

Parkhead Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131466
Local Authority	Gateshead
Inspection number	315811
Inspection dates	7–8 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Janet Bennett

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	362
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Tony Stevens
Headteacher	Mr Ben Harding
Date of previous school inspection	1 June 2004
School address	Park Lane Winlaton Blaydon-on-Tyne Tyne and Wear NE21 6LT
Telephone number	0191 4335618
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Parkhead Community Primary School is larger than average. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those learning English as an additional language are small. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average. There is an above average number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. A Children's Centre which provides a range of services to families is located on the school site.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Parkhead Community Primary School makes satisfactory provision for its pupils and has some clear strengths. It is appreciated by parents. Children's skills on entry to the nursery are well below those typical for their age, particularly in communication skills. Although the standards reached by pupils at the end of Year 6 remain well below average, this represents satisfactory achievement given their starting points. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because staff work well in partnership with other agencies to support their needs. Although pupils' progress is satisfactory overall, it is good in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1.

Successful action has led to improved teaching and learning which are good. They are most consistently effective in the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1. Although most teaching in Key Stage 2 is good, there is still some variation in quality. Where teaching is good, staff have high expectations, provide good levels of challenge and give clear guidance which helps pupils to improve. Where teaching is satisfactory, the pace of learning slows, assessment is not used well enough to plan different work that is matched to pupils' needs, and learners do not always know how to evaluate their work in order to make it better. Overall, monitoring is insufficiently rigorous to ensure consistency in the quality of teaching in Key Stage 2.

The quality of the curriculum is good. The varied range of activities outside lessons is appreciated by pupils and these contribute well to their healthy lifestyles and enjoyment of school. Pupils behave well in lessons and are very enthusiastic about the increasing use of the school grounds to extend learning beyond the classroom. Pupils are proud of the contribution they make to the local community and enjoy taking responsibility for fund-raising events or for acting as buddies to younger pupils. Effective partnerships exist with external agencies. For example, school and Children's Centre staff work together very closely to ensure that children are well supported as they transfer to school. This contributes very well to children's personal development and well-being. Effective use of information and communication technology (ICT) is enabling a growing number of children to save their work electronically in school so that they can review and further develop it at home. The skills pupils are developing through the use of ICT make a sound contribution to their future learning.

Leadership and management are good. Financial management is outstanding. Self-evaluation identifies clear priorities for improvement and these are understood by staff and senior leaders. The school has good capacity to further improve because improvements to the environment have extended opportunities for learning in the Foundation Stage and have improved behaviour in lessons and around school. Well managed systems are now in place to regularly track the progress that all pupils make and the proportion of good teaching has improved. This has led to better standards in Key Stage 1 and all senior leaders understand the action needed to raise achievement in Key Stage 2. Governors are committed to raising standards and are involved well in the work of the school but they are not always sufficiently involved in monitoring.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage is good. From starting points which are well below those typical for their ages children make good progress. Current good teaching is helping children reach the nationally expected levels for entry into Year 1 in some areas of learning,

although overall they are below this level. Children make outstanding progress in their personal, social and emotional development because the levels of care provided by staff are very high. Adults provide very good role models and children have many opportunities to develop independence, to explore the world around them and to work effectively with others. The opportunities for nursery children to learn alongside older children help them to quickly grow in confidence and to make good use of the wide range of exciting opportunities for play.

The curriculum is well structured so that all areas of learning are covered. There is a good balance between learning through play which children initiate themselves and through activities which staff lead. When learning is most effective, adults build upon children's interests and work in partnership with them to challenge their thinking.

The Foundation Stage leader has established an effective team where all members of staff make a good contribution to learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and achievement in Key Stage 2.
- Ensure that the work set in lessons is well matched to the specific needs of all pupils.
- Ensure that monitoring is sufficiently rigorous to improve the consistency of teaching.
- Ensure that pupils receive clear guidance so that they understand what they need to do to improve.

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

Achievement is satisfactory. From starting points that are well below those typical for their age pupils make satisfactory overall progress. Standards have been well below average by the end of Year 6 but work seen and its assessment by the school show that it has improved in quality this year. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress overall because staff work in partnership with other agencies to support their learning needs. Their progress is not as strong in Years 3 and 4.

In the Year 6 national tests in 2007 standards were well below average. Some pupils did not make sufficient progress in Key Stage 2 but these weaknesses have been largely addressed and the progress of most pupils in this key stage has accelerated and is now satisfactory. Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 are good and as a result standards in 2007 were in line with the national average at the end of Year 2.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils understand right and wrong, show courtesy towards others and behave well in lessons and around the school.

Pupils enjoy school and feel that their teachers make learning fun. They feel safe and secure because staff take excellent care of them and are very approachable. Pupils know how to stay healthy and enjoy the many opportunities to exercise in lessons, at playtime and through

involvement in extra-curricular activities. They are keen to take responsibility for organising events such as charity fund-raising and for helping younger pupils through the school's 'buddy' system. They are proud of their school's achievements in the community and speak enthusiastically about singing for senior citizens and taking part in local church events. Pupils feel that they are listened to and appreciate that their views are acted upon.

A significant number of pupils choose to use ICT to continue their learning at home. The opportunities for pupils to use ICT and to be involved in community and enterprise events provide a sound contribution to their future learning.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Recent action has led to improvements throughout the school, although teaching is most effective in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. The quality of the teaching in Key Stage 2 is variable but has improved overall and the pace of most pupils' learning has quickened because of this. The school is aware of the few remaining areas of underachievement. It needs to improve the rigour in the monitoring of teaching and develop strategies to deal with this.

Where teaching is most effective, pupils are interested and motivated to learn, teachers have high expectations, and staff provide good advice so that pupils can evaluate their work in order to make it better. All pupils take a full and active part in the lessons and their learning benefits from role play, partner work and thoughtful use of resources. Through effective use of ICT, teachers enable a growing number of pupils to save their work electronically so that they can review and further develop it at home.

Learning slows in classes where teachers do not plan work that is well matched to pupils' differing needs, and do not provide learners with the guidance they need to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and statutory requirements are met. It places an appropriate emphasis on the core subjects and is enhanced by linking activities between subjects. Although pupils have appropriate opportunities to develop writing skills, some opportunities for them to apply these skills in longer writing tasks in different subjects are missed.

There is good enrichment through a wide range of extra-curricular clubs which contribute well to children's healthy lifestyles. There are also planned learning opportunities which promote pupils' personal development and safety. Pupils are very enthusiastic about the increasing use of the school grounds to extend learning beyond the classroom. Strong partnerships with external agencies are contributing to exploring ways in which the woodland area can be used to best effect.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school takes good personal care of its pupils. All aspects of health and safety are thoroughly considered and electronic systems for sharing information contribute well to this aspect of the school's work. Risk assessments are in place and arrangements for child protection and

safeguarding meet government requirements. Good working relationships with external agencies ensure that the small number of pupils with behaviour concerns is well supported. Academic guidance to help pupils improve their work is satisfactory and in some classes this is used well. An example of this was seen in the Year 3/4 class where the teacher used his evaluation of pupils' work to check their mathematical understanding in order to give very clear guidance for improvement. The school needs to ensure that such good practice is used consistently in all classes.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. Self-evaluation identifies clear priorities for improvement and these are understood by staff and senior leaders. The school has made satisfactory progress overall since the last inspection and the effectiveness of recent improvements shows good capacity to further improve. The recent focus given to improving teaching has raised standards in Key Stage 1 and improved progress in Key Stage 2. Improvements to the learning environment both indoors and out have contributed well to learning in the Foundation Stage and also to the behaviour and engagement of older pupils in school. Good systems are in place to track the progress of pupils and these systems are being used to set challenging targets for all learners.

Financial management is outstanding. Savings made in some expenditure areas have enabled the school to fund additional staffing to cover for staff preparation time and facilitate smaller group work. Funding and grants invested in the school grounds and building have also improved the pupils' learning environment. Governance is satisfactory with some good features. Governors are well informed about the school's provision but they are not always sufficiently involved in monitoring.

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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	2

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	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	3

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?	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?	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	3
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	3
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	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

9 May 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Parkhead Community Primary School, Gateshead, NE21 6LT

Thank you for making us so welcome. We really enjoyed spending time with you. You were very courteous towards us and happy to talk about your work and school activities. You told us that you feel safe in school and we could see how well all of the adults care for you. We could also tell that you enjoy school by your good behaviour and the way in which you try really hard in lessons. Keep it up!

We were impressed by your willingness to take responsibility and to help others through raising money for charities and taking part in community events. We were also pleased to see how much you understand about healthy living and how enthusiastically you exercise and take part in sporting activities at playtime. The youngest children in school really enjoy learning outdoors and we were interested to hear the ideas older pupils have for using your beautiful school grounds to support their learning too.

Yours is a satisfactory school. In some lessons, your teachers set tasks for you to do which make you think really hard and this helps you to learn well. We have asked that this happens all the time, particularly in Key Stage 2, and we have also asked for more checks that this is happening. We noticed how some children learned more by thinking carefully about the advice that their teachers gave. We think it would be good if you were all able to do this so we have asked your teachers to give you more regular guidance to help you improve. You could play your part by thinking of ways in which you could make your work better as well.

Carry on enjoying school, behaving well and looking after each other. We wish you all great things for the future.

Janet Bennett

Lead Inspector