

# Cramlington Shanklea First School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	122194
<b>Local Authority</b>	Northumberland
<b>Inspection number</b>	292335
<b>Inspection dates</b>	27–28 June 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Gianna Ulyatt

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>	First
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–9
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	231
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Andrew Hodson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Janet Holland
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 October 2002
<b>School address</b>	Nairn Road Parkside Chase Cramlington Northumberland NE23 1RQ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01670 715205
<b>Fax number</b>	01670 590610

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is an average sized first school situated in an urban area where there is no significant social and economic disadvantage. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. There are very few pupils from minority ethnic groups. The number of pupils who have a statement of special educational need is almost double the national average. The percentage of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is about half the national average. Attainment on entry to the school is broadly average and most children benefit from private pre-school provision situated within the school building. The school offers additional services in the form of full day care and after school provision. The school is to close in July 2007 and re-open as a school catering for the full primary age range in September 2007.

## 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; its success is due in part to the strong leadership of the headteacher. Pupils enjoy school and thrive in the happy and caring atmosphere. Relationships are very good and each pupil is valued as an individual. Overall, parents support the work of the school. One parent expressed a typical view by stating, '...the school has been wonderful and I now have a happy and confident child.' Behaviour is exemplary and pupils show high levels of consideration and care for each other and for those less fortunate than themselves. In lessons, they listen well to teachers and each other, work very hard and are proud of their achievements. Pupils are very well prepared for their next stage of education and the oldest are very excited about the prospect of being the first Year 5 cohort in the new primary school.

Standards are very high and pupils achieve very well. Children enter the school with skills and knowledge that are at the expected level for their age. Adults in the Foundation Stage work well with children and support their learning. The children make good progress, although the curriculum does not provide enough opportunities for children to learn through play across all areas of learning. Good progress continues in Key Stages 1 and 2 because teachers make learning interesting and fun. School data indicate that in spite of the recent influx of new pupils to the school, attainment in mathematics has improved and in reading it has been maintained. However attainment in writing is not as high as in previous years, and opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills across a range of subjects are limited. Pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress.

Teaching is good and pupils learn well in lessons. Teachers are skilled at using technology to support new learning and pupils are interested and motivated to learn. The strong emphasis on developing speaking and listening skills encourages pupils to discuss ideas across many subject areas. The good curriculum in Key Stages 1 and 2 widens pupils' interests and enhances their social skills. Classrooms are enhanced by good quality displays. They reflect pupils' work and support their learning well. The good levels of care and support ensure that all pupils make very good progress.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides strong leadership and shares a clear vision with all staff and governors. The recent appointments of staff to management positions have strengthened the leadership team. All are well focused on bringing about improvements and on developing the full primary curriculum. Through regular monitoring, all are aware of what the school does well and what needs to be developed. Governors know the school well and are supportive and challenging in all respects. Self-evaluation is securely based on the school's needs and is used well to inform the school improvement plan. The school has addressed all issues from the last inspection, and with key middle management posts in place, is in a good position to move forward. The school offers good value for money.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the range of opportunities for children in the Foundation Stage to learn through play.
- Ensure that pupils have sufficient opportunities to practise their writing skills across a range of subjects.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Standards are high and pupils achieve very well. Attainment on entry is broadly average, but slightly below expectations in early literacy skills. Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage, particularly in reading and writing and mathematical calculation. By the time they begin Year 1, their attainment is above the expected level for this age group. By Year 2 the school's results in the national assessments are significantly above average and have been consistently so for the past five years. Pupils of all abilities, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, achieve at the same good rate. By Year 4 pupils sustain the good progress and maintain their high standards. In the 2006 assessments for Year 4 pupils, more than half reached the higher levels in reading and over a third reached the higher level in writing and mathematics. Within this picture of consistently high attainment, standards in mathematics and reading are a little higher than those in writing, where pupils do not have enough opportunities to practise their skills in other subjects.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils love coming to school because lessons are interesting so they are motivated to learn. Attendance is above average. Pupils feel safe and secure with many caring adults around to help out should the need arise. The school has helped to instil sensible habits for keeping healthy and school menus contain healthy choices. Pupils enjoy sports and participate in physical activities after school. The elected school council is involved in some decisions relating to school reorganisation, including the choice of deputy headteacher. Pupils are extremely well prepared for their future economic well-being because they attain high academic standards and have very well developed social skills.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They are given opportunities to demonstrate their achievements and time to think about their feelings and emotions. They consider the needs of others and support local and national charities. Pupils' behaviour is excellent. They listen carefully in lessons and eagerly raise their hands to answer questions. They clearly understand the differences between right and wrong. They have developed good friendships with pupils new to the school and have made them feel very welcome.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teaching is typically lively and offers pupils a range of interesting activities. Good use of the interactive whiteboard and other resources combined with problem-solving activities allows teachers to provide an interesting and active learning environment. Teaching in Key Stage 2 is a strength of the school and encourages pupils to learn independently, speak with confidence, listen to others and work successfully in groups. Pupils discuss and explore the values shown by famous people, for example. Pupils' work is marked regularly and pupils are learning how to improve by evaluating their own and others' work. In all lessons pupils behave extremely well and support one another in their learning. They are spontaneous in their praise for their classmates. Teachers actively promote pupils' thinking skills and encourage them to discuss dilemmas. There are, however, missed

opportunities to encourage pupils to formalise their ideas in writing and develop and practise their skills across different subjects. Pupils with learning difficulties receive excellent support from skilled and caring teaching assistants and consequently make good progress.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good and promotes good achievement in terms of pupils' academic and personal development. There is a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy and, as a result, standards are high in these subjects, but there is not enough emphasis on using writing skills across the curriculum. The curriculum has been successfully remodelled to make learning enjoyable and relevant to pupils' lives. Throughout the school, lessons are enriched by educational visits, for example to castles, the coastline and farms. The development of speaking, listening and thinking skills has had a major impact on pupils' self-confidence, on the way they learn together, and on their readiness for future learning. Science and personal, social and health education promote pupils' understanding about how to adopt safe and healthy lifestyles. Information and communication technology (ICT) supports learning across subjects. The teaching of French in all year groups broadens pupils' outlook. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are very well provided for and there is very good inclusion across the school. The Foundation Stage curriculum focuses well on early literacy and mathematical skills, but does not offer children enough opportunities to learn through play. Extra-curricular activities focus well on developing pupils' interest in a range of sporting and exercise activities, such as cricket, netball and cycling and there is a flourishing school choir and a maypole club.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Care, guidance and support are good. The health and safety of all children have high priority and all child protection and safeguarding requirements are met, including risk assessments. The school works very hard to meet the needs of all pupils. The needs of those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well met by skilled staff. Secure procedures are in place to ensure the good welfare of vulnerable pupils, including those in care. Assessment systems are used well to identify pupils who need additional help, and high quality support is provided to ensure they achieve well. Parents are positive about the care shown to their children and the many opportunities provided for them to be involved in their children's learning, including planned workshops in ICT. Academic guidance is good and pupils have useful targets to guide their learning and help them improve. The school works closely with a range of medical and educational specialists to provide specific advice and resources whenever required.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. The strong leadership of the headteacher has ensured the continued high standards over a number of years. The school has a good picture of its strengths and where it needs to go next. Its action plan is firmly rooted in the priorities identified. The headteacher is guiding the school well through a period of significant change. Staff development is well focused on school improvement issues as well as preparing teachers to undertake new roles and responsibilities within the primary school setting.

The enthusiastic management team has been newly appointed in preparation for school reorganisation. Together they are analysing pupils' work and looking at ways to ensure high standards are maintained. The recent strong focus on mathematics has resulted in standards improving in Key Stage 1.

Governance is good. Governors are knowledgeable and know the school well. They are particularly supportive in guiding and directing the school through the current period of change. Governors are good critical friends. They support and monitor the work of the school and hold it to good account. The school has made good progress since the last inspection. It has good capacity to improve as it develops into a primary school.

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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>	<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>	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	1
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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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	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>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

<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.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

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

29 June 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Cramlington Shanklea First School, Northumberland,

NE23 1RQ

I had a very enjoyable two days in your school. I particularly enjoyed talking to you over lunchtime. You are very friendly and caring pupils, and I think that you attend a good school. It is very good to see the way you welcome newcomers to your school, so they quickly make new friends. In September, when you become a primary school, you will get the chance to make even more new friends. It was good to see how excited the Year 4 pupils are about being the first Year 5 in the school and I know the school is planning very interesting activities for you. You are very kind in the way you support charities and you seem to really enjoy the events that involve raising money. You are growing up into confident young people. It is good to see how well you concentrate in lessons and how you listen very carefully to the ideas of your classmates. I can tell you like school because your behaviour in lessons and around the school is excellent.

I know you work hard and try your best at all times. Your standards are high in reading, writing and mathematics. The school is going to look at ways in which you can practise your writing more and use the skills you have across other subjects, perhaps. I have also asked the school to look at ways to give the Reception children more chances to learn new things while they are playing. Reception children can help out too by continuing to play nicely with their friends and helping the teachers to tidy away afterwards.

Thank you again for being so helpful and don't forget - the harder you work, the better your future chances in life.

With best wishes

Gianna Ulyatt

Lead inspector