

# The Village Primary

## Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 111559           |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | Stockton-on-Tees |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 310627           |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>        | 21–22 May 2008   |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Denis Goodchild  |

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                                    | 245  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>              | The governing body                                       |
| <b>Chair</b>                              | Mrs Aileen Mather  |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                        | Mrs Patricia Gibb  |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b> | 1 May 2004   |
| <b>School address</b>                     | Windsor Road<br>Thornaby<br>Stockton-on-Tees<br>TS17 8PW |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                   | 01642 676768   |
| <b>Fax number</b>                         | 01642 606625   |

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|--------------------------|----------------|
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is an average sized school. It serves an area of significant social and economic disadvantage. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. There is a small number of looked after children. The number of pupils leaving or joining other than at the start of the school year is above average. The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

The Village is a good school with outstanding features. It provides good value for money.

Personal development is outstanding because pupils fully endorse and practise what is at the heart of the school, namely respect. As a result, behaviour is exemplary. Pupils are justifiably proud of their school and they eagerly embrace all that is offered. They enjoy coming to school. They readily take on responsibility and contribute to the smooth running of the school. Through their work for many charities, they demonstrate a concern and respect for the needs of others. Pupils eagerly participate in the many opportunities for exercise and fully understand the benefits of a healthy diet and lifestyle. Parents overwhelmingly agree that their children are safe and secure.

The school's national assessment results in 2007 for Year 2 pupils were below average, reflecting the significant number of pupils with learning and behavioural difficulties in this group. Standards in the current Year 2 are average. Results for Year 6 in the 2007 national tests were close to average in English and mathematics but below average in science. Effective school action is raising standards. In the current Year 6, standards are above average with a significant increase in the proportion of pupils working at the higher levels in all subjects. Good teaching ensures that pupils make good progress because teachers know their pupils well and prepare interesting and exciting activities that accurately match their needs. Pupils are therefore well motivated and succeed with their tasks.

The excellent curriculum makes learning exciting and meaningful, removing many barriers to learning. It is very successful in developing and encouraging pupils' interests and talents and allows them to blossom and to succeed. Pupils therefore develop into confident, mature individuals, well prepared for the next stage of their education. Excellent relationships underpin the good support that pupils receive. Pupils very much appreciate the care they receive and are confident that they have someone to go to should they have any concerns. Academic and personal development is carefully monitored so that pupils quickly receive the support they need. However, the guidance that pupils receive on how to improve is not consistently embedded across the school. This slows progress for some pupils.

The headteacher's excellent leadership has established a staff team which is dedicated to creating an ethos in which every child can succeed and feel valued. Teaching and learning are monitored effectively and the school's own evaluation of its effectiveness is accurate. School action is well chosen to improve standards. Governors' financial management and contribution to school improvement is good.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 1

Provision in the Foundation Stage is outstanding. Children start the Nursery with skills that are below those typical for their age. They are often well below, particularly in personal, social and emotional development and in communication, literacy and language development. Staff are very caring so that children quickly begin to feel happy and secure. Close attention is given to developing children's social skills, and routines are well organised so that children quickly acquire very good learning habits. As a result, most children make excellent progress, with most meeting and some exceeding the expected levels for their age by the end of Reception. Parents say they notice their children developing greater independence soon after starting in Nursery.

A very good range of indoor activities covering all areas of learning provides many opportunities for children to exercise choice and work independently. Pupils' curiosity is stimulated and enjoyment of learning is well promoted. Excellent use is made of the large and stimulating outdoor areas to help children develop new skills. Outstanding teaching gives children an excellent start to their learning.

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

- Ensure that marking is consistent across the whole school and is rigorous in identifying what pupils need to do to improve.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Standards are broadly average and pupils' achievement is good. Over time, standards in Year 2 have typically been average although there was a slight dip in national assessment results in 2007. This was because the group included a significant number of pupils with challenging learning difficulties. Current standards in Year 2 are back to average levels and pupils achieve well. Year 6 standards in 2007 in English and mathematics were close to average, but in science they were below average. In the 2007 national tests, the proportion of more able pupils achieving the higher levels was below average. Standards in the current Year 6 are above average, representing good achievement overall. Effective school action has reversed the downward trend in science and significantly increased the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in all subjects. School data indicate that pupils are on course to achieve the challenging targets set. Pupils also achieve well in art, physical education and outstandingly in singing. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make very good progress because of the sensitive support of knowledgeable teaching assistants.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Attendance is average. Pupils enjoy coming to school and cannot speak highly enough of all that it offers. Typically pupils say that, 'it is peaceful and calm' and activities are 'interesting and exciting'. There is a strong emphasis in school on teaching pupils to respect others. As a result behaviour is exemplary. Pupils work hard, cooperate well in lessons and have very positive attitudes to learning. The 'Stop Box' effectively allows pupils to share concerns so that the school is a friendly and safe place. Pupils say there is no bullying. They willingly accept responsibility as playground 'buddies' or as school council members and make a valuable contribution to the school community. Pupils have carried their message of 'respect' and their campaign against bullying into the wider community through neighbourhood demonstrations. They raise funds for a number of charities, recognising their responsibility for helping others. Pupils enjoy sport and appreciate the excellent opportunities for physical exercise particularly the recently refurbished, stimulating outdoor environment. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the school's residential visit abroad and enjoy cultural weeks when they learn about different cultures as well as celebrating their own. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good and occasionally outstanding. Excellent relationships underpin good learning as pupils want to please their teachers. Teachers are very good at planning activities and using resources which fully engage pupils and promote enjoyment for learning. Pupils are therefore very well behaved and time is well spent in lessons. Activities are well matched to pupils' needs so that they make good progress in their learning. Teaching is most effective when teachers clearly explain what pupils will learn in the lesson then challenge them with questions to clarify and explain their answers. This is not yet embedded across the school. Progress is accelerated where pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own and each other's learning. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make very good progress because of the high quality, sensitive support from teaching assistants.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding. It is innovative and creative, making learning exciting, meaningful and enjoyable for every child. The school's programme for pupils' personal, social and emotional development is exceptional in the way it develops pupils' confidence and self-esteem and removes barriers to learning. The Nurturing Programme ensures that vulnerable pupils can enjoy the same success as other pupils. Teachers' planning is detailed and carefully matched to pupils' needs. The school is very good at adapting the curriculum to enrich learning opportunities whilst remaining focused on developing key skills. During the inspection, pupils experienced and accessed a wide range of media and knowledge in their study of Chinese, Aboriginal and Mexican cultures. The whole school was alive with creativity and the joy of learning. An excellent range of school clubs, visits and visitors provides many opportunities to develop pupils' special interests and talents, particularly in physical education and singing.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. The excellent relationships fostered are at the heart of the very good personal support that pupils enjoy. Parents describe the school as, 'family orientated where all staff are friendly and approachable.' Teachers know their pupils very well and pupils can share their problems in confidence with an adult. Typically pupils say that, 'The teachers are always there for you and help you to get through it.' Safeguarding procedures are in place and the school takes appropriate action to ensure the pupils' health and safety. The school effectively tracks pupils' progress and uses this information to identify the needs of individuals and groups of pupils and to set challenging targets. Teachers' marking generally identifies what pupils need to do to improve. However, it is not consistent across the school so that not all pupils get the benefit of good advice. This slows progress for some pupils. Early action by the school and effective links with parents and external agencies make sure that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive the help they need and make very good progress. The Nurture class helps vulnerable pupils to be fully included in all aspects of school life and to make good progress.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher's outstanding, inspirational leadership is central to the school's success in promoting pupils' outstanding personal development and in creating an ethos in which every child can succeed and feel valued. This has led to the development of a curriculum which promotes a real enjoyment of learning.

Very supportive of the headteacher, the senior leadership team monitor the school's work effectively. This has enabled them to take appropriate action to raise standards. For example, a greater focus on problem solving in mathematics, investigations in science and on the needs of the more able has raised standards and increased the proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels. Recent monitoring has identified that marking continues to be insufficiently rigorous in some areas of the school; this is confirmed by inspection findings.

Governors have a good understanding of the quality of the school's work and play an active part in developing plans for school improvement. Effective financial management has helped the school sustain a good staffing ratio and to buy in outside expertise. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. Provision in the Foundation Stage and for personal development has improved and assessment procedures for science are now in place. Given the strong leadership of the headteacher and the recent improvement in standards the school has a good capacity to improve further.

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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 |
|---|----------------|

### 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?   | 1   |
| The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage   | 1   |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements   | 2   |

### Achievement and standards

|  |   |
|--|---|
| How well do learners achieve?  | 2 |
| The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners   | 3 |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 2 |
| 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  | 3 |
| The behaviour of learners   | 1 |
| 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 | 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? | 1 |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?   | 2 |

<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 | 2   |
| 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

23 May 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Village Primary, Stockton-on-Tees, TS17 8PW

Thank you so much for the warm welcome when I inspected your school recently. A special thanks to those groups of pupils who talked to Mrs O'Neill and me. We were very impressed with your maturity, your sense of responsibility and your politeness. You gave us lots of information about your school such as all the activities, visits and visitors which makes learning so enjoyable. You are right to be proud of your good school and of the outstanding features in the school.

You are full of praise for your teachers and how they make learning so enjoyable. We were very impressed at how teachers organise activities so that lessons are full of interest and are exciting. As a result, everybody works hard and you often make good progress in your work, especially when teachers question you and ask you to explain your answers. Teachers' marking gives some of you good advice on how to improve. The staff are going to look at ways of improving marking so that all of you get the advice you need to improve at a faster rate. I am sure you will soon see an improvement just as the school has helped to improve your English, mathematics and science work. I was very impressed by the standard of art work, the quality of creative movement and the excellent singing by the whole school and in particular the choir not forgetting the table tennis players who were far too good for me!

Your parents say that you enjoy coming to school and are very happy with the way the school takes good care of you. You agree and this is seen in your attendance. We agree with you that adults in the school are very caring and they make sure that you know all about staying safe and healthy. Your teachers and your headteacher have been very successful in creating a school which is built on respect. But this could not have happened without you. So well done, keep up the hard work and I'm sure that your school will get even better.

Best wishes for the future.

Denis Goodchild

Lead inspector