

Whinney Banks Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	134076
Local Authority	Middlesbrough
Inspection number	316236
Inspection date	22 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Linda Buller

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	415
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Linda Green
Headteacher	Mr John Wiffen
Date of previous school inspection	1 June 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Fakenham Avenue Middlesbrough TS5 4QQ
Telephone number	01642 817713
Fax number	01642 828621

Age group	3–11
Inspection date	22 October 2008
Inspection number	316236

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and the following issues:

- the effectiveness of the actions taken by leaders and managers to halt a decline in standards in Key Stage 1
- whether provision remains good enough to maintain pupils' outstanding achievement by the end of Year 6
- how well the information gained from assessment of children's work in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is used to meet the needs of individual pupils and reach challenging targets.

Evidence was gathered from the school's records of pupils' progress and the assessments of the standards they attain, from observing teaching and learning, from analysis of pupils' work in books and from discussions with pupils, staff and governors. Parents' responses to the Ofsted questionnaire were also analysed. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation were not justified and these have been included in this report.

Description of the school

The school is larger than average and draws its pupils from an area with high levels of social disadvantage. A much greater proportion of pupils claim a free school meal than is typical of other primary schools. Most pupils are of White British background with very few from minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. There has been a significant change to the teaching staff since the time of the last inspection.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school which is rightly held in high esteem within the local community. Inspirational leadership by the headteacher and senior staff who provide excellent role models for both staff and pupils underpin the school's success. The emphasis the school gives to all staff having the time and training needed in order to understand and meet the differing learning and personal needs of every single child is exemplary. Consequently, the climate for learning is excellent and pupils of all backgrounds and abilities achieve exceptionally well in relation to their different starting points.

Although the school was also judged to be outstanding at the time of the last inspection it has not rested on its laurels and has sustained high standards. From a starting point that is much lower than usually seen progress is outstanding and pupils reach above average standards by the end of Year 6. Outstanding leadership and management operate high quality systems of self-evaluation. Rigorous analysis of the information gained ensures that any slowing in the rate of pupil progress is quickly spotted and prompt action taken to bring about improvement. For example, the intensive support provided for pupils following a decline in standards at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2007 has resulted in these pupils (now in Year 4) making rapid progress. They are now reaching standards much nearer those expected for their age despite a significant number of pupils in this year group being identified as having specific learning difficulties.

Staff are totally committed to doing their best for all pupils and make excellent use of the expertise of colleagues to enhance their own knowledge and skills. They manage pupils extremely well and have high expectations for their progress both personally and academically. Pupils respond well with exemplary behaviour ensuring that lessons proceed at a good pace. Teachers and support staff have very effective strategies for improving pupils' literacy skills through the linking of letters and sounds. This builds progressively as pupils move from the Reception classes and through Key Stage 1 and is one of the key reasons why standards are once again rising by the end of this key stage. Pupils are provided with clear learning targets to aim towards, they know how well they are doing and readily explain how they use their targets to improve their work. Teachers throughout the school are highly skilled in planning activities which help pupils to develop new skills and knowledge whilst providing regular opportunities to put into practice the skills previously learnt. This is the key to pupils' outstanding progress as they move from one year group to the next.

Supporting this outstanding teaching is a well planned curriculum which provides pupils with a wide range of interesting and stimulating activities which cater for pupils' individual learning styles and interests. Meaningful links between subjects help pupils to have a real purpose for their learning and ensure that every opportunity is taken to improve their basic literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills. A very good range of after-school clubs and excellent opportunities to develop exceptional skills in creative arts enhance the school's outstanding curriculum and add significantly to pupils' enjoyment.

The school's safeguarding procedures fully meet current government guidelines. The school's very strong ethos of caring for pupils as individuals shows in the efforts made by staff to ensure that pupils feel safe and secure. Pupils are confident to try new activities and learn from their mistakes. Their outstanding personal development is demonstrated in their excellent attitudes to work and their enthusiasm for all the school has to offer. They carry out a range of duties very responsibly and make equally good use of other opportunities to contribute to the school

and the wider community. They have a good understanding of the need for regular exercise and a healthy, balanced diet to keep fit and well. Despite pupils evident love of school attendance levels are satisfactory. Whilst most pupils attend regularly the poor attendance of a few results in lower than average levels of attendance overall. Pupils' ability to self-reflect, get along with others and their above average basic skills prepares them exceptionally well for their future lives beyond school.

All members of the school community share a vision for future success. The governing body provides very good strategic leadership, supports the school very well and holds it to account most effectively for its performance. The school works hard to play its part in community cohesion, playing a central role in developing effective partnerships and in raising the aspirations of pupils and their parents. The school provides excellent value for money and has an outstanding capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage Grade: 1

Outstanding leadership and management result in highly effective provision which ensures that all children make significant gains in their learning. Their achievement is consistently good and often excellent in relation to their starting points which are well below those typical of children of their age. Speaking and listening skills are particularly low. Strong teaching with significant elements of outstanding practice reflects an excellent understanding of how very young children learn. Activities are very well planned, and children have many opportunities to make choices and develop their social skills and confidence. The outdoor learning area is attractive and used well. Indoor and outdoor learning is well integrated. Speaking and listening and personal and social development are given a high focus. As a result, by the time children move into the Reception classes their personal development is outstanding; they are confident independent learners who behave extremely well. There are good assessment systems in place which build up a comprehensive picture of each child's progress. However, leaders are aware this information is not yet used as sharply as it might be to ensure that when moving from Nursery to Reception classes more able children are quickly challenged to reach the standards of which they are capable. Children's welfare is given a high priority and robust arrangements are in place for their safeguarding. Classrooms are well equipped, safe and secure, enabling all children, including the most vulnerable, to thrive. Leaders have exceptionally high aspirations and provision is continually evaluated leading to consistent improvement.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Outstanding leadership and management result in highly effective provision which ensures that all children make significant gains in their learning. Their achievement is consistently good and often excellent in relation to their starting points which are well below those typical of children of their age. Speaking and listening skills are particularly low. Strong teaching with significant elements of outstanding practice reflects an excellent understanding of how very young children learn. Activities are very well planned, and children have many opportunities to make choices and develop their social skills and confidence. The outdoor learning area is attractive and used well. Indoor and outdoor learning is well integrated. Speaking and listening and personal and social development are given a high focus. As a result, by the time children move into the Reception classes their personal development is outstanding; they are confident independent learners who behave extremely well. There are good assessment systems in place which build up a comprehensive picture of each child's progress. However, leaders are aware this information is not yet used as sharply as it might be to ensure that when moving from Nursery to Reception

classes more able children are quickly challenged to reach the standards of which they are capable. Children's welfare is given a high priority and robust arrangements are in place for their safeguarding. Classrooms are well equipped, safe and secure, enabling all children, including the most vulnerable, to thrive. Leaders have exceptionally high aspirations and provision is continually evaluated leading to consistent improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve levels of attendance.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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?	1
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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	1

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which 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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	1
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?	1

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

25 October 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Whinney Banks Primary School, Middlesbrough, TS5 4QQ

Thank you for making me welcome during my recent inspection of your school. I really enjoyed talking with you and seeing you work. Your pride in the school shone through your comments. You, and most of your parents, are right in thinking you go to an outstanding school. Those responsible for running the school do their job extremely well. Staff work very hard, to make sure you feel safe and secure and to help you learn as much as you can. This helps you to become very mature and confident young people. You told me that you enjoy all of your lessons because your work is interesting and fun. I was very impressed with how much you know about what you need to do to reach even higher standards.

It was easy to see how much you enjoy school and how keen you are to get involved with making your school as good as it can be. Unfortunately there are still a number of you whose attendance is not as good as it should be and I have asked the school to try even harder to improve this.

You need to play your part in this by always coming to school as often as you should.

Thank you once again for helping me. I enjoyed my time with you and your teachers. I hope that you continue to work hard and enjoy school.

Yours sincerely

Linda Buller

Lead inspector