

Ravensworth Terrace Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108333
Local Authority	Gateshead
Inspection number	324746
Inspection dates	8–9 December 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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	195
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 Janet Scott
Headteacher	Mrs Jean Simpson
Date of previous school inspection	1 January 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Birtley Lane Birtley Chester le Street County Durham DH3 2PP

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	8–9 December 2008
Inspection number	324746

Telephone number
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is smaller than average and draws its pupils from an area with higher than average levels of social disadvantage. The proportion of pupils who claim a free school meal is above average. 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 above average. The school provides education for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

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 where pupils do well both academically and in their personal development. Pupils' positive attitudes and good behaviour allow them to take full advantage of the wide range of activities which the school provides for them. Pupils are friendly and sociable; they concentrate well and are keen to do their best in lessons. Most pupils attend regularly and this is reflected in their obvious enthusiasm for learning. Currently, attendance is below the national average but is improving in response to new strategies now in place. Pupils have a good understanding of how to develop healthy lifestyles and how to keep themselves out of harm's way. They take responsibility readily, work well in groups and leave the school well prepared for the future.

Pupils' achievement is good. Children get a good start in the EYFS and overall make good progress to reach well above average standards by the end of Year 6. This is as a result of teaching which is good and at times outstanding and a broad and balanced curriculum which focuses well on improving pupils' literacy skills. The curriculum is made more relevant and exciting by the range of visits organised and a good range of extra-curricular activities. This was confirmed by the comment of one pupil during the salsa session when stating, 'this is the best bit of my week'. A significant strength of the good teaching is the skilful management of pupils which ensures that lessons are calm and purposeful. In many lessons teachers expect a lot from pupils, questioning is used skilfully to challenge the pupils' thinking and check their understanding. Pupils respond with great enthusiasm to the challenges set for them. There are times however when teachers expect too little of pupils and this restricts their progress. Where this happens progress slows and contributes to the inconsistencies in progress across the school.

Care, guidance and support are good. Relationships between staff and pupils are warm and supportive and, as a result, pupils say they feel safe and happy. The school is fully committed to meeting pupils' specific needs. The creation of the Nurture Unit is an excellent example of how staff and governors work tirelessly in the development of effective partnerships and expertise. These links enable staff to provide the pupils in their care with equal opportunities to overcome any barriers to their learning. Whilst in the main, good quality academic guidance is provided, pupils' understanding of how to improve their work is not yet fully secure.

Leadership and management are good. The experienced headteacher is well focused on raising standards and providing good quality provision. Careful checks on the school's work have ensured that leaders and managers have a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Actions taken to improve pupils' writing skills have met with some success and standards are rising. However, although the school is fully aware that pupils' progress slows in lower Key Stage 2, the actions taken by leaders and managers have not yet reversed this trend. Governors support the school well and are involved fully in helping it improve. The school have dealt effectively with the areas for development identified at the last inspection and have a good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children enjoy a happy start to school life and achieve well in the Reception class. Children's personal development and well-being are good. They become engrossed in chosen activities and play very well with others demonstrating good levels of behaviour. Staff work hard within

limited accommodation to create lively and well resourced areas for children's learning and development. The accommodation provided for the Reception class does not make it easy for the children to move freely from indoor to outdoor activities. To overcome this difficulty, staff and children are very inventive and do well with what is available. Detailed planning successfully links together many areas of learning with a good range of reading and writing tasks which help to tackle weaknesses in literacy skills. As a result, children in the current Reception class are well on track to reach broadly average standards by the time they enter Year 1. This represents good progress from a starting point that is below the level usually seen for this age. Activities which are led by an adult are built on well through the wide range of opportunities provided for children to practise what they have learnt whilst engaged in play and the activities which they choose for themselves. Children are cared for well. Their parents are involved closely in their education and are kept well informed about how they can contribute to their children's progress. Regular opportunities are taken to observe children's learning and this information is used effectively to plan their next steps in learning. Leadership and management are good. The leader uses her specialist knowledge and enthusiasm well in making suitable provision for all the children.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the rate of progress pupils make especially in Years 3 and 4.
- Ensure that teachers across the school consistently provide work that is challenging enough to meet the needs of all pupils.

Achievement and standardsGrade: 2

Pupils achieve well. By the end of Year 6, standards are well above the national average. This represents good progress overall from a starting point that is below what is typical for their age when they join the school. However, the rate of pupils' progress is variable as they move through the school. By the end of Year 2 pupils standards are broadly in line with the national average. In Years 3 and 4 progress slows and pupils do not always reach the targets set for their learning. However, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities continue to make good progress as a result of good quality targeted support. Consistently good and often outstanding teaching in Years 5 and 6 accelerates progress and helps pupils to make up any lost ground. Although varying because of the ability of the cohorts the results of national tests in Year 6 show standards which are high when compared to other schools nationally.

Personal development and well-beingGrade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Good behaviour and positive relationships are well established. The few pupils who at times find classroom routines difficult to follow are managed well. Pupils say that they enjoy their work and that their class teacher will always 'help me if I'm stuck and boost my confidence'. Pupils know right from wrong and show sensitivity to those less fortunate than themselves. The older pupils take on responsibility by helping to care for the younger children in the playground and are involved in fundraising and in charitable activities in the wider community. The school council is active in ensuring that pupils' views are heard and they are very proud, for example, of their success in having mirrors fitted in the toilets. Pupils understand how to stay fit and well. They know the importance of eating healthily and the taking of regular exercise. They say they feel safe and that the occasional incidents of teasing or falling out are dealt with quickly and effectively by staff. Pupils speak about their enjoyment of school and their liking for their teachers and other staff. Attendance is below average but is improving as the few who are not regular attenders respond well to the school's encouragement and practical help. Pupils

are confident and self-reliant in their classrooms and have the ability to work both independently and collaboratively. Their good literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills (ICT) ensure that they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good overall but at times varies in quality from satisfactory to outstanding. Pupils enjoy school because they get on well with their teachers and an atmosphere of mutual respect ensures that pupils are keen to do their best and behave well. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to work together; this contributes well to pupils' personal development. Teaching assistants are deployed well in lessons and often work effectively with small groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. In many lessons, high levels of challenge, targeted questioning and a brisk pace to learning, results in all pupils making rapid progress. This is particularly evident in upper Key Stage 2 classes but is not consistent throughout the school. Although there are often elements of good teaching, in some classes pupils are not always sufficiently challenged to reach the standards of which they are capable.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. Good provision is in place to improve pupils' basic skills both in literacy and numeracy lessons and across other subjects of the curriculum. In history, for example, children developed their speaking and listening skills by acting out the lives of north-eastern mining families of past years. The adaptation of the curriculum to meet the specific needs of those pupils now taught within the Nurture Group is outstanding. Curriculum provision for ICT has improved markedly since the last inspection and is now good. A wide range of extra-curricular activities are offered which are well supported by pupils and extend their understanding and enjoyment of the work done in the classroom. The school's personal, social, health and citizenship programme caters well for pupils' personal development and its strong emphasis on health has been recognised by national awards.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care, guidance and support pupils receive are good. Bold decisions taken by the school, such as setting up the Nurture Unit, have improved the care and support provided for all pupils through the provision of a calm and orderly atmosphere in which to learn. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils follow national guidelines. Pupils stated confidently that if they have a problem or a concern there is always someone to turn to for help or advice. Strategies introduced since the last inspection to improve attendance, such as the Attendance Club, have started to impact with marked improvement in the attendance rates of those pupils targeted. Close

attention is paid to the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities enabling them to learn effectively and make good progress. Teachers give good feedback to pupils about what they have done well. Discussions as to whether success criteria have been achieved are regular features of lessons. Guidance to help pupils understand what they need to improve in their work is less consistent.

Leadership and management Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. A range of regular monitoring activities ensures that self-evaluation is accurate and enables the school to correctly identify and prioritise areas for development. Regular assessments and tracking of pupils' progress from year-to-year are used to set challenging targets for pupils to reach by the end of Year 6 and overall these are successfully met. Information on rates of pupils' progress is analysed thoroughly by the headteacher. This indicates that progress is slower than expected for pupils in Years 3 and 4. Pinpointing the reasons for this slower progress is not as rigorous; as a result, the actions taken to bring about improvement are not yet having the desired impact. The school's contribution to community cohesion is satisfactory. Good provision is made to raise pupils' awareness of the social, cultural and religious diversity of the local and wider community. Good links have been established with the local community to enhance pupils' awareness of social, cultural and religious diversity. These are being extended to deepen pupils' understanding and knowledge of equality and diversity. Plans are in place to develop the school's involvement with wider national and international communities.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

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

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?	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
The extent to which 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 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?	2

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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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	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

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

10 December 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ravensworth Terrace Primary School, Gateshead, DH3 2PP

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited to your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you, looking at your work and finding out about the things you enjoy most in school. We agree with you that yours is a good school. You make a good contribution to the school's success by how well you behave and your enthusiasm for your work. It was good to hear how much you understand about keeping safe and what you need to do to be healthy.

We think your school is well led and managed and that everyone works hard to make sure that you are well cared for and safe in school. Staff work hard to help you to reach standards that are higher than those in other schools by the time you are in Year 6. However, we noticed that there are times, especially in Years 3 and 4, when a number of you are doing work which you find too easy and are ready to try harder work. We have therefore asked your teachers to make sure that they challenge you to do as well as you possibly can in all lessons.

We know you will continue to work hard and help your teachers to make your school even better. We wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Linda Buller

Lead inspector