

# Bloemfontein Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	114034
<b>Local Authority</b>	Durham
<b>Inspection number</b>	301733
<b>Inspection dates</b>	27–28 June 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Joe Clark

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	104
School	
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Tracy Davinson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Michael Peaker
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 September 2003
<b>School address</b>	The Middles Craghead Stanley County Durham DH9 6AG
<b>Telephone number</b>	01207 232198
<b>Fax number</b>	01207 232198

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This is a smaller than average primary school serving an area of high social and economic deprivation. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is well above average. All pupils are of White British or European heritage. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above average. Pupils' attainment on entry is well below average for their age, particularly in social skills and language development. The school has Artsmark Silver and Healthy Schools awards as well as the Gold National Clean Air Award.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory and improving school. Some features of its work are good. Progress throughout the school is satisfactory, and accelerating. Standards are below average overall in Years 2 and 6, which represents satisfactory achievement from pupils' starting points on entry to Year 1. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. The supportive and stimulating environment, with its strong emphasis on learning through play and exploration, helps pupils to make good progress in meeting their personal goals.

Boys and girls are making faster progress than in recent years because teaching and learning, whilst satisfactory, are improving. With the effective support of local authority staff, there have been significant improvements in teaching and learning in the last 18 months, particularly in assessment procedures. Management systems to develop key aspects of classroom practice have also improved. There is much more sharing of good classroom practice between teachers as a result of more effective monitoring. Improved leadership at all levels is giving a clear impetus and direction to securing improvements in pupils' progress. Relationships are positive and encouraging, and teachers work hard at giving pupils confidence and reassurance. Opportunities to develop pupils' literacy skills are not always planned for or, when they unexpectedly arise, not taken.

The curriculum is satisfactory. There is an increasing focus on developing basic skills but planning for how this is to be achieved in all lessons is inconsistent. The introduction of a modern foreign language throughout the school has been popular with pupils. Enrichment is good in the arts. Computers are not used sufficiently to assist learning across all subjects of the curriculum.

Pupils' personal development is good. In lessons and around the school, their behaviour is good. Their attitudes to learning are positive. Pupils mix well with each other and use the good range of outdoor play equipment enthusiastically and responsibly. Attendance is below average despite a considerable improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils enjoy coming to school where they feel safe and are well cared for, receiving good personal support. 'We don't want to leave' was a comment often repeated by Year 6 pupils. Pupils understand the importance of staying safe and trying to live a healthy lifestyle. They leave the school with good basic skills in mathematics but skills are below average in English and well below what is expected in some aspects of information and communication technology (ICT). There is scope for improvement in pupils' literacy and ICT skills in preparation for the next stage of schooling. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive good support. They make good progress in meeting their personal and behavioural targets and satisfactory progress in their academic work.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Provide planned opportunities in all lessons for pupils to develop and enhance their literacy skills.
- Raise standards in ICT by making more use of computers in all subjects.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Achievement is satisfactory but standards are below average. Children's skills when they start school in Reception, although generally well below those typical for their age, are rising because more children join having had pre-school Nursery experience. Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage, but, overall, their skills are still below average for their age when they start Year 1. Pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. This is accelerating due to better teaching and learning but it has not yet translated into higher test results at the end of Year 6. Current standards at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 are below average. In 2006, overall results in national tests at the end of Year 6 were below the national average. However, this is a marked improvement on results in previous years and represents satisfactory achievement given pupils' starting points. Results in mathematics were similar to the national average, showing that achievement in this subject among this particular group of pupils was excellent. The results in English were well below average. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. They enjoy taking on responsibility as buddies or school monitors and many Year 5 pupils have successfully completed Sports Leader Award training. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. On the yard, they use the good range of outdoor play equipment enthusiastically and responsibly. Pupils enjoy coming to school. Attendance has improved since the previous inspection but remains below average. Pupils say that they feel safe in school and that there is little bullying. They believe having access to buddies and mediators provides reassurance and support if needed. 'If I was bullied I would go and find a mediator who would help me' was a typical comment. In the Foundation Stage, pupils successfully follow specific programmes to help develop and nurture relationships with adults and each other. Pupils understand the advantages of maintaining a healthy lifestyle through sensible diet and the value of keeping fit through regular exercise. They develop good mathematical skills but reading and writing skills are below average and skills in some aspects of ICT are well below average. These need to be developed further to prepare pupils for the next stage of education.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory and improving. Much of the teaching seen was good but the improvement in the quality of teaching, whilst resulting in pupils making faster progress, has not been consistently good for long enough to have had a strong impact on pupils' standards and achievement. There are some common strengths in the teaching. Relationships are supportive and encourage pupils to want to learn. The inherent challenges in teaching mixed-age classes are skilfully tackled through ensuring the tasks set match each group's capability. Marking and assessment are good. They help pupils know what they have to do to improve. Teaching assistants offer good quality support and are well deployed in lessons. The use of questioning to ensure all groups of pupils understand what is being taught as the lesson proceeds is often

not effective. Lesson plans are well structured but do not provide enough planned opportunities to help pupils improve their literacy skills.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory. There is an increasing emphasis on developing basic literacy skills but planning to achieve this, through their application and development in lessons across all subjects, is not robust enough. Good curriculum links with other providers enhance what the school offers, for example, in providing modern foreign language teaching throughout the school. There is good support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities through withdrawal and in-class support from specialist teachers and teaching assistants. The range of extra-curricular activities provided is satisfactory. There is good enrichment of the Arts through outside visits and visits to the school by performers and artists. The Foundation Stage curriculum is good. A supportive and stimulating environment underpins a strong curriculum focus on learning through play. Not enough use is made of computers to support learning in most subject areas.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The care, guidance and support of pupils are good. Safeguarding procedures are up-to-date and conform to recent legislation. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive effective personal support and academic guidance. The school knows its pupils well, and relationships are trusting and supportive. The school works effectively with external agencies to provide good levels of care and support, particularly for pupils with specified needs. Good links with the local comprehensive school ensure transition to the next stage of education is smooth and non-threatening. Guidance is satisfactory and developing well. Pupils know how well they are doing because the setting of targets has become more effective. Good use is made of prior attainment data when setting targets for the end of Years 2 and 6. Children in the Foundation Stage are well cared for and helped to settle in successfully.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Leadership by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and subject coordinators provides a clear focus and whole-school drive to ensure standards and achievement improve. This is now acknowledged by all leaders to be the top priority. The recent improvements in teaching and learning are the result of more effective monitoring systems. These are satisfactory, and improving. Consequently, pupils are now making faster progress and reaching higher standards in their work. More needs to be done to raise standards of literacy throughout the school however. The provision and deployment of ICT resources inhibit pupils' learning; for example, there are only eight laptop networked computers with Internet access available for class teaching. Progress since the previous inspection is satisfactory. Standards in English are improving but are not yet high enough. The capacity for further improvement is satisfactory, as is governance. The local authority has provided effective support, particularly in helping to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and the headteacher.

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## Annex A

## 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>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

### 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	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<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>	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>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

2 July 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Bloemfontein Primary School, County Durham, DH9 6AG.

Thank you so much for your warm welcome when I visited your school recently. I really appreciated the help you gave me and the interesting things you told me about your school. I enjoyed talking to you.

This is what I think about you and your school.

- You are friendly and polite.
- You get on very well together – it's good to see the bigger pupils looking after the smaller ones.
- Your behaviour around the school is good.
- In lessons you work hard and do your best.
- You enjoy school but some of you do not attend regularly enough. If this applies to you, I think it's time you changed and started coming more often.
- Your teachers are getting better at teaching you in ways that help you learn but there are not enough opportunities in every lesson to help you improve your English.
- You like using computers but the school does not have enough of them and the ones you do have are not used regularly enough to help you learn.
- The school takes good care of you, right from the Reception class and up to Year 6. You get good support from your teachers and other adults.

Overall, your school is a satisfactory school and is getting better. With your help I'm sure it will soon be a good school in every way.

Thank you once again for all your help.

Good luck for the future.

Joe Clark

Inspector