

Westerhope Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108457
Local Authority	Newcastle upon Tyne
Inspection number	324774
Inspection dates	20–21 November 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)	446
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	Ms Brid Fitzpatrick
Headteacher	Mrs Jo Warner
Date of previous school inspection	1 December 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Hillhead Road Westerhope Newcastle upon Tyne Tyne and Wear NE5 1NE
Telephone number	0191 2674750
Fax number	0191 2675430

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	20–21 November 2008
Inspection number	324774

© 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 three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is larger than average and draws its pupils from an area which is broadly average in terms of social and economic advantage. A smaller proportion of pupils than is typical of other primary schools claim a free school meal. Most pupils are of White British heritage with a few from minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The school has undergone a number of changes to staffing since the last inspection. A new deputy headteacher took up post in September 2008.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education. Much has been done by the management team to improve provision since the last inspection. This is having a positive impact and some aspects of the school's work are good. Pupils develop well as confident, responsible young citizens in an atmosphere of care and harmony where they are taught that everyone is equal and valued. The good personal development of pupils is due to the extremely high levels of pastoral care, guidance and support provided by staff. Personal development is also promoted successfully through effective partnerships within those in the local area and beyond. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe and say that they are happy with the way members of staff deal with rare instances of bullying. Behaviour is good and pupils have a strong sense of community. They develop good enterprise skills and are satisfactorily prepared for life after school because the school works hard to provide additional opportunities for them to develop skills such as discussion, planning and team work.

Achievement is satisfactory. In the past, standards declined and targets were missed because pupils made uneven progress as they moved through the school. The school's systems for checking pupils' progress have since improved to become more rigorous. This is having a positive impact because it is leading to more consistency in the quality of the learning. Teachers have been helped to identify at an earlier stage any pupils whose progress slows down. Actions taken as a result of this information are successful in Key Stage 2. However, in Key Stage 1 assessment information is not always used sharply enough to ensure high expectations of what pupils can achieve by the end of Year 2. Leaders and managers have correctly identified that too many pupils in Key Stage 1 and 2 experience difficulty in using their knowledge of letters and sounds to spell accurately in their written work. There has been training for all staff on how best to develop pupils' skills in this area and embedding systems into everyday practice is at an early stage of development. Leadership and management are satisfactory and while many of the senior leaders are new to their positions there are clear signs that they are becoming more focused on where the school needs to improve. For example, pupil progress meetings are led by coordinators to share information that is helping to further improve pupils' learning.

Teaching is satisfactory overall and there are clear signs that the quality of learning is improving. This is particularly evident in upper Key Stage 2 classes where a greater proportion of the teaching is good. This is helping pupils to increase their rate of progress and close the gaps in their learning. As a result, standards are rising and by the end of Year 6 are now broadly average. Teachers generally manage pupils well and plan a range of interesting tasks which capture pupils' interest. However, activities in a small number of lessons do not always move pupils forward from what they have already understood. This is because they spend too much time on revisiting work that pupils already know before providing new challenges to their learning.

Curriculum provision is good. Various new initiatives have been introduced to make the curriculum more exciting and these are now bearing fruit. For example, the attendance of pupils has improved and is now satisfactory, results at Year 6 increased in the most recent national tests halting a decline in standards. Enrichment to the curriculum is a particular strength of the school and is a key reason why pupils say they enjoy school so much. The programme for personal development helps pupils gain a good understanding of the need to adopt a healthy lifestyle. Working relationships between staff and pupils are good. Teaching assistants provide valued support for those pupils who find their learning difficult. The quality of care, guidance and support is good, with robust and supportive systems in place to ensure the well-being of

the pupils. Parents are extremely positive about their partnership with the school and feel they are well informed. Target setting is in place across the school and shared in a variety of ways with pupils, parents and other members of staff. However, in a small number of classes these are not always used consistently.

The school's contribution towards community cohesion is good. Projects such as 'No Outsiders' increase pupils' knowledge of equality and diversity and help them to understand the importance of the contribution they can make to the local and global community. Although standards are currently lower than they were at the time of the last inspection, the school's recent track record shows a satisfactory capacity to make the necessary changes to bring about further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) achieve well because the provision is good and there is a correct balance between adult-led activities and those that children undertake independently. When they join the Nursery, children's levels of development are below those typical of three year olds, with an increasing number of children in each year with significant language delay. Frequent opportunities to talk and listen, in a patient, caring atmosphere, builds the confidence of each individual child, developing their personal and social skills in good preparation for future learning. The teaching of letters and sounds is systematic and means that children quickly acquire early reading and writing skills. Behaviour is managed well and relationships are calm and warm. As a result, there is a high level of trust and children are very at ease with the adults around them. This feeling of being safe and healthy helps them to enjoy their day. Teaching is good and enables all children to participate fully and with enthusiasm, for example, children squealed with delight in the Bear's Cave, and enjoyed the exciting range of linked activities planned for them, inside and out. The new-shared leadership has made a good start in placing successful emphasis on the promotion of children's welfare. Ongoing observation to check learning works effectively to meet each individual child's needs and to help them learn and develop. However, the variation in tracking systems between Nursery and Reception reduce the impact of information sharing and the effective monitoring of progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide appropriate levels of challenge for all pupils.
- Introduce a consistent system for the assessment and tracking of pupils' progress from the beginning of Nursery to the end of Key Stage 1.
- Ensure that all teachers use assessment information accurately to improve children's learning.

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

Following a decline in standards at the end of Key Stage 1 since the last inspection, actions taken by the school to bring about improvement have met with some success. School records indicate that standards at the end of Year 6 in 2008 were broadly average. The rates of pupils'

progress are faster in some year groups than others as they move through the school. This results in achievement that is satisfactory overall. The good start which children make in the EYFS has not always been built on well enough in Key Stage 1 in the past. As a result, standards in writing and mathematics in the national assessments at the end of Year 2 in 2008 were below the national average continuing a two-year downward trend. However, evidence indicates that this situation is improving and the current Year 1 and 2 cohorts are making satisfactory progress from their given starting points. Inspection evidence indicates that the challenge for more able pupils throughout the school continues to be an issue requiring improvement. The school provides good additional academic support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, which enables these pupils to progress at the same rate as other pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy school and appreciate the fact that teachers work hard to make their lessons fun. There has been considerable improvement in attendance, which is now broadly in line with the national average. Pupils' behaviour is good. They relate well towards each other and towards the adults in the school. They feel safe and are confident that if they had any problems all adults in the school would help them to resolve them. They have a well developed understanding of how a balanced diet and regular exercise helps them to grow strong and healthy. Pupils have a good knowledge of the lives and customs of others. This is indicative of their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. They respond well to the opportunities to work together and develop good team-working skills both in and outside the classroom. Pupils make a significant contribution to the life of the school and the local and wider community. They take on responsibilities such as membership of the school council and many older children are peer supporters looking after younger children. They have recently made soup from vegetables produced in their garden and served it to members of the local community and are rightly proud of the contribution they make to the running of a school in India. These positive qualities, together with their sound acquisition of basic literacy and numeracy skills, provide a secure basis for their future education and adult life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching is satisfactory. There are examples of good teaching throughout the school but this is not yet consistent enough to bring about good progress for all groups of pupils. However, it is helping to prevent the downward trend in standards seen since the time of the last inspection. Relationships between teachers and pupils are positive and lessons take place in a calm and productive atmosphere. Teachers manage behaviour well, although occasionally in doing so the pace of learning slows. The partnership between teachers and their teaching assistants is being used to good effect in providing pupils, particularly boys, with additional explanations and encouragement. This helps these pupils to maintain concentration and remain focused on learning. Teachers use their subject knowledge well to provide pupils with a variety of tasks taking good account of their differing learning styles. Assessments of pupils' work are increasingly accurate but not always used to ensure that pupils are sufficiently challenged in all parts of lessons. More able pupils, for example, are too often expected to complete the same work as their peers before moving on to work more suited to their level of ability.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school has worked hard over the past year in order to refine and develop its curriculum and to improve the rates of pupil progress. It has focused particularly on boys' writing and mathematics throughout the school. The success of these initiatives is to be seen in improving standards especially in Key Stage 2. Across the curriculum there is an increasing focus on the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. The curriculum is enhanced by a wide range of enrichment activities which impact well on personal and academic development. Pupils go on many visits and visitors, such as theatre groups, help to extend learning and to raise achievement. The 'No Outsiders' project promotes equality and diversity well, challenging stereotypes and promoting positive images. The Forest School project, aimed at overcoming the barriers to learning experienced by a group of boys, is having a significant impact on the development of self-confidence. This has resulted in improved behaviour.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The pastoral care and support for pupils is effective and leads to good personal development. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils follow national guidelines and all necessary steps have been taken to bring about pupils' well-being. As a result, pupils feel extremely happy, safe and well cared for. Teachers provide effective incentives for good behaviour and relationships promote positive attitudes towards learning. The well-landscaped outdoor environment provides excellent opportunities for children to play well together and staff support this through teaching skills such as giving instructions and following rules in games. In a small number of classes, opportunities are occasionally missed to refer pupils to their targets on a day-to-day basis. However, systems for the provision of academic guidance are becoming increasingly consistent and pupils appreciate the opportunities to assess their own work and that of their peers. As a result, pupils' understanding of how their targets can influence their next steps in learning is improving. In some classes marking gives particularly good additional support for learning and the children respond well to improve their work. Parents are extremely positive about the home-school partnership arrangements and the ways in which their children are supported in school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher, senior members of staff and governors share a clear vision for the school. They are enthusiastic and strongly committed to speeding up pupils' progress. The school's leadership has an accurate overview of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and priorities for improvement are correctly identified. Senior leaders are taking an increasing role in monitoring their areas of responsibility; this provides an accurate view of the progress currently being made by pupils. Revised systems for tracking pupils' progress have helped to improve staff accountability and have increased expectations of the progress that pupils are expected to make from one year to another. As a result, standards in Key Stage 2 are rising. Consistency in the tracking of pupils' progress from Nursery through to the end of Key Stage 1 is less effective. Insufficient use is made of assessments at the end of the EYFS to ensure that those pupils who attain highly at the age of five continue to do so

by the age of seven. Governors support the school well. They contribute in a range of useful ways to support staff and pupils. However, their monitoring activities do not always take sufficient account of the impact of school provision on pupils' achievement. As a consequence, some governors' views regarding the effectiveness of what the school provides are currently too high.

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?	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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

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?	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/or disabilities make progress	3

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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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

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 eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
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

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

25 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Westerhope Primary School, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE5 1NE

Thank you for the very friendly welcome you gave the inspection team when we visited your school. We enjoyed meeting you and seeing the things you do. Yours is a satisfactory school. It helps you make satisfactory progress and reach standards that are similar to those reached by other pupils of a similar age by the end of Year 6. Those of you in Nursery and Reception do particularly well and we have asked the school to check carefully that you continue to do so when you move into Years 1 and 2.

We are delighted that you enjoy school and congratulate you on your good behaviour. It is good that more of you are now attending school regularly. You have a good understanding of keeping healthy and we are pleased to see how well you get on with each other and how keen you are to play a part in making life better for others.

The school has put in place new systems for checking how well you are doing. These provide teachers with useful information about what you know and can do especially for those of you in Years 3–6. We have asked your school to make sure that all adults make the best use of this information to challenge all of you to do as well as you possibly can in all of your lessons.

Keep working hard and enjoying school.

Yours sincerely

Linda Buller

Lead inspector