

Handale Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131645
Local Authority	Redcar and Cleveland
Inspection number	315846
Inspection dates	9–10 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Margaret Armstrong

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	343
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Darren Fowler
Headteacher	Mrs Christine Buckley
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	West Park Avenue Loftus Saltburn Redcar and Cleveland TS13 4RL
Telephone number	01287 640 416
Fax number	01287 646 350

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average sized school serving an area of social and economic disadvantage in East Cleveland. It is housed on a split-site. The school was formed at the start of the last academic year by the amalgamation of separate infant and junior schools. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is higher than average as is the percentage who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The number of pupils who have a statement of special education need is low. A very small proportion of pupils are from minority ethnic groups; none speak English as an

additional language. There is a Sure Start Centre attached to the school. The school provides breakfast and after school clubs.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Handale Primary is a satisfactory school with an accurate view of its effectiveness. It provides satisfactory value for money. This improving school has some good features, such as pupils' personal development and the imaginative curriculum which inspires pupils to learn. The headteacher and staff know the pupils very well. This results in a good level of care for vulnerable pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Most parents are pleased with the quality of education their children receive. They appreciate the support offered to pupils with social and emotional needs, and the opportunities to learn how to help their children at home.

The personal development and well-being of pupils are good. Pupils attend regularly and enjoy school. They are well supported to develop good personal skills. Guidance for their learning is satisfactory. Relationships are good and, as a result, pupils are well behaved and manage their emotions well. All pupils have a good understanding of how to stay healthy and safe. Pupils make a good contribution to the community through their involvement in fund raising for a range of charities and by supporting others as 'Reading Partners'. These personal qualities provide a positive platform upon which to improve their academic achievement, and prepare them to become responsible citizens of the future.

Standards are average and achievement is satisfactory. When children start school their level of development is below that which is typical for their age group, particularly their personal development and ability to communicate. Good provision in the Foundation Stage means children quickly become active learners and achieve well. Pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through the school and, by the time they leave Year 6, standards are average. This represents improvement since 2007 when results of national tests were below average. This improving picture results from the rigorous and determined efforts of leaders to tackle weaknesses by setting more challenging learning targets and keeping a closer check on pupils' progress towards them. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and other vulnerable pupils, make satisfactory progress because of the match of provision to their individual needs.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. There is some good and often outstanding teaching, but not all is sufficiently challenging. Senior leaders have implemented new strategies to ensure consistency in the quality of teaching. These have not yet been adopted fully across the school. As a result, learning moves forward at a satisfactory rate rather than the good rate for which the school strives. Marking is not used consistently across the school resulting in some pupils being unsure about how well they are doing and how they might improve. The school has outstanding partnerships with outside agencies. This ensures the curriculum is enriched by a good range of high quality activities available both inside and outside lesson time.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The recently formed leadership team has signposted a clear turning point in the school's development. It has taken swift and decisive action, for example to raise standards in Key Stage 2. Other leaders, managers and governors are improving their skills although currently they do not always have enough opportunities to ensure they have a fully informed view of how well the school is performing. Nevertheless, actions are being taken to remedy weaknesses as can be seen in pupils' accelerating progress and in the higher standards by Year 6.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Good provision in the Foundation Stage enables children's learning to get off to a successful start. The good level of care given to children helps them settle quickly so they learn to work and play together in a safe and interesting environment. Good assessment procedures help teachers to plan activities which take account of children's prior experiences and learning needs. As a result, teachers provide a good balance of activities led by an adult and those initiated by children. Staff keep a close check on how well children are doing. Effective links with parents ensure they support learning well. Consequently, children make good progress in relation to their low starting points. By the end of Reception most children achieve the goals expected for their age. Leadership and management are good, and there are detailed plans in place to improve provision.

What the school should do to improve further

- Consolidate the use of new teaching initiatives to raise standards in English and mathematics.
- Improve the use of marking across the school so pupils know what they need to do to move on in their learning.
- Provide more opportunities for senior leaders to find out how well the school is doing and to influence the way forward.

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. Standards are broadly average by the end of Year 6. In 2007, pupils reached standards which were average in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2. Inspection evidence shows current standards are below average. This represents satisfactory progress for these pupils from their low starting points when they joined Year 1. In 2007, standards were below average in the national tests for eleven-year-olds. Over the past year, the school has placed a focus on raising achievement in English and mathematics and, as a result, standards are rising. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those from minority ethnic groups make similar satisfactory progress to other pupils. Although there is some variation in the attainment of boys and girls, there is no measurable pattern. Internal assessments indicate that the school is likely to meet its performance targets of average standards at the end of Year 6.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Many pupils have poorly developed personal and social skills and low self-esteem when they enter school, but they are confident, self-reliant and articulate by the time they leave. They behave well because relationships are good and they know what is expected of them. Pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong and treat each other with respect. They enjoy coming to school. This is reflected in improving levels of attendance. The school promotes healthy lifestyles well. This enables pupils to make informed choices about the food they eat

and to take regular exercise. Pupils say they feel safe in school and are confident issues such as bullying will not be tolerated. They are a credit to the school and take a pride in their contributions to the community. They act as 'Play Leaders', serve on the school council and represent the school at local fund raising events. Their literacy and numeracy skills are satisfactory but well developed social skills stand them in good stead for their future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. There is some good and outstanding teaching. Teaching is improving but is too variable in quality to promote consistent progress. This is because the number of useful initiatives implemented to help improve the quality of teaching have not been adopted fully across the school. Good teaching is typified by lessons progressing at a fast pace with activities that challenge pupils. Teachers have a good understanding of each individual's needs and use perceptive questioning to extend pupils' thinking. Explanations are clear and this helps pupils know precisely what they need to do to be successful in their learning. Teaching assistants are well briefed to ensure that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are provided with tasks which cater well for their learning needs. Where teaching is less effective, questioning is not adapted sufficiently to ensure all pupils can participate fully in lessons. As a result, the pace of learning is slower and pupils do not engage as well as they could. Generally, marking is supportive and encouraging. In the best examples, it clearly indicates how pupils can improve their work. This practice is not consistent across the school. As a result, pupils do not always know how to move on to the next steps in their learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. It is broad and balanced and meets all statutory requirements. It is creative and engaging and promotes good achievement in pupils' personal development. This is seen in the way the school adapts the timetable to enable older pupils to take responsibility and spend additional time on activities such as music, physical education and the performing arts. Pupils in Year 6 for example, report that the 'Chill-out Club' helps them settle quickly into learning each morning. The curriculum is enriched through strong links with the wider community. These include visits from artists and sports specialists, visits out of school to Preston Park and Saltburn Beach and opportunities to participate in Enterprise Weeks. The school has excellent links with other providers. For example, very effective links with behaviour support services has resulted in a whole school approach to behaviour management. As a result, pupils with social and emotional difficulties participate fully in the activities provided by the school. The opportunities for learning beyond the classroom are good and pupils are very keen to attend the wide range of sporting and creative activities which are available.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. Procedures for child protection, risk assessment and health and safety are fully in place. Expectations for the behaviour and development of pupils are very high within a caring environment in which all feel valued and supported. The work of the learning mentor has been particularly successful in helping pupils at risk of exclusion engage

in their learning. The school's partnership with parents is good. The innovative use of the community link worker supports learning well and has resulted in improved attendance. Very good links with outside agencies ensure that the needs of pupils, especially vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, are met. Academic guidance is satisfactory. Strong links with the receiver secondary school ensure a smooth transfer as pupils move to the next stage of their education. A new school tracking system keeps a close eye on the progress of individuals. This enables the school to set challenging targets for groups of pupils but the use of individual targets for improvement is less well developed.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership, management and governance are satisfactory. The headteacher provides purposeful leadership and this has helped her to develop a good team spirit in the school. Consequently, the school has maintained a good focus on raising standards during a period of significant change. Improvements have been made in English and mathematics, and standards are rising in both subjects. Teaching and learning are monitored regularly and support is given when required. Senior leaders have implemented a good range of strategies to help teaching improve. However, action taken has not yet ensured the quality of teaching is consistent across the school. Self-evaluation procedures are comprehensive and provide an accurate picture of what is working and what needs attention. Recent development of the skills of senior leaders is enabling them to make a fuller contribution to evaluating the school's work. However, they are at an early stage in developing this aspect of their role especially in checking that changes are being effective. The school has good support from well informed governors who act as challenging and critical friends. They know the school well and play a full part in its development. The school has a satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

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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?	1
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?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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

11 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Handale Primary School, Redcar and Cleveland, TS13 4RL

Thank you for the kind and friendly welcome given to us during our recent inspection of your school. You were keen to talk to us and answered our questions thoughtfully, politely and sensibly. Your behaviour is good and we could see you enjoy learning. It was good to hear you feel safe and happy in school. All the adults care for you a great deal. It was good to see how proud you are of the certificates you are given when you have done something really well. You have been particularly successful in sporting events. Well done! We found out about the responsibilities you undertake and your involvement with local community activities. You are confident young people and have the personal qualities to make a success of your education.

Your school is a satisfactory school. There are, however, many things which are changing quite quickly. It is clear that these changes mean that you are doing better at school. We thought all of your teachers worked very hard to help keep you safe, healthy and happy. They are planning exciting activities which you enjoy. We found some of your lessons made you really think and work hard but they were not all like this and so we have asked your school make sure all lessons are lively and interesting. We think marking could be improved so you always know what the next step in your learning will be. We have asked the headteacher and governors to make sure all of the adults who are responsible for checking how well you are doing share the job of finding out how things can be improved further in your school.

You can help your school by always asking how well you are getting on and what you still have to do to improve further. Of course, you should continue to try to do you best in everything that you do and in English and mathematics in particular.

I wish you all the very best for a successful future.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Armstrong

Lead inspector