

Shiremoor Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108579
Local Authority	North Tyneside
Inspection number	309729
Inspection date	31 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Moira Fitzpatrick

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	389
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Joe Caffrey
Headteacher	Mrs Helen Clegg
Date of previous school inspection	1 April 2005
School address	Stanton Road Shiremoor Newcastle upon Tyne Tyne and Wear NE27 0PW
Telephone number	0191 2008701
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: the pupils' achievement and standards, the quality of teaching and learning, the personal development of pupils and the leadership and management of the school. Evidence was gathered from observation of lessons, looking at pupils' work and scrutiny of assessment data and other documents, as well as from discussion with staff, governors and the children. Other aspects of the school were not inspected in detail but there was no evidence that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified. These have been included where appropriate in the report.

Description of the school

Shiremoor Primary School is larger than average. It is set in an area of high social and economic deprivation. Most pupils are of White British heritage, with less than 5% from minority ethnic groups. A small number of pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above average, so too is the proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school regularly wins acclaim for its work. Some of the recent awards include: the Challenge Award for More Able Pupils, International School Award, Basic Skills Award, the Gold Artsmark and the Healthy Schools Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Shiremoor Primary is an outstanding school. The headteacher's visionary and unremitting approach to continually improving teaching, learning and the care that pupils receive is at the heart of the school's success. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds make tremendous gains in their academic and personal development during their time at the school. Despite their very low starting points in Nursery, pupils make excellent progress to reach average, and sometimes above average, standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The school sets challenging targets and pupils in the current Year 6 are on course to achieve them and so reach above average standards. In information and communication technology (ICT), standards are above average because of the school's innovative and imaginative ways of using technology to accelerate learning. Pupils' high quality artwork is displayed throughout the school, showing how well they achieve and how much they are valued. Pupils' achievement is excellent because of the constant focus within the school to overcome any barriers that may hinder pupils' progress and limit their achievement. All staff are keenly alert to pupils' needs and circumstances; they constantly share information and ideas in the relentless drive to raise standards and create the best learning opportunities for every pupil.

Links with local business, the police, fire brigade and health services are excellent. They bring an exciting extra dimension to pupils' experiences and add to their overall achievement. The high point of such links is the biannual careers convention when representatives from the armed forces and a wide range of local businesses fuel pupils' ambitions and open their eyes to the opportunities of the wider world. These experiences are only part of an excellent curriculum, which is carefully planned to provide challenge and continuity of learning for pupils of all abilities. The focus on the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT underpins all learning. Pupils make such good gains because these skills are constantly being reinforced in other subjects. Careful planning by staff ensures that all pupils benefit from the broad and exciting curriculum. Equality of provision and the inclusion of all pupils are fundamental to the school's aims. Pupils who need either additional support to overcome difficulties or greater challenge to release their full potential are all very well provided for.

Innovative and well planned use of technology to support learning adds another dimension which develops pupils' independence and accelerates their learning. A very successful example is the use of MP3 players to support Year 4 pupils to learn their tables. They have improved so much that pupils are happy to invite visitors to 'catch them out' with challenges! Pupils find it difficult to say what they like best about their learning because they have so many exciting choices during lessons and in the range of out-of-school clubs. What they are clear about is that themed days, creativity days and choices week, as well as the many after-school clubs, give them a 'fantastic' number of ways to develop new interests and explore their talents.

Pupils love school and most say there is nothing they would improve. They feel safe and secure, and are absolutely convinced that adults will sort out any problems they have. Their outstanding personal development gives them skills and confidence well beyond their age, because they are so well included in decision-making and know that their ideas and points of view matter. Pupils of all ages have great trust in the 'Stay Safe and Happy Management Committee'. This pupil committee develops good qualities of citizenship by empowering all pupils to take responsibility for aspects of their safety and well-being. It also has many playground improvements to its credit, which give pupils a great sense of pride. Pupils have an excellent understanding of what makes a healthy lifestyle, through the school's strong emphasis on

sensible eating and plenty of exercise. The school's provision of a second breakfast mid-morning for all pupils, underlines for them the importance of healthy eating that provides the fuel for learning and good performance. Pupils' excellent behaviour and hard work do them credit, and create a positive and purposeful atmosphere everywhere in the school. They are kind and considerate and always ready to help each other. Their strong basic skills, added to their excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their personal qualities, prepare them very well for the future.

The impact of the school's excellent care, guidance and support of pupils is seen in the outstanding teaching. Teachers' detailed knowledge of pupils' learning, and their personal well-being, form the very strong base on which all learning is planned. Excellent assessment procedures give teachers the knowledge on which to plan just the right challenges for pupils of different abilities. Pupils are given work which they can tackle independently, so they make a prompt start and use time very well. One of the things they love about their learning is that, 'teachers expect us to do things for ourselves'. This brings a tremendous sense of achievement and spurs pupils on to new challenges and targets. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and they use this to full effect by providing specialist teaching in some subjects, such as mathematics. Teachers' enthusiasm for learning is infectious and pupils quickly respond to the interesting resources and activities that teachers provide, which keep the pace of learning brisk.

Pupils are taught to evaluate their own learning and to decide what they need to improve next. The use of personal target badges keeps pupils alert to improving their learning and they are seen referring to these prompts in and out of class. Excellent teamwork, based on getting the best out of staff expertise, produces a flexibility that allows the school to respond to individual needs and support pupils to do their best. The good performance of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, in national tests, demonstrates the impact of this teamwork. Pupils are eager to confirm that they feel well cared for. They know that 'teachers know when you need help or have a problem, so you are never stuck or worried', and that the rules and systems that they have helped their teachers to make the school a safe, secure and happy place to be.

A vibrant sense of purpose and energy pervades the school because all staff are involved in improving its performance. Expectations are very high; so too is the support for professional development to enable staff to meet them. Staff at all levels are encouraged to be involved, to extend their expertise and professional qualifications and be robust in their evaluation of the school's work. The headteacher is an outstanding leader who has the vision to see beyond barriers to imaginative and effective solutions. She inspires staff by the quality of her own work, creates many opportunities for their development and encourages them to aspire to the top of their career. Senior leaders work closely with the headteacher to ensure all pupils are fully included in the life and work of the school, and develop excellent links with parents and external agencies. They too act as role models for staff in the quality of their work and the enthusiasm they bring to their tasks. The school's accurate judgement of its effectiveness indicates how well it knows itself. A slight dip in performance in mathematics last year is already being addressed with a range of strategies designed to tackle some weaknesses in the learning of a few lower attaining pupils. Governors work alongside staff to support and challenge the school's performance. They have been highly effective in improving attendance this year through new strategies they have introduced. The excellent leadership and management of the school and its improvement since the last inspection demonstrate an outstanding capacity for continued improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children start in the Nursery with attainment that is very much below what is typical for their age. Many have significant weaknesses in speech and language development and their social skills are under-developed. They make rapid progress in all areas of learning because of the very careful assessment of their development and their learning needs. Adults make good use of these assessments to plan activities that excite and stimulate the children to learn. The quality of care is very high. Adults establish good routines so that the children feel safe and secure and develop the confidence to learn independently. By the end of Reception, the majority of children have reached the goals expected in all areas of learning and most have made particularly good gains in personal, social and emotional development. The excellent links with parents add further support to children's learning. Parents are delighted with the progress that their children make and that they are happy in school - 'My child came skipping out, excited that she had learned about Chinese New Year.'

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in mathematics for some lower attaining pupils.

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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	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 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	2
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

1 February 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Shiremoor Primary School, North Tyneside, NE27 0PW

Thank you all very much for the help you gave with the inspection of your school recently. You helped me to find out very quickly that your school has so many really good things about it that it is outstanding. This means it is part of a very small group of the best schools in the country. One reason for this is that you all work so hard and learn at a very good rate. No wonder your families and teachers are so proud of you. Your ICT skills amazed me and I was very impressed to see so many of you turning up for sessions before school in the ICT suite.

I almost agree with those of you who told me nothing could be improved, but not quite. I did find something your teachers have already begun work on - helping some of you to get better at mathematics. I know that some of Year 4 are already whizzing along with their tables this year so the improvement has started!

I agree that your school gives you some 'fantastic' ways to learn and loads of exciting and interesting activities, visits and visitors. I think this is why you have such excellent attitudes to learning and know that whatever you want to learn you can. I think the lovely things you do might play a part in your excellent behaviour - you are too busy having fun to think of anything else! I think the other reason your behaviour is so good is that you copy your teachers in showing care and consideration for everyone. I agree with you that you are exceptionally well cared for and that your teachers are always there to sort any problems. Yours is the only school I have visited where every pupil has their own target badge so that you can practise your targets at spare moments during the day. Your understanding of how to improve your work is better than I see in many schools because your teachers have taught you how to do this well.

I am glad you have such excellent teaching, because you really appreciate it and make the most of it. It's no surprise that your teachers do so much for you - you reward them very well with your hard work and determination to succeed. Keep on doing this and you will help to keep your school up there with the very best.

My very best wishes to you all for the future.

Yours sincerely

Moira Fitzpatrick

Inspector