

Overfields Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111630
Local Authority	Redcar and Cleveland
Inspection number	310647
Inspection dates	18–19 March 2008
Reporting inspector	Derek Sleightholme

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	185
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Angela McBride
Headteacher	Mrs Jean Robinson
Date of previous school inspection	1 June 2003
School address	Allendale Road Ormesby Middlesbrough TS7 9LF
Telephone number	01642 314548
Fax number	01642 327024

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a below average size primary school. Nearly all pupils are from White British backgrounds. None are at an early stage of acquiring English. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above average, so too is the percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. A special educational needs department provides classes for pupils with speech and language difficulties.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school. The acting headteacher, supported by a committed staff, is doing a good job in maintaining the school's provision and in beginning to strengthen it. All staff are working effectively with local authority staff to implement an action plan to raise standards and improve teaching. Most parents hold positive views of the school.

Pupils' personal development and well-being, and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Pupils value opportunities to exercise regularly. They know why it is important to stay fit and be healthy. Pupils feel safe because the staff care for them personally and the school has rigorous safeguarding procedures. Most pupils enjoy school because they find the activities interesting. During a moving Easter assembly, pupils were enthralled as they watched the drama group enact the life story of Jesus. As it reached the finale, the clapping was spontaneous. Pupils relate well to others in lessons. They are proud to show visitors around the school. Pupils also support their local community; for example, the choir sometimes sing in a local supermarket. Behaviour is good and attendance is satisfactory.

Achievement is satisfactory. This is because teaching is satisfactory. There is some good teaching in each key stage, especially in Key Stage 1, but pupils do not benefit from this consistently as they move through the school. The most able pupils are not always guided and challenged to do harder work. Nevertheless, most pupils make good progress from very low starting points to reach average standards by the end of Year 2. Most of the teaching in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory rather than good because expectations are not always high enough. Here, pupils' work and assessment data show that pupils make satisfactory progress over time to reach average standards by the end of Year 6. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make similar progress to other pupils.

The curriculum is satisfactory. It is enriched well through visits and visitors. Pupils' personal development and team building skills are promoted through an out of school adventure programme. Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Pupils receive satisfactory advice on what they need to learn next, and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported appropriately. The school's flexible organisation supports pupils with speech and language difficulties well and most make good progress.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Self-evaluation is currently satisfactory, although many school leaders are still developing skills to give them a more secure whole school overview of provision. Governance is satisfactory; many governors are just beginning their role. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. Children are admitted to the Nursery with skills that are very low compared to what is typical for their age. This is particularly evident in personal and social skills, language, literacy and mathematical understanding. The Foundation Stage team provide an exciting range of child-centred and adult-directed learning experiences. For example, children explore the colour 'green' by making paint, decorating biscuits and moulding clay into frogs. Progress is good in all areas of learning through the Nursery and Reception years. Despite the good gains made, some children do not reach the nationally expected goals at the time of transfer to Year 1.

Leadership is good. Teamwork is strong with high quality care and supervision. Assessment practices are diligently undertaken. Daily observation of children's independent activities provides highly reliable assessment information. Parents appreciate the innovative feedback they receive. This includes digital portfolios that feature pictures of their children at work.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and achievement for all pupils at Key Stage 2, and for the most able pupils throughout the school.
- Improve consistency in teaching, raise expectations and strengthen pupils' learning through feedback, including marking.
- Improve leaders' monitoring of the school's development.

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' achievement is satisfactory and standards are average. By Year 2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics tend to be average or slightly below. This represents good achievement compared to these pupils' starting points when they entered Year 1. School data and inspection findings show that pupils in the current Year 2 are on track to attain average levels this year.

Standards by the end of Year 6 have been low in recent years in all the main subjects. The achievement of these pupils was, therefore, less than might have been expected given the results they gained at the age of seven. The school was well aware of this issue and feels that, with the new procedures for tracking progress and changes to teaching deployment, pupils are now making satisfactory progress. Inspectors agree, and evidence gathered during the inspection on pupils' current standards shows that their standards are likely to rise this year and should be close to average overall.

Pupils with learning difficulties make satisfactory progress. Those attending the speech and language classes make good progress because they benefit from effective individual care and support.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy sharing the accomplishments and successes of each other. Behaviour is good. Pupils are polite and positive as they go about their work, and speak confidently with adults. Their interest in the many different activities, and their enthusiasm in lessons and as depicted in photographs, show how much they enjoy school. Attendance is average; pupils value the awards they receive for attending well and being punctual.

Pupils know how to keep safe and healthy. They are eager to participate in energetic morning 'wake and shake' sessions and an increasing number select a healthy lunch. They thoroughly enjoy visits to outdoor centres, and in sports-related activities after school. Pupils contribute well to their school community by promoting friendships in the playground. School councillors play an important part in helping improve the school. This responsibility gives them a clear idea of what it is to be a good citizen. Pupils help to raise money for charity. Some used their own

initiative to organise a toy auction to raise funds for a national animal charity. Pupils' average basic skills and their good social development prepare them soundly for their future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching is satisfactory. There are pockets of good teaching in each key stage but provision is inconsistent. Most of the teaching in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory, whilst it is mostly good in Key Stage 1. Successful aspects of teaching are subject knowledge, relationships with pupils and classroom management. Teaching is also good in those lessons where the levels of interest and challenge have a positive impact on pupils' learning. Year 2 pupils made good progress in a mathematics lesson because well-organised practical activities helped them understand turning and direction. In English, Year 6 pupils enthusiastically interviewed each other because they were motivated by the teacher's enthusiasm for literacy.

Not all of the teaching is of this good quality. Often the pace of lessons slows progress and knowledge is not always consolidated well. Consequently, pupils make steady rather than good progress overall. The more able pupils are not always challenged sufficiently through the tasks planned for them, and the dialogue with them during lessons. Marking, like several other aspects of teaching, is inconsistently applied. Some pupils are not provided with enough clarity and direction on exactly what they need to do to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. The statutory programme and personal, social, health and citizenship education enables pupils to make satisfactory progress in learning. Educational outings, such as to outdoor centres, local businesses and museums, make a big contribution to their social and cultural development. One strength is the flexible organisation that allows pupils in the speech and language classes to join the main classes. They are integrated well and this helps them to make good progress. One weakness is the lack of challenge in curriculum content for the more able pupils.

Specialist visitors add to pupils' personal development and well-being. A book illustrator and a wood carver helped pupils to improve their artistic and physical skills. Many pupils participate in after school activities including sport, art, and music. This helped the school recently gain accreditation as a Healthy School and the Activemark in 2007.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. All staff contribute well to the welfare of their pupils and help them enjoy school. This enhances the school ethos, which is one of welcome, care and purpose. This pastoral care leads to good personal development and well-being of all pupils.

Routines for child protection and health and safety are thorough. Safeguarding and risk assessments meet requirements. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive effective support and they make similar progress to other pupils. Good and effective links with outside agencies and parents are very successful. They especially help pupils in the speech and

language classes to be fully integrated into the life of the school and make good progress. Close partnerships with local secondary schools enhance pupils' learning and help ensure pupils are prepared for a smooth transition into Year 7.

The school diligently and rigorously collects information about pupils' attainment and progress each term to track their progress in reading, writing and mathematics, and set targets for improvement. These targets are not sufficiently challenging because, although underachievement has been halted during this year, information is not being used to challenge the more able pupils in particular to aspire them to make the greater progress of which they are capable.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management, including governance, are satisfactory. The acting headteacher is working with other leaders to ensure the school successfully maintains its aim to 'create a welcome, stimulating and learning environment', and they have had some recent success in improving achievement and standards. They have not yet been so successful at ensuring good achievement throughout Key Stage 2 or for the more able pupils. The strategic working group has drafted a clear plan to raise standards and improve teaching. An early outcome is that pupils' progress is monitored through termly assessments and tracking. Targets for the end of Key Stage 2 are based on expectations that pupils will make at least satisfactory rather than good progress, and are not always sufficiently challenging.

Although some leaders have experience of monitoring provision across one key stage, their ability to form a whole school view of the impact of actions and progress is still developing. Governors are supportive, and although many have been recently appointed, they too are becoming more confident in holding the school to account. Self-evaluation is satisfactory. Currently, the school's capacity to improve is satisfactory.

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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?	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	2
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	3
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?	3
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	3
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

19 March 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Overfields Primary School, Redcar and Cleveland, TS7 9LF

Thank you for the helping us when we inspected your school. You were friendly and helpful. We enjoyed visiting your classrooms, looking at your work on display and in your books and talking to you about your school. We saw how your suggestions to improve the school, such as extra equipment for playtimes, have been followed up.

You attend a satisfactory school. People get on well together and it is a happy place to be. Your behaviour is good. We know you understand the importance of keeping healthy and how eager you are to take part in daily exercises. You told us you feel safe and know how to get help. We know that you enjoy the many activities that are provided for you. Opportunities such as working with a book illustrator enhance the satisfactory curriculum you receive.

You make good progress up to Year 2. Your progress is then satisfactory up to the end of Year 6. By then most of you have reached the expected standards. Teaching is satisfactory because you have interesting things to do.

We have suggested that the school makes sure that the progress made by pupils in Years 3 to 6 quickens. Those of you capable of reaching higher standards should have tasks that challenge you even further. We also think that you could receive more guidance on how to improve. The school leaders will be using all their skills to check everything in school is working well. You can help by continuing to work hard in lessons and do even better in your tests in English, mathematics and science.

We wish you and all the staff the very best for the future.

Derek Sleightholme

Lead inspector