

Timothy Hackworth Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114113
Local Authority	Durham
Inspection number	311487
Inspection dates	17–18 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Eric Jackson

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	430
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr John Laverick
Headteacher	Mrs Anne Dockray
Date of previous school inspection	1 June 2005
School address	Byerley Road Shildon County Durham DL4 1HN
Telephone number	01388 772959
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a much larger than average primary school with nursery provision, serving an area of high social and economic deprivation. There is a Language Resource Base on site with 14 pupils who have a statement of special educational need. Almost all the pupils in the school are of White British or European heritage, and very few learn English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average, and the proportion with a statement of their needs is well above average. There is a Surestart Children's Centre on site that is inspected separately.

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 that is improving well. There are particular strengths in the provision for children in the Foundation Stage, in accelerating progress in learning across the school, in pupils' personal development, and in leadership and management. Pupils are very happy to be here, feel safe, and say that the staff are very kind and helpful to them. The majority of parents are pleased with the quality of education the school provides. One parent summed up these views in writing, 'I think it is a good school, and my child enjoys going. Any problems/issues are always dealt with.'

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Behaviour is good, and, according to the pupils, any incidents are quickly dealt with by the staff. There is a strong and effective focus on the promotion of healthy lifestyles, with a very wide range of sporting activities, supported through the local Sports Partnership. This focus is reflected in the school's achievement of the Activemark and Healthy School status. Pupils are active supporters of the school and local community, and are well prepared for the transition to future learning.

The school was disappointed by the results it achieved in national tests and assessments in 2007 at the end of Years 2 and 6, even though they had been accurately predicted. Whilst results for pupils in Year 6 with learning difficulties and/or disabilities showed that they had performed well compared to similar pupils nationally, other pupils' results indicated underachievement. However, the school's relentless focus in the last two years on the drive to raise standards and improve pupils' rate of progress in English and mathematics has been effective. Analysis of the school's tracking data, discussions with pupils and a scrutiny of their current standards as seen in their exercise books, indicates that pupils throughout the school are making good progress and achieving standards that are not far short of average. Current school data show that the large majority of pupils across the school has met or exceeded the challenging targets set for them in English and mathematics so far this year.

This improvement is in response to consistently good and occasionally outstanding teaching. Improvements in teachers' planning and practice are showing clear impact on progress and achievement in most aspects of pupils' learning. This is because the head and deputy headteacher have put in place improved management and evaluation systems, working closely with other senior staff and governors. The school now has a clear picture of its strengths and weaknesses, so that improvement planning is directly focused on raising standards in all aspects of learning. The staff are implementing new marking and assessment systems to set new challenges for the pupils. These are not yet used consistently across the school nor do they involve pupils sufficiently in understanding what they need to do to improve.

Good improvements have also been made in the provision for children in the Nursery and Reception classes. However, despite the good developments in English and mathematics, where pupils are given tasks that interest and challenge them, the rest of the curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 has not improved sufficiently in line with national guidance and there are limited links in learning between subjects. Nonetheless, the good range of visits and visitors to the school and extra-curricular activities add strongly to pupils' learning experiences.

The school's care for its pupils is good and all the required safeguarding and child protection measures are in place. Academic support and guidance for pupils is satisfactory. The Language Resource base provides satisfactory support for pupils identified with difficulties or disabilities

related to their language development. In-class support is generally more effective than when pupils are withdrawn from class for extra help.

Leadership and management are good, and the increasing effect of successful initiatives to promote better progress for pupils shows that there is good capacity to continue to improve. Governors are well-informed, and have shown through astute staff appointments that they make a good contribution to the school's progress.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Good leadership and management ensure that provision for children in the Nursery and Reception classes is good. Children are safe, well cared for and thoroughly enjoy their experiences. Many children begin Reception with skills and knowledge well below those typical for their age. They make good progress and leave with standards below national expectations for their age. The staff's thoughtful planning promotes children's independence, personal and social development, and language skills with increasing effect, following fundamental restructuring of the way learning is promoted. Continuous outdoor learning opportunities attract both boys and girls where the staff prompt and challenge their thinking skilfully. It was delightful to witness the wide variety of activities exciting and engaging the children in all parts of the setting.

What the school should do to improve further

- Devise and implement an interesting and challenging curriculum that make links in learning between different subjects.
- Involve pupils more in assessing their own progress and setting learning targets.
- Ensure that support for groups and individuals are consistently effective across the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Improvements brought in by the new leadership team two years ago had insufficient time to have a significant impact on national test and assessment results in 2007. These showed that standards were significantly below average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The school's concentration on the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, including those supported in the Language Resource Base, led to this group of pupils achieving well but average and higher attaining pupils did not do so well and many underachieved.

Progress has accelerated well this year as higher quality teaching and learning make a measurable impact. Extensive school data shows that achievement is now good throughout the school, including for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Current standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are below average, but much closer to average than in 2007. This represents good progress and achievement given pupils' starting points at the beginning of Years 1 and 3 respectively. The current Year 5 pupils are on track to exceed the school's targets in 2009.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' well-being and personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural learning, are good. The curriculum includes good cultural learning opportunities. Through art, music, religious education and assemblies, pupils have good opportunities to reflect on their growing understanding of philosophy and personal belief. They feel safe and secure in school,

because they have good relationships with adults and other children. They enjoy their learning, illustrated by their good behaviour and joint collaboration. This allows lessons to flow smoothly. Attendance is satisfactory. Pupils know what to do if bullying occurs, and are confident that any problems will be resolved by teachers. They learn how to live healthy lifestyles from good access to a broad range of supportive activities. For example, the curriculum has a good focus on physical education and pupils take part in a range of extra-curricular activities such as football, gymnastics and drama. School councillors are confidently involved in finding out what matters to both pupils and parents to make improvements. Pupils are also involved in the wider community through such activities as taking part in concerts and raising funds for a range of charities. Preparation for the next stage of learning is good overall. Most pupils develop secure basic skills but aspects of potentially higher achieving pupils' basic skills are not well enough developed.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good and occasionally outstanding so that pupils make good progress. This improving picture is a result of the determined efforts of leaders and teachers to set more challenging learning targets and of the better monitoring of progress towards them. Lessons are well-planned and delivered, with an improved focus on the achievement of average and potentially higher attaining pupils. Pupils are enthusiastic about learning which they regard as both fun and challenging. They feel their teachers are helpful to them when they need support. Marking is particularly effective in literacy with consistently high standards of target setting and challenge. However, it is more variable in other areas, especially in numeracy and science. Pupils are not fully involved in assessing their own learning and setting targets. Support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is best when allied to class groups: it is least effective in some of the withdrawal groups.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and improving. It meets the needs of almost all learners well, including those pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Pupils have good opportunities to explore a wide range of activities, enriched by the 'Literacy Goes Mad' initiative, visitors to school and visits outside. There have been good developments in English, especially in writing, and in mathematics that have improved pupils' achievement. However, the rest of the curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 has not developed at the same rate in line with national guidance, particularly to promote links in learning between subjects. Good extra-curricular activities help develop team-building skills and add to pupils' physical, social and cultural development. Good partnerships with the local high school and parental support are providing good experience of modern foreign languages, aided by good links with a primary school in France. Other aspects of personal and social education are well taught, and are further enhanced through educational visits to explore other faiths and cultures. Promoting enterprise and life skills engages pupils well through 'Young Enterprise' and helping to run a Credit Union.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory overall; the school's care of pupils is good. Required child protection and safeguarding procedures are in place. The staff make full use of opportunities to help pupils to discuss their worries and concerns. They also help pupils to develop their social and emotional understanding well through class discussions. There is very effective emphasis on being healthy through a good range of physical activities. Teachers take account of pupils' progress and targets when they plan and mark work in literacy, involving pupils effectively in the process. Academic support and guidance are variable across other aspects of learning. For example, despite recent improvements, marking and assessment procedures in numeracy and science require further development to ensure their consistent use across the school. Provision for pupils needing specific support in their learning is variable: it is most effective when it is offered in close relationship to what is happening for other pupils.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. A school atmosphere has been created that is calm but has a lively feel of positive learning taking place, especially in the nursery and reception classes. All pupils have equal access to the school's good provision.

The headteacher, ably supported by her deputy, has effected many changes that are showing measurable impact in higher standards, faster pupil progress, better pupils' achievement and personal development. She has concentrated effectively on developing skilled leadership, teaching and support teams, prepared to implement required change to raise standards for the pupils. School self-evaluation is good, leading to the right priorities being identified for further improvement. There is also clear and focused determination to raise standards in all aspects of the school's work. However, teachers' use of assessment information and involvement of the pupils in this process is not consistent across the school. Governors both support and challenge the staff in their role as critical friends, and the chair is knowledgeable and active in his role. Resources are deployed effectively in the main, and the school is well-placed to continue to improve.

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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?	2
The standards ¹ 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	2

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	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?	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?	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

20 June 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Timothy Hackworth Primary School, Durham, DL4 1HN

It was great to be in your school this week with so many activities going on. It was also good to meet you and some of your parents – please thank them for us if they sent back the questionnaire. Your friendly welcome and willingness to talk to us made our job of inspecting your school very enjoyable. Thank you.

You will remember that we came to check how well your school looks after you and helps you to grow and learn. You and many of your parents told us that Timothy Hackworth Primary is a good school. We agree with you. Watching the children in the Nursery and Reception having such a good time in their learning made me wish that I was four again so that I could join in with them!

Your school cares for you well, making sure that you are safe and enjoy your work. The staff work hard to help you make good progress in your learning, that you told us was interesting and enjoyable. I was impressed that Year 2 know so much about Vincent Van Gogh's style of painting. We think that your school is improving, and you are helping it to improve by behaving well (nearly all the time!), working hard and trying to do your best. We hope that you will keep on exactly like that.

The staff are going to help you decide with them whether or not you are doing well enough in your learning, and what you need to do next to improve further. They are going to make sure that all of you, including those who need extra help, get the kind of support that helps you to do your best. They are also planning to add new activities and ideas to what you learn to make it even more interesting and enjoyable. You should like that.

It was good to see Year 5 working with staff from the local high school, and we know that many of you in Year 6 will be going there in September. We wish you good success in the future, and hope that you do as well as you can in all you try to do.

Yours sincerely

Eric Jackson

Lead inspector