

# Caedmon Community Primary School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	108380
<b>Local Authority</b>	Gateshead
<b>Inspection number</b>	309673
<b>Inspection date</b>	9 July 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Derek Neil 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	244
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Allan Symons
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Clive Wisby
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 January 2005
<b>School address</b>	Whitehall Road Gateshead Tyne and Wear NE8 4LH
<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 433 4095
<b>Fax number</b>	0191 433 1000

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: the achievement and standards of the most able pupils, the school's use of assessment, and the effectiveness of the new management structure. Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation form (SEF); national published assessment data and the school's own assessment records; a range of school documentation; observation of the school at work; discussions with staff and pupils; and the parents' questionnaires. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but there is no evidence to suggest that the school's own evaluations, as given in its SEF, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

Caedmon Community Primary is a school of average size in the Saltwell ward of Gateshead. The attainment of pupils when they start school in the Nursery and in Reception is much lower than is typical for children of that age. A very high number of pupils are entitled to free school meals. There are above average proportions from minority ethnic groups, of pupils who use English as an additional language, and of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school has the basic skills Quality Mark, the Active Schools and Football Association Charter Marks, and the Healthy Schools Award. A new headteacher was appointed recently, following a lengthy period when the previous headteacher was absent because of ill health.

## 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. Although the number of parents returning the inspection questionnaire was extremely low, it is clear that they greatly appreciate the school's strengths. As one wrote, reflecting the views of others, 'This is a school where my children enjoy learning, feel safe, and are well cared for.'

Pupils usually enter Key Stage 1 with skills that are broadly typical for their age. They make satisfactory progress and by the time they are seven they reach standards that are sometimes below and sometimes above average. Apparent improvements in these standards recently have been partly due to inaccurate assessments and are slightly misleading. The standards achieved this year are low. The most able pupils do not achieve the higher levels of which they are capable.

Although pupils' progress is uneven in Key Stage 2, most achieve well during the four years and reach standards that are close to the national average. The school's data indicate that the standards in English this year will exceed the national average. This success is largely due to the school's recent drive to improve literacy. The achievement of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is satisfactory; the school has plans to provide more support for them in future.

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their social, spiritual, moral and cultural development, are outstanding. Pupils flourish at school and mature into sociable and self-assured young people. They are very polite, respectful of others, and confident when speaking with adults. They greatly enjoy school. As one parent wrote, 'He loves school and never misses a day because of this.' The pupils know how to lead a healthy lifestyle; a large number undertake the school's 'Olympic challenge,' committing themselves to rigorous health-related demands. Their good work on drug abuse has been recognised beyond the school. They feel safe in school and say bullying, if it occurs, is dealt with effectively by staff. There are no recent incidents of racial abuse, and pupils from different ethnic groups play harmoniously together. Pupils make a very good contribution to the school and wider communities; the school council, for example, played a key role in selecting the new headteacher. Older pupils learn enterprise skills through their involvement in a successful photography business. Attendance has been steadily improving and is now about average; staff have worked hard with parents to get attendance to this level.

Teaching and learning are good. Detailed lesson plans help the teacher make it clear to pupils what they are going to learn. Lessons have a variety of practical activities that keep pupils working happily on their own or in groups. Pupils behave extremely well and get on with their work without the need for supervision, although in the better lessons the teachers regularly talk to the whole class to make sure everyone is keeping up and understands what they are doing. Pupils have the confidence to ask questions when they are curious or something seems unclear. On the whole, work is at the right level for them, but occasionally it is too easy for some.

The imaginative curriculum provides a rich variety of stimulating activities. Its major strength is its contribution to pupils' personal development. This is reflected in the many opportunities it offers to be creative. Pupils' favourite subjects are music, art and drama. The high quality of their work in these areas is evident in the excellent displays, such as the large mosaic of mythical beasts. The regular opportunities to perform in public, for example by appearing in musicals or leading assemblies, do much, in the words of one pupil, 'to keep us fit and boost our

confidence'. The curriculum is enriched by interesting visits, for example to places of worship of different faith groups, which develop pupils' understanding of other cultures. Special events, such as healthy school week and motivational visits by leading sportsmen, help promote a healthy lifestyle. Lessons place appropriate emphasis on basic skills and this has led to good work in English and information and communication technology. The school recognises the need to provide more programmes to accelerate the progress of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Pupils are very well cared for. One parent commented, 'I am at ease sending my son to this school knowing his safety is its main priority.' Although one parent was concerned about potential hazards, recent checks by experts and subsequent action by the school indicate these fears are unfounded. The school's vast array of awards is highly effective in increasing motivation and is very popular with pupils. A favourite is the previous headteacher's award for 'impeccable exercise books.' Academic guidance is improving but still has some way to go. Teachers' assessments are not yet wholly reliable. Pupils do not always get good advice on how to improve their work. Most significantly, as the school has recognised, the system for tracking pupils' progress does not flag up early enough when they are falling short of their target and need additional support.

The school has done well to minimise the disruption caused by the previous headteacher's absence. However, progress with issues identified in the last inspection, for example in assessment, inevitably stalled. The new headteacher and the new leadership team bring fresh ideas. New structures, designed to involve more people in improving the school, have made an encouraging start; for example, staff appreciate the benefits of more teamwork. They are too recent, however, to have had much impact. The new management teams have concentrated on drawing up lengthy plans for each subject and have not had time to develop their main areas of responsibility. For example, the curriculum team has not yet considered how to improve the curriculum or assessment arrangements. Nonetheless, staff and governors have brought about clear improvements and are justifiably sanguine about the future; the school has good capacity to improve.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

The Foundation Stage provides pupils with an extensive range of resources, well designed activities, and an excellent outdoor area that is used very well. The balance of activities initiated by the children and those led by the staff is struck well. Pupils make very good progress and leave this stage with skills that are broadly typical for their age, and in some respects slightly higher. Recent emphasis on developing their literacy skills, for instance, has led to a rise in standards and a narrowing of the gap between boys and girls. Strong leadership has brought about several improvements, particularly in the accuracy of assessment.

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

- Raise standards in Key Stage 1.
- Use assessment information to identify as early as possible when pupils are underachieving.
- Ensure the management teams lead improvements in their main areas of responsibility.

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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?	2
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?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	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

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	3
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	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?	3

<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	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
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

10 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Caedmon Community Primary School, Gateshead, NE8 4LH

Thank you for welcoming me so warmly into your school. I enjoyed watching you in lessons, at assembly, and at play; talking about your school with you and your teachers; and looking at your work. Now I want to share with you what I found.

Caedmon is a good school. Here are some of the many things I liked about it.

- You told me you really like coming to school and feel safe there.
- You appreciate the opportunities to perform in public and be creative; for example, the school council enjoyed leading the assembly I saw, and I was very impressed with the rehearsal for 'Oliver!'
- You told me you like your lessons and the staff. I can see why: you have some good teachers.
- You know how important it is to eat healthily and take exercise. I was pleased to see how many of you sign up for the 'Olympic Challenge,' and hope even more of you will do this in the future.
- Your behaviour is excellent. You behave very well in class and in the playground. You work very hard in lessons and can be relied upon to get on with your work without much supervision from the teacher. You should be proud of this.
- Your teachers and other staff take good care of you. They work very hard to make sure you are happy and safe.
- Many of you are very grown up and help with the running of the school; the school council, for instance, has done valuable work, such as helping to select the new headteacher.
- You are self-assured when speaking with adults. The Year 6 pupils I met are confidently looking forward to secondary school.

I think you and your teachers could make the school better and this is what I would like to happen now.

- I would like the teachers to help you make better progress and for the pupils in Key Stage 1 to reach higher standards in your work. To do this, they will use the information they have about you to see when anyone needs extra help.
- I have suggested more effective ways for the management teams to decide how they can improve the school. School councillors who are linked to those teams will be able to assist with this work.

You are lucky to go to such a good school. Thank you again for helping me with the inspection. It was a pleasure to meet you.

With very best wishes for the future

Yours sincerely

Derek Neil

Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools