

Hareside First School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122268
Local Authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	292354
Inspection dates	12–13 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Andrew Scott

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

Type of school	First
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	384
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Janet Bell
Headteacher	Mrs Karen Chetwynd
Date of previous school inspection	1 January 2002
School address	Hareside Cramlington Northumberland NE23 6BL
Telephone number	01670 712440
Fax number	01670 716422

Age group	3–9
Inspection dates	12–13 June 2007
Inspection number	292354

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a large first school in a residential area where socio-economic conditions are average. Attainment on entry to the Foundation Stage is typical for children of their age. Almost all pupils are from White British families and no pupil is at an early stage of learning to speak English. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The school is to become a primary school in September 2007, as part of Northumberland's move towards a two-tier system of schools. The building of a new school is under way; there have already been new additional pupils and staff, and more pupils will join the school in September 2007 from a neighbouring school that is closing.

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. There are outstanding features. Although it is undergoing important changes, the excellent leadership of the headteacher and commitment of the staff ensure that the high quality of pupils' education is being maintained during this time of change. This is a school where pupils prosper academically. They consistently achieve well and reach above average standards by the end of Years 2 and 4 in the key subjects. On a personal level, pupils develop into responsible and thoughtful young people because of the excellent level of care by all staff for their well-being and safety. Pupils are respectful of others, behave well and so are well prepared for life ahead.

All pupils achieve well because teaching is essentially good, sometimes outstanding, and because teachers are very sensitive to the different needs of pupils. Teachers create a positive working atmosphere in their classrooms and have high expectations of their pupils. As a result, pupils are motivated to work hard and develop a pleasure for learning. They make good progress throughout the school from average starting points in the Nursery. By the end of the Reception year, children exceed the goals expected of them because teachers provide rich experiences that enable them to learn for themselves. Teachers throughout the school continue to encourage pupils to develop independence of thought and accuracy in their basic skills.

Teachers know their pupils' progress very well through constant assessment in lessons and very thorough systems of recording performance. Consequently, they set work that is usually right for pupils' capabilities. A good curriculum gives pupils a broad range of subjects, often interrelated, yet some teachers do not always use this good curriculum effectively. Lessons are always relevant to pupils' needs, but some activities are quite routine and some topics are unenterprising. The school has identified this as an area for development and has plans to bring about improvement.

The strong emphasis on safeguarding pupils results in them taking mature responsibility for their own well-being. Their knowledge of diet and exercise is advanced for their age. Safety matters are intrinsic to school life. Children in the Foundation Stage are already taking advantage of the adjacent building site to learn and act out new safety procedures. Pupils' social development is good, although their social responsibility through the school council is very new. Pupils have yet to become fully aware of the multi-cultural nature of modern society.

The school's leadership and management are good at all levels. It is not immediately obvious that some senior teachers are new to the school because the school is very inclusive and the headteacher has established clear and efficient systems. The quality of governance is a great asset. Although there is not complete consistency in all aspects of the school yet, the signs are promising. The headteacher's shrewdness ensures that the school's self-evaluation is accurate so it can highlight the necessary developments. The school is quite right to concentrate its energies on its move to primary status at present. It has developed well since the last inspection and shows good capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the curriculum is implemented in a way that interests and excites pupils in all subjects.
- Maximise opportunities to develop pupils' awareness of multi-cultural issues.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are above average and pupils achieve well and reach challenging targets. Children enter the Nursery with skills typical for their age. They make good progress through the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception). By the end of the Reception year, they exceed all the goals expected of five-years-olds. This good progress continues through Years 1 and 2. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics have been consistently above average for the past five years, and especially high in 2006.

By Year 4, pupils' attainment has been improving, especially in reading and mathematics, and is usually above average, as it was in 2006. Attainment in science and information and communication technology (ICT) is also higher than expected for pupils of this age. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who are particularly able achieve as well as other pupils, underlining the school's commitment to equality.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good with some outstanding features. Pupils fully understand what makes them individual and special; they develop great respect for other pupils. By Year 4, pupils become responsible; for example, by looking after the welfare of younger children. Pupils are enthusiastic about their roles in the very recently formed school council, but it is too soon to judge the effectiveness of their work. Pupils benefit from plenty of cultural opportunities but their awareness of the diversity of Britain's multi-cultural society is underdeveloped.

Their knowledge and understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle are outstanding. They know the need for balance in their diet and that certain foods are needed but can cause harm in excess. The building work of the new school is proving an excellent resource to strengthen their sense of safety even further. Behaviour is good overall; pupils are attentive and enjoy work, although some become restless when, occasionally, lessons lose momentum. Pupils state that racism and bullying in any form are unacceptable and are confident that adults will deal with any such incidents effectively. Attendance has recently improved and is now close to the national average, but holidays taken in term time continue to affect overall attendance and cause pupils to miss valuable work. By Year 4, pupils are well equipped to take advantage of their next stage of learning.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good with some outstanding examples. Teachers generally set challenging work with high expectations. This is especially apparent in the Foundation Stage where children love the work and produce writing which is of a high standard for their age. Throughout the school, teachers have a very good rapport with their pupils giving them the security and confidence to make contributions, share their ideas and work effectively with others during lessons.

Teachers present and explain new learning clearly, often using resources skilfully, although not always exploiting the potential of interactive whiteboards. They frequently make good use of the final segment of lessons to give children the opportunity to assess their own work against the original objectives. Occasionally, pupils do not have enough time to work independently.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school has a good curriculum. A strong focus on the core subjects means that pupils acquire good basic skills. These are promoted well through every subject, although not all opportunities are fully exploited. In the Foundation Stage, children benefit from rich experiences, and a good mixture of directed teaching and learning through exploration. The school's policy of inclusion is outstanding. For example, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have very focused learning plans and sensitive support from teaching assistants. Such distinctions, though, are deliberately played down so that all pupils just blend in. There are good activities outside lessons but the school does not at present take the pupils on educational visits. The school is working towards consistently implementing the curriculum with greater variety and creativity in its planning. The best lessons have exciting content that inspires pupils but sometimes the curriculum is too formal.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are in place. Training for child protection, for example, is very recent especially to ensure all new staff are up to date. Pastoral care is excellent. Staff know all pupils extremely well and respond to particular needs sensitively, and work very closely with outside agencies. For example, liaison with the Education Welfare Officer is improving the attendance of the more vulnerable pupils. Very good personal, social and health education has resulted in pupils increasingly adopting safe and healthy lifestyles.

Guidance for pupils' academic development is good. The school's tracking system is very thorough and ensures that staff know the fine detail of pupils' progress. Extra support is swiftly allocated for those pupils most in need. All pupils are increasingly aware of how they are doing and how they can improve their work. Although pupils' efforts are celebrated, not all teachers support learning and boost pupils' self-esteem enough by displaying their work in classrooms.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership and management are good, especially those of the headteacher. Her excellent leadership is steering the school very successfully through a new phase of development. New staff, pupils and parents are being absorbed into the school smoothly because of efficient systems to guide them, and the headteacher lays down clear guidelines. She is well supported by the new deputy headteacher and other senior teachers, especially in the Foundation Stage, and they are already gelling as a team.

The school knows itself very well. It is well aware of its strengths and the main areas for development. Inevitably, its energies at present are focused on the new school building and new status. Governance is very good. Governors are very knowledgeable and their expertise is

valuable in aspects of the school's work; such as, health and safety and staff recruitment. Parents are very positive about the school and praise its caring ethos, in particular. A small number think that the school does not take enough account of parents' views. The inspection found no evidence of this. The vast majority of parents believe the school does take account of their views.

The school has developed well since the last inspection. Standards have been maintained, the state of the building is being emphatically dealt with and the key issues have been long since addressed. The progress towards primary status and the readiness of the staff to develop professionally show that the school is well placed to improve further.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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
--	-----------------------

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	2
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	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
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	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?	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.

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	1
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

14 June 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hareside First School, Cramlington, NE23 6BL

Thank you for the part you played in the inspection of your school. My colleagues and I were very grateful for your comments, which helped us to get to know your school quickly.

We feel, like you, that you have a good school. The school takes excellent care of you so that you not only feel safe and valued, but also become very good at looking after yourselves. We were impressed by your knowledge of how to lead a healthy lifestyle. We know that you behave well and take a great interest in your work. You obviously respect your teachers as well as other pupils and this makes for a happy and productive school. It also prepares you well for later life, although we do feel that you should learn more about the different cultures in our country.

We were also impressed by your success in your work year after year. You all achieve well and reach standards better than expected for children of your age, not only in English and mathematics but also in science and ICT. A lot of your topics in lessons are very interesting but some are not so exciting, and so we have asked the school to plan learning that will motivate and fascinate you. I am sure that your teachers would like to know what might particularly interest you.

Your school is making very good progress towards becoming a primary school. All staff are working hard to make sure any changes do not affect your normal school life. Your headteacher is a very important reason why your school is doing so well. I am sure that you will help her and all the staff to keep the school as normal as possible next year when more and more changes will take place.

I wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Scott

Lead Inspector