

Kibblesworth Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108334
Local Authority	Gateshead
Inspection number	301738
Inspection dates	24–25 May 2007
Reporting inspector	Andrew Scott

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	106
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms Debbie Goldfinch
Headteacher	Mr Kevin Dodd
Date of previous school inspection	1 September 2003
School address	West View Kibblesworth Gateshead Tyne and Wear NE11 0XP
Telephone number	0191 4102975
Fax number	0191 4102975

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This small primary school serves a village in rural Gateshead where there is considerable social and economic disadvantage. There is an above average percentage of pupils who are eligible for free school meals and a high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Nearly all pupils come from White British families and the movement among the pupil population is high. Attainment on entry to the nursery is much lower than expected nationally.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Kibblesworth Primary is an outstanding school where pupils thrive. A very strong focus on raising all-round skills results in excellent achievement in all major subjects. Standards are above average by Year 6. Pupils have come a long way from a low starting point and there are clear indications that their attainment is already rising further. Children now make rapid progress in the Foundation Stage and currently reach above average standards. Standards by Year 2 have improved consistently over recent years, so providing a first-rate platform for future success at Year 6.

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. Many of them begin school with weak social and language skills and, by Year 6, they are thoughtful and sensible. Group activity in lessons shows how considerate and respectful they are to other pupils, as well as adults; behaviour is, therefore, impeccable in lessons and pupils sustain high levels of concentration. Through a range of their own councils, pupils contribute fully to the school community. Close interaction with the village gives pupils an excellent understanding of their own ex-mining culture. They are very well aware of the need for a healthy lifestyle; even children in the nursery know the importance of washing hands – 'to remove germs'. Overall, pupils' preparation for their life ahead is excellent.

Classrooms are inspiring places. Teachers are very knowledgeable about their subjects, and so present new learning with a confidence and clarity that motivate pupils and enable them to make rapid progress. Teachers have many strategies that engage all pupils, from hot-seating to brainstorming, from adept questioning to light-hearted but highly focused games. As a result, pupils are only too happy to respond. Teachers match work skilfully to suit pupils' particular needs. An interview with a former professional footballer, for example, motivated boys to write. Teachers' very high expectations are based on an in-depth knowledge of pupils' capabilities. Pupils thoroughly enjoy learning, not least because teachers make work exciting and varied.

The school takes excellent care of its pupils through rigorous safeguarding practices and a thorough knowledge of each pupil. There is an excellent system for monitoring pupils who show signs of vulnerability so that they can be helped swiftly. Similarly, procedures for checking pupils' progress are comprehensive, so that potential under-achievement is nipped in the bud and all pupils are given challenging personal targets. The curriculum is impressive. The richness and variety beyond the classroom percolate through each lesson and so inspire very effective learning. The Eco-School Award underlines the school's commitment to the environment, for example.

The school has improved markedly since the previous inspection. Spearheaded by the excellent leadership of the headteacher, the staff are highly effective in identifying how the school can best improve, and doing it without fuss and without delay. The great sense of unity, helped by a rejuvenated governing body, means that plans are cohesive and dynamic. Consequently, the school is in excellent shape and poised to develop further.

What the school should do to improve further

- There are no significant issues that the school needs to address.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Standards were average in the national tests of 2006. Given their low starting point, this represents outstanding progress for all pupils, regardless of ability. Children begin school with skills and abilities that are well below the level expected for their age, especially in language development, and personal and social skills. They make excellent progress through the Nursery and Reception classes, and nearly all of them reach the goals expected of five-year-olds; a few exceed them.

Pupils continue to make outstanding progress throughout the school. Standards have been rising appreciably in recent years in the assessments at Year 2. They were average in 2006, and close to being above average. By Year 6, standards in the national tests have been average in English, mathematics and science. However, pupils' achievement was very high last year and convincing evidence from the school's records and pupils' work indicate that achievement will be very similar this year, if not better, because of the sustained excellence of the teaching. This achievement is especially impressive because of the high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the adverse impact of pupils who leave and enter the school during their primary years.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is outstanding. They rapidly develop very good social skills because of the school's close-knit and lively atmosphere, and the excellent opportunities to work co-operatively. Pupils are proud of their school and enjoy coming; attendance is never less than average and improving because of the school's very good liaison with families. Pupils work very hard in lessons and sustain good concentration. They really appreciate the varied activities and become very aware of their own local culture through activities like The Black Seam project, which enables them to learn about the importance of the mining community. The Artsmark Silver award shows the breadth of their cultural activities.

From an early age, pupils become thoroughly aware of how to live healthily; for example, Reception children refer impressively to calcium in milk being good for bones. Pupils are very active; their energetic playground activity emphasised their enthusiasm for exercise and also how mindful they are of their safety and that of others. Their excellent links with the community are typified by the allotments they maintain in conjunction with Age Concern. Pupils play a full part in the school community through the school council and also via an eco council and class councils. Increasingly effective basic skills, including computer skills, prepare pupils extremely well for the next phase of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching and learning are outstanding overall. Teaching is consistently good in every class and frequently excellent. Teachers have very high expectations of their pupils and, based on their excellent knowledge of pupils' progress, set work that matches abilities and is challenging. Solving anagrams of words like 'heart' is a tall order for Reception children, but they do so in

their stride; this is excellent learning. Using skilful strategies like brainstorming, games and exciting themes to motivate pupils has enabled teachers to improve attainment.

Teachers make the classrooms desirable places to be. There is genuine warmth in their welcome and encouragement of pupils to do their best, but there is no nonsense. Any inappropriate energy is swiftly redirected. Teachers explain new concepts with great clarity so that pupils quickly understand. The interactive whiteboards are a great asset in supporting this. Teaching assistants are very good at guiding less able pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding. The school provides a wealth of interesting and stimulating activities, in and out of lessons. In their everyday learning, pupils benefit greatly from fascinating visitors, artefacts and hands-on activities. A strong emphasis on literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) contributes to their success. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum; the mixed year classes, for example, pose no problems.

The Foundation Stage provision is lively and varied, so children progress swiftly. There is excellent support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and very good scope for gifted or talented pupils in workshops at the secondary school. Resources are very good, notably in ICT. All older pupils have ready access to a laptop computer and can take them home to work on. The grounds are great for exercise, creative play or just letting off steam.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The care, guidance and support for pupils are outstanding. The school is meticulous in its procedures for safeguarding pupils through, for example, very thorough vetting of all adults connected with the school and extensive staff training. There is an excellent system for assessing pupils who, for whatever reason, may be vulnerable, so that specialist help can be provided early. Links with outside agencies are outstanding in supporting pupils; the transition teacher at the secondary school is especially effective at easing pupils' move there.

Academic guidance is excellent. The school knows exactly how well pupils are progressing through regular and detailed monitoring. This enables teachers to provide the right support for pupils who might be temporarily underachieving, notably through sharp and challenging targets. The regular 'before and after' assessments in the Golden Files are excellent for checking progress in writing. Such support has had a significant impact on raising standards.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The leadership and management of the school are outstanding. The energy, perceptiveness and wisdom of the headteacher are key factors in the school's excellent progress. He is extremely thorough in his organisation, is astute in the recruitment and professional development of staff, and his enthusiasm and drive are contagious. He is very ably supported by all staff, especially the Foundation Stage leader and the deputy headteacher; the deputy headteacher has been a major factor in the emphatic improvements in writing, science and ICT.

The school is highly skilled at evaluating its own progress. It highlights accurately its strengths but does not fight shy of areas that need developing. As a result, action plans for improvement are detailed and focused on the key aspects. For example, a shortcoming in mathematical calculation was spotted and swiftly remedied.

Governance is good and has improved a great deal since the last inspection, when it was judged unsatisfactory. Governors are now fully involved in school development and are increasingly active in monitoring the school's work. Parents are very complimentary about the school and clearly think highly of its provision for their children.

All issues from the previous report have been robustly addressed and all aspects of the school have improved. There is a very skilled and cohesive workforce, eager to develop further. They share an admirable vision and are very successfully putting it into practice. Consequently, the school has excellent capacity to improve.

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

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	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

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	3
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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
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?	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	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

26 May 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Kibblesworth Primary School, Gateshead, NE11 0XP

I am writing to thank you for the part you played in the inspection of your school. Your comments were very helpful in enabling me to get to know your school in the short time I was with you.

I think you have an outstanding school. You are right to be proud of it because you know, like me, that you have excellent teachers and a wonderful atmosphere in which you prosper in your work and personal development. You all achieve extremely well and, although standards have been average in the past, it looks as if they are improving rapidly. This is because you respond so well to your teachers. They are very knowledgeable and supportive. They have high expectations of you and provide a great variety of interesting things that motivate you. It is no surprise that you work really hard and enjoy school.

You also make very good progress in learning how to be responsible and caring individuals. All the adults in school make sure that you are very safe and secure at all times. Your various school councils, together with your links with the village and the wider world, all help to show you how diverse and complex society is and also how you can contribute to it. You are very aware of how to live healthily and safely. Your all-round skills and the excellent links with your secondary school smooth your path to the next stage of your education.

Your headteacher does an outstanding job for your school. He makes sure that your teachers are very skilled and get the best out of you. He has brought in new, exciting developments that clearly benefit you. A laptop for each junior pupil makes learning in ICT lessons so much faster, for example. The 'outside classroom' is ideal for your physical development. Your school has improved a great deal in the past few years and shows every indication of becoming even better.

I wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Scott

School Inspector