

Waverley Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108453
Local Authority	Newcastle upon Tyne
Inspection number	309695
Inspection dates	31 March –1 April 2008
Reporting inspector	Derek Neil HMI

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	332
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Gill Dickinson
Headteacher	Mrs Glynis Hyde
Date of previous school inspection	1 May 2004
School address	Maple Close Dumpling Hall Newcastle upon Tyne Tyne and Wear NE15 7QZ
Telephone number	0191 2674549
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Waverley is a large primary school in the Lemington ward of Newcastle upon Tyne. The attainment of children when they start school in the Nursery and in Reception is broadly typical. The percentage entitled to free school meals is above average. The proportion from minority ethnic groups is very low. No pupils use English as an additional language. Relatively few have learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Formerly a first school for pupils aged 3-9 years, it became a primary school for pupils aged 3-11 years in 2003. It had its first set of national test results for Key Stage 2 in 2005. The school has Healthy School status and the sports Activemark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Waverley Primary School provides a satisfactory standard of education and the great majority of parents are very pleased to send their children there. One commented, representing the views of many, that the school 'is a friendly place that puts the children's needs first'. Pupils like the school too; as one parent explained, 'I have never heard him make a derogatory comment about the environment or the staff.'

Since the last inspection the school has completed its change to an all-through primary. This has been a difficult process. During this period, standards at Key Stage 1 have declined and pupils' achievement in Key Stage 2 has been poor. In particular, some of the most able pupils have not been achieving as well as they should. While the school continued to provide a happy and caring environment for its pupils and introduced the improvements suggested in the previous report, it did not act swiftly enough to ensure all pupils were making good progress in English and mathematics. Staff have now recognised the need to improve the ways they assess pupils' progress and to provide additional support once it becomes apparent that someone is falling behind. As a result, standards have begun to rise and the school's own data indicate that younger pupils in Key Stage 2 are achieving well. These developments have not yet had time to affect the results of the national tests.

Pupils like coming to school. They benefit from its supportive and caring atmosphere and its competent teaching. They appreciate the rich variety of the curriculum, especially the residential visits. Pupils develop into mature and polite young people, whose behaviour is very good and who show great care and consideration for others, because of the staff's hard work and support. Pupils enjoy their lessons, although they sometimes are given work that is not matched well enough to their needs.

Although the transition to a primary school presented managers with considerable challenges, school leaders have weathered the storm and are taking steps to help pupils make better progress. Senior leaders and governors monitor the work of the school quite closely, but their evaluation of its performance is not accurate enough to identify some of the shortcomings that need to be tackled. The capacity for further improvement in the school is satisfactory.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children enter the Nursery with skills that are largely typical for their age, although a fairly large proportion are less fluent in their spoken language than is normally found. As a result of the well planned curriculum, the children enjoy learning and make good progress. By the time they leave their Reception class they have improved in all areas of learning and have skills that are slightly above expectations for their age in most areas of learning. They make considerable gains because of the innovative practical activities in the Nursery. For example, in one session, painting, smelling and chopping vegetables to make soup helped them to develop their personal, social, speaking and listening skills. The quality of teaching is good overall, although it varies between teachers. Particular strengths are the effective small group work, the balance that adults strike between supporting and extending children's learning, and the good quality indoor and outdoor activities. On occasion, teaching is less effective, for example, when children are given worksheets they are unable to read. However, the strong leadership in this part of the school has accurately identified key areas for improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards for its most able pupils.
- Improve teaching by ensuring that work is always well matched to the needs of pupils.
- Evaluate its performance more rigorously to identify priorities for improvement.

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

Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 and achieve standards that are about average, although few of the most able reach higher levels. Their progress in Key Stage 2 is uneven, but overall their achievement is satisfactory. By the time they are 11, most pupils reach the standard expected of them but the more able do not make as much progress as they should. This is because, since the school became an all-through primary, the organisation of classes has created problems for teachers and because many of the staff have not fully understood the standards they should expect of older pupils. The school has realised that this is an issue and has taken steps to improve pupils' rate of progress. Consequently, the younger pupils are now doing well. Many of the older pupils, however, have not made the progress they should. The school's efforts to raise standards have not yet had an effect on the national test results.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve satisfactorily. Those who are withdrawn from lessons make good progress when they work intensively with a teaching assistant. The school's data indicates that many have made great strides with their reading because of its intensive support.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy coming to school and their attendance is good. They have positive attitudes to their work and particularly appreciate the range of after-school clubs. Behaviour is very good in lessons, around the school and at playtimes. They are polite to each other and to adults. They have a good understanding of how to stay healthy: they know the importance of a balanced diet and make the most of opportunities to take exercise. They are aware of different aspects of keeping safe, including the need to take precautions when crossing roads or when working on the Internet. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. The school does not make the most of opportunities for spiritual development. Pupils' preparation for their future lives is satisfactory: they have good personal qualities, such as the ability to work in a team and to act with self confidence, and satisfactory basic skills, such as literacy and numeracy. They make good contributions to the community and enjoy fund raising for different charities. The school council is fairly active and councillors are proud of the way they have improved the school. For example, they eagerly point out the anti-bullying posters they have produced around the building.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Most lessons are satisfactory. They are well organised in that they have an orderly start, a good balance of whole-class and individual work and usually a well timed ending. The teacher has a clear idea of what is to be learned and explains this well to the class. Pupils behave very well: they pay attention to the teacher and carry out instructions to the letter. The teacher usually checks carefully on how the different groups are getting on and how well they understand the work. Low attaining pupils get good support from teaching assistants in the classroom. Teachers try to tailor the work to match the needs and the ability of different pupils but sometimes they do not do this successfully. Consequently, the more able pupils are not challenged enough and do not make the progress they are capable of and at times the work is too difficult for the least able to understand. The atmosphere in lessons is calm and supportive, but sometimes the teaching is pedestrian; some worksheets are uninspiring, for example, and in mathematics lessons pupils seldom get the opportunity to discuss their own ideas for solving problems.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The rich and varied curriculum develops pupils' awareness of other cultures, an important priority in a locality of limited cultural diversity. It also places an appropriate emphasis on promoting pupils' basic skills. It gives pupils opportunities to use these skills in different contexts. For example, some teachers link them with work in other subjects, though these links are not planned as a systematic school approach. Some subjects are taught in significant blocks of time so pupils get the chance to study topics in depth. For example, pupils enjoyed an extended study of India, during which they experienced a range of national customs such as dance, food and art. Pupils are enthusiastic about the extensive range of visits and out-of-school activities available. The work of one teacher as 'cultural ambassador' helps to identify good opportunities for enriching the curriculum through visits to museums and heritage centres. Although a high number of parents would like to see more clubs before and after school, inspectors believe that the staff provide a good range of well attended extra-curricular activities. These include football, rugby, dance and kick-boxing, which help promote a healthy lifestyle.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school takes good care of its pupils. It provides good support and guidance for their personal development. It is not as effective in providing academic guidance; pupils do not know what targets they are expected to achieve and are unsure about how they can improve their work. This limits their rate of progress. Systems for rewarding the pupils help to motivate them; the weekly achievement assembly is particularly appreciated. The school has established productive partnerships with outside specialists. The link with a parent support adviser, for example, has contributed to improvements in some pupils' behaviour and attendance. The support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is comprehensive. It is based on the good quality education plans that the staff prepare for individual pupils. As one parent of a child with dyslexia commented, 'Staff have helped him every way they can.' Adequate systems ensure the safety and welfare of pupils, who are well supervised throughout the day. In response to feedback

from the pupils, the school has improved the supervision of playtimes. Pupils are confident that they can go to an adult if they have any concerns.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The difficulties of managing the change to an all-through primary school were not well handled initially and consequently standards and achievement deteriorated. The organisation of classes was problematic at first and some staff took time to understand the standards that should be expected of older pupils. It has taken some time to turn the ship around. This is largely due to weaknesses in the school's self-evaluation. Managers and governors have not assessed the school's effectiveness accurately and have overestimated the quality of its work. Although they consult with parents and pupils and act upon their views to bring about improvements, staff do not analyse assessment data rigorously enough; and governors, though very supportive, do not hold the school fully to account. As a result, school managers have not identified some important shortcomings. For instance, the school development plan is not explicit about pupils' underachievement and does not establish how its planned actions will make a difference to pupils' standards. Nonetheless, management overall is satisfactory because staff have been led well in building an interesting and varied curriculum and in ensuring that pupils' personal development continues to be good. Recent improvements, particularly to the frequency and use of assessment, have begun to have an effect.

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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?	3
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	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ 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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
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

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?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4
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 April 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Waverley Primary School, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE15 7QZ

On behalf of the inspection team I should like to thank you for welcoming us so warmly into your school. We enjoyed watching you in lessons and at play, talking about your school with you and your teachers, and looking at your work. Now we want to share with you what we thought. We think the school gives you a satisfactory standard of education.

Here are some of the many things we liked.

- You told us you like coming to school, enjoy your lessons, and feel safe there.
- You make the most of the after-school clubs and you have good memories of the residential visits you have been on.
- You work hard in class by answering the teacher's questions when you are sitting on the carpet and by getting on with your own work at your table.
- Your behaviour is very good. You listen carefully to the teacher and you walk around the school in a sensible way, showing consideration and respect for others. You should be proud of this.
- Your teachers and other staff take very good care of you while you are at school.
- You make a good contribution to the life of the school, for example by being a member of the school council.
- You know how important it is to eat healthily and take plenty of exercise.

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

- You already do quite well in your work but we think you could do better! We have asked your teachers to help so you always learn as much as possible in class.
- We have suggested how the staff should decide what they need to do next in order to make the school an even better place for you to learn in.

Thank you again for helping us so much with the inspection. It was a pleasure to meet you.

Best wishes for the future.

Derek Neil

Her Majesty's Inspector