

Knop Law Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108450
Local Authority	Newcastle upon Tyne
Inspection number	324771
Inspection dates	13–14 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Graeme Clarke

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)	391
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	Mr Richard Oliver
Headteacher	Mrs Pauline Dutton
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Knop Law Primary School Hillhead Parkway Newcastle upon Tyne Tyne and Wear NE5 1LH
Telephone number	0191 2674453
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This above average size primary school was created in 2005 by the amalgamation of neighbouring first and middle schools. The school serves a suburban community in north-west Newcastle, a locality where socio-economic factors are broadly average. A below average number of pupils are eligible for free school meals. Most pupils are from White British families and others come from a European, African or Asian heritage. None are at the early stages of learning to speak English. The proportions of pupils with learning difficulties, and those with a statement of special educational need, are well below average. There is Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision in the Reception class.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Knop Law is a good primary school where many important aspects of its work are outstanding. Children thrive because the headteacher, ably assisted by her senior team, provides very clear educational direction for all staff. Together they successfully promote the school's aim to develop the whole child. Pupils' personal development is outstanding, high standards prevail and many pupils achieve very well. This is a very inclusive school where everyone has many opportunities in a truly excellent curriculum to develop their talents and demonstrate accomplishments. Wonderful, exemplary displays in classrooms, corridors and the hall strikingly reflect pupils' work of the highest quality. The school widens pupils' understanding and contributes outstandingly to community cohesion through its most effective partnerships with the local community, the church and other faiths, and schools abroad. The school has excellent links with parents and their confidence in it is quite exceptional. One sums up their views: 'I feel that Knop Law Primary School has given both my children the very best start to their education that I could have wished for ... By instilling high standards and expectations from a very young age most pupils appear to go on and fulfil their potential by means of a caring environment.'

Overall achievement is good and standards are well above average. Results of national tests and assessments at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 were significantly above average in 2007. Early indications in 2008 are that pupils in Key Stage 1 sustained these very high standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Unvalidated data for Key Stage 2 show an improvement in English, especially in writing, and the school exceeded its target for the number of pupils reaching the higher level. Although standards in mathematics remained well above average, the school did not reach its target for pupils reaching the higher level. A few more able pupils who attained very well in Year 2 did not make enough progress in Key Stage 2. The school has responded promptly to this issue and is successfully strengthening mathematical understanding. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress.

Pupils behave exceptionally well in lessons and assemblies. They act considerately and politely. Confidence and courtesy are the hallmarks of their contribution to discussion. They thoroughly enjoy school, are delighted when they do well and happily share the success of others. Attendance is above average. Pupils have a really good grasp of the need for healthy eating and enthusiastically take part in physical activities during and after school. They contribute exceptionally well in many ways to their school and wider community. Their endeavour, coupled with local and international partnerships, makes a distinct contribution to community cohesion. Very good basic skills, very well developed social skills and a strong grasp of enterprise prepare them exceptionally well for their future.

Leadership, management and governance are good. The school's successful attention to develop writing has paid dividends. Good achievement and outstanding personal development represent good value for money. Teachers help pupils know how well they doing, but collectively are not yet using challenging targets to give pupils clear, long-term aspirations and goals, and consistent pointers towards the next steps in their learning. The firm resolve of the headteacher, senior leaders and governors to aim higher, coupled with a clear track record of progress since amalgamation, indicate a good capacity for improvement.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

The EYFS is outstanding. Parents are delighted with the way their children settle into the Reception class and are justifiably proud of the progress they make. A well established system of visits eases the transition from home to school and useful documentation helps parents support their children's learning. The quality of care is excellent and enables children to feel secure and relaxed in the setting. Teaching is outstanding. Children are encouraged to make sensible choices and participate fully. They respond extremely positively to the absorbing and appropriate practical activities staff arrange for them. Because teachers ring the changes with new activities at frequent intervals, children look forward to school with excitement and become engrossed in their work. Their confidence soon grows and they develop abilities to learn independently. Teachers and support staff work very effectively together to support children and ensure consistency and progression in their learning. Staff emphasise courtesy and consideration throughout the day which, with well established routines, enable children to form positive relationships and conduct themselves impeccably.

When children begin Reception, most have skills and knowledge broadly typical for their age. By the end of Reception last year, children exceeded expectations for their age in communication, language and personal development, although their social development was closer to average. Almost all children reached the levels expected of five-year-olds. A great majority exceeded them, with many doing exceptionally well in their reading and mathematical development. This outstanding achievement is the result of carefully managed rigorous assessment and diligent support, which identify individual learning needs and ensures children make excellent progress. The very successful leadership is characterised by an entirely accurate perception of effective provision in the EYFS and a clear determination to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise attainment at the higher levels by the end of Key Stage 2, especially in mathematics.
- Make more use of challenging targets to improve pupils' progress throughout Key Stage 2.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good. From entering school with skills and abilities that are typical for their age, pupils make good progress in the EYFS and start in Year 1 with standards that are above average. Progress is good in Key Stages 1 and 2 and pupils leave school with standards that are well above average. Results of teachers' assessments at the end of Year 2 have been significantly above average for several years. A high proportion of pupils exceed the level expected for their age, although in 2008 these levels fell a little in relation to those seen in recent years.

Test results at the end of Key Stage 2 were similarly impressive in 2007, being significantly above average in all subjects. Provisional results in 2008 show a small decline on the previous year because in science and in mathematics fewer pupils exceeded the level expected for their age. The school's records show that in mathematics a few more able pupils did not make enough progress. In contrast to this, writing improved, especially with an increase in the number of pupils reaching the higher level. Inspection evidence shows most pupils are currently making good progress in mathematics and that they are sustaining their high standards in writing. As a result of very effective support, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make

similarly good progress as their classmates and in 2007 attained higher standards than their counterparts nationally.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. They benefit enormously from a very wide range of opportunities in lessons, assemblies and visits to heritage and environmental centres. Together these lead to pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils speak cogently about the importance of healthy eating and many partake of the healthy snacks and meals the school offers. They take part enthusiastically in physical education and with notable success in voluntary sports activities. The school deservedly has the Healthy Schools and Activemark awards. Pupils clearly enjoy most lessons and school activities where they work very industriously and well. A large number participate in after-school clubs and many take great pleasure from contributing to the large choir, orchestra and recorder groups. Pupils say they feel safe in school and comment that antisocial behaviour and bullying are rare, and are always dealt with quickly. Pupils' excellent behaviour in lessons never diminishes learning. Older pupils are considerate in looking after their younger schoolmates. Pupils become willingly involved in charitable causes and contribute fully to the close links with schools in India and Ethiopia. These contacts extend pupils' global awareness and enhance their contribution to community cohesion. Pupils' strong social and team-working skills and very good basic skills prepare them exceedingly well for their future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Good and sometimes outstanding teaching leads pupils to make good progress in lessons. Teachers plan lessons thoroughly, and use both their subject expertise and knowledge of their class to align activities to pupils' abilities. Although teachers help each pupil to understand what they should concentrate upon to improve the quality of their work in the short term, challenging targets for pupils to aim for are not clearly defined. Skilful use of interactive whiteboards and good questioning encourage pupils to give their views and participate in lessons, but these do not always tax the most able. Middle and lower attaining pupils do particularly well but, occasionally, higher attaining pupils do not make as much progress as they could. The exceptional standards of presentation seen in pupils' books reflect the pride they take in their work. Teachers reinforce key points at the ends of lessons and consolidate pupils' learning well. Marking is particularly thorough and always celebrates pupils' accomplishments. However, comments do not consistently give pupils clear guidance on how to improve or move on to the next level.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

All pupils have full access to an outstanding and well balanced curriculum. Pupils have an exceedingly rich range of opportunities to take part in; arts related activities, such as the orchestra and choir, out-of-school events and many after-school clubs. Together these make a huge contribution to pupils' well-rounded development. Furthermore, outstanding use of local resources makes the curriculum exciting and relevant to all. Gifted and talented pupils

benefit greatly from enrichment activities. Pupils' awareness of their own and the wider community are successfully developed through international links with schools and through local studies and visits. Together these widen pupils' perspectives of life outside Britain and strengthen their knowledge of their local community and its heritage. Excellent partnerships with local businesses, community associations and the church further enrich pupils' skills and understanding, and make a vital contribution to pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school has a very tangible culture of care for individuals and it offers outstanding pastoral support. Very well founded arrangements for safeguarding pupils' welfare fully meet requirements. Pupils say they feel secure and know who to turn to for help. Well developed procedures and excellent booklets give very appropriate guidance to parents so they can support their children's learning at home. Academic guidance and support are good. Teachers work closely with teaching assistants and helpers, and together they make an effective contribution in supporting pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to make good progress. The quality of academic guidance given to most pupils, including the gifted and talented, is good overall. However, there is scope for greater use of targets, and a number of pupils who have previously attained highly do not always receive the support they need to enable them to fulfil their potential.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Good leadership and management very successfully promote the caring ethos, positive climate for learning and good achievement evident throughout the school. All staff contribute through firmly established procedures that ensure the school runs well day by day. However, arrangements for using challenging targets to raise standards are not explicit. Many pupils in Key Stage 2 are uncertain of the target levels to which they should aspire and are unclear about how to reach them. In turn, a minority have not made the progress they should. A particularly strong feature of the school's work is the outstanding contribution made to community cohesion. Partnerships enhance the community the school serves by helping pupils develop a strong local and wide global perspective. Governors have a broad knowledge of the school through receiving formal reports from senior staff, but their arrangements to acquire information at first hand are less methodical. The leadership team's self-evaluation results in a detailed development plan for improvement. They clearly identify key priorities and the resources needed to address them, but are less precise in setting out the criteria to judge success. Nevertheless, governors and leaders rigorously monitor spending and the use of resources and, given the high standards and good achievement of pupils, the school gives good value for money.

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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?	1
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?	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?	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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
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?	2
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?	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	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
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**

17 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Knop Law Primary School, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE5 1LH

Mrs Hilley, Mr Lowery and I really enjoyed our recent visit to inspect your school. Thank you for helping us when we came into your classrooms and assemblies to see you at work. You were very polite and helpful, and we did enjoy talking with those of you whom we met. We were pleased to see how much you like to take part enthusiastically in activities during and after school, how you value the help you get and the friendships you make. You are very well behaved and polite to others in lessons and outside. We were pleased to see how you contribute to school life and how you help others who are less fortunate than you. I know the headteacher and all the staff are very proud of you.

Your school gives you a good education. All the adults in the school look after you very well and that is why you feel safe and happy. Last year, in 2008, most children in the Reception classes made outstanding progress and many reached very high standards. Pupils in Year 2 also reached very high standards. We noted that last year pupils in Year 6 did not do as well as expected in mathematics at the highest level. We were especially pleased that pupils who get extra help did really well. When we looked at your books we were delighted to see how much care you take to make your work neat. We saw how teachers tell you how well you are doing and that on occasions they suggest ways to help you improve. When we looked at the target cards you have, and spoke with some of you we found some of you were uncertain about the levels of work to aim for at the end of your time at Knop Law, and what to do to reach them.

I have asked the teachers to help those of you in Years 3 to 6 to use mathematics accurately and in many interesting ways so as many of you as possible can reach the highest level. I have also asked them to help those of you in Years 3 to 6 be clear about the levels in English, mathematics and science they expect you to reach by the end of Year 6, and to help you to reach them.

You have very many opportunities at Knop Law to learn about life and these should stand you in good stead for the future. I hope that you all do really well.

Yours sincerely

Graeme Clarke

Lead inspector