR6 9EE
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 5535566
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	314	<b>Fax number</b>	0191 5535563
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr Michael Hartnack
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Barbara Handford
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 June 2001		

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The context of the school is one of broadly average social and economic circumstances. However, very few pupils are entitled to a free school meal. An average number of pupils enter school with identified learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the incidence of more profound barriers to learning is small. Few pupils come from backgrounds of other than White British ethnicity. The incidence of learning English as a new language is very low. When pupils join the school their standards are a little above average.

## 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 and better than its own rather modest evaluation. It has maintained the many strengths identified at its previous inspection and has found new ways of demonstrating its success. It is aspirational and has outstanding capacity to improve further. Many parents sing its praises: for example, 'teaching and pastoral care are excellent', 'a fantastic school', 'staff have a wonderful attitude' and 'the school has a very positive atmosphere and children achieve high standards'. It prepares its pupils extremely well for their future and gives them many opportunities to contribute to the community. The school works very strongly with others: parents, other schools and educational bodies and with the community.

Pupils join the school with standards that are a little above average. Because they benefit from the school's many strengths – its lively curriculum, teaching that is scintillating at times, rigorous procedures for care – they make consistently good progress. Their good progress is clear in the standards they achieve. Tests scores for leavers at the end of Year 6 are almost always well above average in national tests. A one year decline in science in 2003 was thoroughly addressed and in 2006 more than half the pupils achieved the highest level possible at this age. However, pupils' achievement goes far beyond their well refined literacy and numeracy skills. The school oozes beautiful art work. Remembrance Day assemblies were made even more poignant by beautiful solo and choral singing. Pupils' written work frequently shows the depth to which they reflect on and develop their understanding of humanity. Pupils respond extremely well to the demands and challenges made upon them. Their attitudes and behaviour are exemplary. One measure of their frequently expressed enjoyment of school lies in their attendance record, currently well above average. They eagerly learn about being safe and healthy. As one pupil commented at lunch time, 'This isn't only healthy. It's delicious, too.' Pupils willingly accept opportunities to contribute to the community. They are quick to take responsibility for themselves and for others by contributing towards change in their school, through the school council, and through opportunities such as their careers day, the outcomes of which are vividly displayed within the school.

The qualities and standards of the school come about because leadership and management are highly effective. Parents and governors recognise this. Pupils progress strongly in their learning as a result. There is a great deal of strength and accuracy in self-evaluation, although the school is reticent to sing its own praises. Strengths in self-evaluation have led to very good use of the considerable expertise and skills of staff. The bright and lively curriculum capitalises on this expertise and these skills very effectively. A deep level of care is shown in supporting pupils' personal development, in keeping a close eye on their progress and ensuring that they make the most of all their learning opportunities. The quality of teaching is consistently good or better in every class, year group and set. This consistency shows in pupils' learning and progress. Pupils know their personal targets, but teachers' marking of their work leaves few reminders in their books about how to improve.

## **What the school should do to improve further**

- When work is marked, ensure that pupils know their next key point for development.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

Standards are well above average by the time pupils leave the school. This is the consistent picture in national tests over the past three years and was confirmed in the work seen during inspection. Pupils enter the school with standards a little better than average. They make at least good and often better progress through the school. This is because teaching is consistently good. It is the case for higher attaining pupils, those who have specific barriers to learning and those who come from different backgrounds. The school sets very challenging targets, which are regularly reached and were exceeded in 2006. Achievement is outstanding and not confined to the standards reached in English, mathematics and science. Throughout the school, there are examples of exhilarating art and design, delightful music and deeply reflective writing.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. The school is highly effective in promoting positive attitudes and raising pupils' self-esteem. Pupils enjoy coming to school and attendance is well above the national average. Behaviour is excellent. Pupils are polite and courteous. An enriched curriculum and the take-up of a wide range of extra-curricular activities foster the development of personal skills and talents. This year, the theme of 'Unity' is continuing to make pupils aware of different cultures and develop respect and tolerance between individuals. Specific enrichment days, such as a Fashion Show and a future careers day encourage pupils to be creative thinkers and learn in real-life contexts. Pupils are very aware of health and safety issues and are actively involved in making their own risk assessments, for example during science lessons and before educational visits. The school council has an active role in representing views on health, and choosing and costing resources for the 'active-play' programme. A Remembrance Day assembly showed that pupils acquire lifelong skills. They are mature, independent individuals who are capable of reflecting on challenging issues and presenting their ideas with confidence. Pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are never less than good in quality, with regular examples of outstanding teaching. This leads to the strong learning of pupils

and their good progress. Typically lessons are well planned and busy, with interesting activities that engage pupils very effectively in their learning. Pupils know that teachers have high expectations and respond very well to this. Relationships between adults and pupils are very positive, often with a quiet touch of humour. The result is that behaviour and attitudes are exemplary. Efficient use is made of modern technology to support learning – regularly by adults, sometimes by pupils. Teachers have extensive subject knowledge and very sharp individual talents. Excellent use of these qualities is made in lessons. Good questioning clarifies what pupils know and teachers use this information well to promote further learning. While marking is done diligently and sensitively, little is written that explains how pupils can improve their work.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

The curriculum is outstanding. It is lively and interesting, stimulating and motivating. It fully meets requirements and responds well to national initiatives. However, it is managed in a style that is entirely in keeping with the spirit of the National Curriculum, completely at ease with the ethos of the school and appropriate to the different needs of individual pupils. It is particularly effective in providing pupils with basic skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology but also with the skills needed for future learning. Its powerful provision for pupils' personal and social development is clear in their extremely positive attitudes and mature manner of conducting themselves. It is rich in opportunities to learn from visitors into school, visits out of school and in its comprehensive range of flourishing activities out of school hours. Special projects continuously refresh learning, giving pupils deep insights into self and others.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. Very effective procedures safeguard all pupils. Procedures for child protection and for health and safety audits are rigorous. Staff are committed to giving the very best support to pupils of all abilities. 'Round Robin' sessions are a creative use of support staff and timetabling to ensure that learning is tailored to individuals' needs while making the best use of staff expertise. The extensive evaluations of questionnaires and discussions result in pupils having a voice in their education. A thorough tracking system ensures that pupils meet and, often, exceed targets. Any under-achievement is diagnosed early and relevant intervention strategies put into place. Pupils have clear targets that help them to know what they need to do next to improve their writing. Teachers' marking of work is very consistent and they give good verbal feedback although it is rare that any written comment explains how pupils can improve. The school maintains very positive relationships with parents that promote good learning.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

Leadership and management are outstanding. Leaders share a deep and powerful sense of vision. Management strategies, such as improvement planning and monitoring and evaluating provision, are very effective in putting that vision into practice. The determination to provide a high quality of education and to achieve high standards is crystal clear at all levels; from senior management, to those with subject and other responsibilities, through all staff working in the classroom and those whose work supports the efficient administration of the school. As a result, aspirational targets are met and at times exceeded. The equality of opportunity provided is excellent. Pupils at all levels progress well. Their talents and potential are capitalised upon. Difference is respected, accommodated and celebrated. Very good deployment of resources ensures the smooth delivery of the curriculum leading to excellent value for money. The governing body is well informed and active. It benefits from a good mix of experience and expertise which is well harnessed to support and challenge the work of the school. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are thorough and rigorous.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	1
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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	1
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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	1
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1

<sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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

Fulwell Junior School

Sea Road

Fulwell

Sunderland

Tyne and Wear

SR6 9EE

11 November 2006

Dear Children

Thank you very much for all the help you gave us during our recent visit. You and the adults working with you made sure that we had a lively and interesting time.

Yours is an outstandingly good school. They do not come much better than yours. It has many, many strengths. Your behaviour and attitudes, your attendance and the standards you reach, are the most important strengths. That is what school is about – building strengths in its pupils. Your strengths are very well supported by what the school does for you. Your lessons are really good and that helps you to become very good learners and to make good progress. The things you learn – your curriculum – are excellent, not only in the way you develop literacy and numeracy skills and use them in other lessons, but also in the way you are encouraged to develop as a person, understanding how to be safe and healthy, how to make a contribution to life and preparing you for your future life. Just as important, your school cares for you very well. You told us you felt safe and well cared for and that means that you can work hard and learn well in a happy environment.

None of these things happen by accident. Behind all the strengths of the school is a great deal of understanding about your needs and how you learn. There are many plans and arrangements that are developed to help and support you. All the adults who work with you – those in the classroom, those in the offices and those who do the jobs that often go unnoticed – share an understanding of the school's ambitions for you and as a result they do their jobs very well. We have left your school with one idea for the future – to leave some helpful hints about how your work can improve when it is marked. We know you know your targets and talk to teachers about them but we think a reminder in your books would be very helpful.

Thank you for a fascinating visit – and especially for the singing in your Remembrance Day assemblies.

Geoff Cooper

Lead inspector