

Fellside Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108378
Local Authority	Gateshead
Inspection number	309671
Inspection date	18 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Rosemary Rodger

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	
School	263
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr John Baines
Headteacher	Mr Kevin Doran
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2003
School address	Fellside Road Whickham Gateshead Tyne and Wear NE16 5AY
Telephone number	0191 488 7486
Fax number	0191 488 7490

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: the quality of teaching and learning; the Foundation Stage and leadership and management. Evidence was gathered from lesson observations, the scrutiny of pupils' work, assessment data, the school's self-evaluation and school records, conversations with pupils, teachers and governors, and the reading of the parents' questionnaire returns. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate.

Description of the school

This is an above average sized school in a suburban area on the outskirts of Gateshead. It serves an area of low social and economic deprivation. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is low. A below average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Most pupils are of White British heritage with a small number of pupils from other minority ethnic cultures. The school has received Artsmark Gold, Healthy Schools and Basic Skills Quality Mark awards in recent years. The school is popular and oversubscribed.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school. Leadership and management are inspirational because of the systematic priority given to continuously maintaining and improving pupils' learning. As a result, standards in all subjects are exceptionally high by the time pupils leave school. The school exudes an ethos of calm and joy in which the achievement, care and personal well-being of all its pupils are evident in all aspects of its work. This is excellently demonstrated in the outstanding results in national tests in 2007; they were even higher than the results of previous years with an exceptionally high proportion of pupils reaching higher levels in English, mathematics and science. Pupils exceed their challenging targets. Children start school with standards that are generally typical of other children. They make excellent progress by the time they leave in Year 6.

The school lives up to its motto to 'provide an inspiring, caring environment, in which we are all challenged to maximise our potential'. The headteacher has created a culture and ethos of challenge and support which results in all pupils achieving success. Successful strategies are swiftly put in place to secure high standards and excellent attendance. The energy, enthusiasm and tremendous teamwork are a testimony to the unrelenting pursuit of excellence by the senior management team. They are supported extremely well by a talented team of teaching, support and administrative staff. The leadership team carry out systematic and rigorous monitoring of the quality of all aspects of the school's work. This leads to impressive improvements in the quality of teaching.

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are excellent. Pupils love school and, as parents reported, their children 'jump for joy' on school days. Pupils take their responsibilities seriously, such as their roles as playground buddies. Behaviour and attitudes are outstanding. Pupils are courteous and respected which gives them great confidence. There is a strong emphasis on mutual respect throughout the school. Pupils are polite, work hard and take great pride in their work, excellently demonstrated by its immaculate presentation.. Pupils have many opportunities to lead a healthy lifestyle. They enjoy a range of sporting activities starting with early morning karate and including a wide range of clubs after school. They said their playtimes are very active because of the spacious grounds and various climbing apparatus. The encouragement to cycle to school is a great success with a large number of pupils cycling. Pupils spoke with excellent understanding of the importance of buying fair trade products and chuckled as they recounted the weekly collection of all of the waste paper for the recycling bin. Pupils showed further excellent understanding of the school's future plans to install solar panels and a wind turbine.

The outstanding teaching challenges and inspires pupils to succeed. Lessons are thoroughly planned to cater for the wide range of needs in each class. Questioning is probing and explanations are exceptionally clear. Whiteboard technology is used supremely well to assist demonstrations, for example as Year 6 pupils learned about rotation in mathematics. Expectations of the pupils are high and they rise to the challenges they meet on a daily basis extremely well. This was well captured in a mathematics lesson pitched at Year 7 level. Excellent subject knowledge is a key strength of teaching. Classrooms are vibrant in the richness of the pupils' work; portraits in the style of Suerat, Picasso and Klee are of an excellent quality and admirably reflect the recent award of the Gold Artsmark. Teaching assistants make an outstanding impact on the learning of the small numbers of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Assessment is outstanding. All pupils have targets for writing and mathematics that they use

to improve their work. They know exactly how to improve because of the meticulous marking of their work.

The outstanding curriculum enriches pupils' learning in many ways. Pupils value the visits made to support history topics. Drama and sporting clubs are very popular. All clubs are well attended. Basic literacy, numeracy and information and communications technology skills are developed to a high level: for example, some pupils are currently preparing electronic presentations linked to a Second World War topic. Pupils write with fluency and a high level of accuracy in subjects other than English. Their involvement in designing and building a shelter in the school grounds shows their talents well. The personal, health, social and education programme helps pupils to address personal issues and safety. Vulnerable pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, are especially well cared for. Many reach the expected levels for their age by the time they leave school. More able pupils are challenged excellently.

Leadership and management are excellent. This is reflected in the very high standards, pupils' excellent achievement, progress and behaviour. All members of staff are hard working and totally committed to giving pupils the best education possible. Governance is outstanding. Governors are very much at the centre of the school and provide a high level of professional expertise and knowledge when it comes to improving the building and grounds. They are challenging and supportive in equal measure; the impact of this is outstanding. The safeguarding of the pupils has been meeting recent government requirements for several years. Parents are unanimous in their praise for the school. They value the support provided for their children and the richness of the provision. They wrote with passion of the privilege they feel it is for their children to attend such a 'fantastic' school. A comment, 'very positive nurturing atmosphere' is typical of many. They praise the inspirational leadership of the headteacher and the approachability, professionalism and dedication of the staff. To sum up, they say their children thrive at Fellside School developing all the confidence they need to grow up to be pleasant and well educated adults.

The inspection agrees that that this is an outstanding school. It has made excellent progress since the last inspection and gives excellent value for money. It has an outstanding capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

The Foundation Stage is outstanding. This is a result of the key priority given to improving provision in Reception to match that of the Nursery and make more effective use of the outdoors for all areas of learning. There are very effective arrangements to introduce children to the Nursery through visits by the staff to the home of every child. Parents are encouraged to drop in or to stay with their children as they wish or as the child needs. As a result, there is a calm atmosphere of happy, settled children who are well cared for and secure very soon after they start school. Informal assessments are made regularly and effectively track the progress children make towards the early learning goals identified for this age. This information is used to excellent effect to pinpoint children whose early learning needs additional support. Good and sometimes outstanding teaching provides a good balance between small group activities and a wide range of options for children to choose where they learn. A high priority is given to promoting learning initial sounds of the letters of the alphabet. The outdoors is used really well to do this. For example, children cycled round and dug in the sand as part of their learning of initial sounds. Teamwork between the two classes is most effective; indeed there is a very strong management team. By the time the children leave the Foundation Stage many are working at levels higher

than expected. They are well prepared for Year 1 and settle quickly, able to use their well developed basic skills, especially writing.

What the school should do to improve further

- The school does not have any areas for improvement that it is not already tackling.

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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	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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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	1
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

19 October 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Fellside Community Primary School, Gateshead, NE16 5AY

Thank you all for making my day in your school so enjoyable. I agree with your parents who say your school is 'first class'. You go to an excellent school where you are all encouraged to work hard. As a result, you achieve exceptionally well in all the tests you take. The quality of the work in your books is outstanding. As you get older you become very skilled at checking each others' work.

Your classrooms are very bright with so many vibrant displays and lots of information to help you learn. Teaching is outstanding, especially when the whiteboards are used to help explain new ideas to you. You gave me many examples of how you keep fit and healthy. This is well reflected in the Healthy School Award you have achieved. Everyone has contributed towards making your school so outstanding. Your excellent behaviour, politeness and enthusiasm for all you do play a vital part. You care for others and are aware of how you can help workers in other countries. There are no major areas for your school to improve that it is not already working on.

Good luck for the rest of your time at Fellside School. I will look out for the red kites the next time I am in your area.

Best wishes

Rosemary Rodger

Lead inspector