

# Balliol Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	108603
<b>Local Authority</b>	North Tyneside
<b>Inspection number</b>	301360
<b>Inspection dates</b>	12–13 June 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Joy Frost HMI

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 category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	138
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ms Elizabeth Scobie
<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Alison Higgins
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 October 2003
<b>School address</b>	Chesters Avenue Longbenton Newcastle upon Tyne Tyne and Wear NE12 8QP
<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 2007471
<b>Fax number</b>	0191 2007472

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools.

## Description of the school

Balliol Primary School is a smaller than average primary school in a deprived area of North Tyneside. Over half of pupils are entitled to a free school meal, which is well above the national average. The majority of pupils are White British, but increasing amounts are from minority ethnic backgrounds and have English as an additional language. The school currently operates three resource bases; an assessment base for nursery-aged children and two for pupils with behavioural, emotional and social needs. A larger than average proportion of pupils has learning difficulties and/or disabilities and statements of special educational need. The schools in the area are undergoing proposals to remove surplus places, and there is a falling roll. A larger than average proportion of pupils enter and leave the school throughout the school year. The school has been awarded Healthy School Status and ActiveMark.

## 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 with many outstanding features that offers its pupils, many of whom have severe and complex learning needs, a good standard of education. It has a very good reputation within the local authority for the work it does with pupils who have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties in the two resource bases. These pupils attend the school from other schools across the borough for differing periods of time. Due to the outstanding care, guidance and support they receive, many are able to return to mainstream education or transfer to specialist provision. Despite the high level of need of some pupils, behaviour across the school is good. The school offers good value for money.

Overall, achievement is good and standards are broadly average. Pupils enter school with skills and knowledge which are well below that expected for their age. Children make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage class where there are good gains in developing their social, physical and creative development. Progress is less marked in the development of basic reading and writing skills. As they move through the school, their progress and attainment are rigorously tracked and pupils who are underachieving are identified and targeted for extra support. By the time they leave Year 2 they have made up some ground in basic literacy skills, and mathematical skills are in line with that expected for seven-year-olds. In the 2006 tests for eleven-year-olds, pupils' attainment rose for the third year running to above the national average in mathematics and science and broadly in line in English. This represents good progress across Key Stages 1 and 2.

In the Foundation Stage, the balance of activities to develop play related learning outside the classroom is not well enough developed. Children gain knowledge of letter sounds which helps them with their reading, but there are not enough opportunities to use these skills to develop independent writing.

Teaching and learning is consistently good. This is because teachers are knowledgeable and lessons are carefully planned to meet the differing, and often diverse needs, of pupils. However, in some lessons the level of challenge for the most able pupils is not good enough. There are many levels of support for pupils' learning, and a range of strategies including; in class support, small group withdrawal, intervention strategies, target setting and quality marking. All are used effectively throughout the school.

The outstanding quality of the care, guidance and support offered by the school is characterised in the calm atmosphere in all areas of the school and the way all pupils are treated equally by staff. Support is given wherever it is needed in an unobtrusive manner. Excellent systems have been put in place to raise pupils' self-esteem and to give them responsibility for their own actions. Comprehensive safeguarding procedures are in place. Because of this support and guidance, pupils' personal development and well-being are good. As they move through the school their confidence grows, and they are able to build and maintain good relationships with adults and peers. Pupils enjoy their education, are knowledgeable about healthy lifestyles and how to keep themselves safe and make a good contribution to the community through the school council and many fundraising events.

The curriculum is satisfactory and meets all statutory requirements. There are a range of visits planned to enrich the learning in the classroom and an opportunity to attend a residential visit for the older pupils.

The leadership of the headteacher is outstanding. She has ensured that the school offers good care and support to pupils and families whilst also leading the drive to raise standards. Leadership and management overall are good, and senior and middle managers work as a team to identify areas of weakness and set targets for improvement. The school has rigorous monitoring procedures but does not always use the data from these effectively to evaluate the impact of their planned actions. The governing body is supportive of the school and carries out its role as a critical friend. The governors are kept well informed by the headteacher and encouraged to visit and take a full part in the life of the school. Despite this, their ability to challenge the school and fully evaluate its performance is underdeveloped. The school has made good progress since the last inspection.

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

- Improve the challenge for more able pupils so that standards rise even further.
- Improve the balance between indoor and outdoor play opportunities for the Foundation Stage pupils and ensure that these pupils have more opportunities to use their knowledge of letter sounds to write independently.
- Plan actions for improvement in more detail so that the governing body can better evaluate the impact of the school's work.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Overall, achievement is good and standards are average. Pupils enter school with skills and knowledge that are well below that expected for their age. Many children in the Nursery are not ready for school but due to the good care and support they receive while they are in the Foundation Stage unit, they settle in quickly and make up some ground. By the time they enter Year 1, the majority have met the early learning goals for their age in mathematical, physical, creative and social development; but are below average in language development, especially writing and knowledge and understanding of the world. By the end of Year 2, standards are still below average but the majority are catching up to national expectations and most have made good progress. Over the last three years standards across Key Stage 2 have been rising steadily. Good procedures are in place to identify pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and appropriate support is provided enabling them to make good gains in their basic skills development as they progress through the school. In the national tests for eleven-year-olds in 2006, pupils' standards were above national averages in mathematics and science and broadly in line with national averages in English. This represents very good progress from their prior achievement. The proportion of pupils who attain the higher levels is below average because these pupils are too often given work which is not challenging enough.

Pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties who are taught either in mainstream classes or in the resource base also make good progress and some achieve high standards in national tests.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good throughout the school. Behaviour is well managed and strategies are appreciated by the pupils who look forward to their 'Golden Time'. Pupils enjoy their education, like coming to school and have developed good attitudes to learning. They work hard in lessons

and actively participate in all the school has to offer. Through the well structured personal, social and health education programme, assemblies, daily lessons and extra-curricular activities, pupils are developing a good understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles and emotional well-being. Bullying is rare in school but when it does occur, pupils and parents are confident that it is dealt with quickly and appropriately. All pupils develop good relationships both in and around the school. They are polite and courteous to adults and each other. Pupils make a positive contribution to their community including fundraising for example comic relief and 'Send a Cow', performances and the active school council which enables all pupils to have a voice and decide how any money raised is spent. By the time they leave the school, they have the necessary skills to ensure their economic well-being.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching is consistently good in all classes. Lessons are well planned and activities closely match pupils' abilities. Teachers use good questioning skills to include all pupils in lessons and to move their thinking forward. The key to the success of the school's work is the high quality working relationships developed across the school. Staff are always cheerful and welcoming and pupils respond to this approach. Good marking and assessment, which informs pupils' learning, contributes to the good progress they make. Pupils have individual targets which tell them the next steps in their learning and these are displayed in some but not all books. Support staff are of a high quality and are used to target individual and groups of pupils both within and outside the classroom. Teachers' planning ensures that pupils from the two bases, some of whom are taught wholly in mainstream, are well integrated into lessons.

Teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory but there are not enough opportunities for the youngest children to experience play based learning outside the classroom and too few opportunities for pupils to use their knowledge of letter sounds to write independently and accelerate their progress.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory and meets statutory requirements. Modern foreign languages are taught in Key Stages 1 and 2 and music, which was unsatisfactory in the last inspection, is now taught well. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop an awareness of multicultural issues which would better prepare them for the world we live in. The school has recognised this and have developed plans address the issue. The school tries hard to plan visits and visitors to the school to enrich the curriculum and a range of extra-curricular activities are on offer. Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 have the opportunity to attend a weekend residential visit to the Lake District. Information and communication technology (ICT) is taught in a well equipped suite and pupils are using their skills across the curriculum.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 1**

Care, guidance and support for pupils is outstanding. All staff know and care for individual pupils very well and cater for their needs. Pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, or who have emotional and behavioural needs are very well supported by experienced,

knowledgeable staff, whether taught in classes or in one of the resource bases. Procedures for vulnerable pupils are especially well developed and safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements. A particular strength of the school is the wonderful multi-agency links they have developed. They work closely with all agencies to support both pupils and their families within the school and the community. Parents are appreciative of the work the school does and the vast majority agree that this is a good school. Attendance has improved through the proactive work of the headteacher and the educational welfare officer; it is now broadly average. The school works exceptionally well with the educational psychologist and the behaviour support team to ensure that all pupils receive the support they need. The headteacher ensures that parents are kept informed about their child through regular newsletters and individual letters to parents where necessary. Pupils' views are actively sought through the school council and more recently pupil interviews with the governing body.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

This is a school that knows itself well. The clear vision of the headteacher to ensure that every child is welcome and succeeds underpins all of the school's work. Leadership and management at all levels are good. Areas for improvement are identified and actions are put in place to address any underachievement. Middle leaders have good subject knowledge and lead their subjects well. The headteacher works well with the whole staff to ensure that they are all involved in planning actions for improvement but these actions are not always as detailed as they could be. There are good procedures in place to monitor the work of the school including teaching and learning and how well different groups of pupils are performing. However, the data gathered from this monitoring is not used rigorously enough to ensure that any actions which are not having the desired impact are changed and refined. The governing body is very committed to the school and they take many opportunities to become involved in school life. Their ability to fully evaluate the work of the school needs further development. The school has made good progress since the last inspection and their capacity to make further improvement is good.

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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?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
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	3
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	1

### 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	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	2

### 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>	3
<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.

## 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	1
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 Balliol Primary School, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE12 8QP

I would like to thank you for your warm welcome when I visited your school recently to see how well you were doing. I enjoyed talking to you all and listening to the things you like about your school. You told me you go to a good school and I agree with you. I especially liked the way you all get along with each other and with your teachers and how well your teachers take care of you. You behave very well and have very good attitudes to learning and because of this you are making good progress.

I have asked Miss Higgins to make a few improvements so that your school will be even better. These are to:

- make sure that the youngest pupils have more opportunities to use the outdoor play area and use their knowledge of letter sounds to write more independently
- make sure that your teachers plan more challenging activities for those of you who are capable of doing harder work.

I have also asked your teachers and governors to keep a closer check on how well the school is planning for improvement.

You can help your teachers by remembering your targets and taking note of the good comments that teachers write in your books.

Keep up the good work!

Kind Regards

Joy Frost

Her Majesty's Inspector