

Lord Blyton Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108700
Local Authority	South Tyneside
Inspection number	324818
Inspection date	17 October 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)	113
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 Alice Malcom
Headteacher	Miss Joanne Atherton
Date of previous school inspection	1 September 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Blyton Avenue South Shields Tyne and Wear NE34 9BN
Telephone number	0191 4240550
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

The inspector gathered evidence from lesson observations, looking at pupils' work, assessment information, documents, interviews and discussions with the headteacher, staff, pupils and a governor. He evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following aspects:

- the quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)
- pupils' standards and progress overall in Key Stage 1 and in mathematics in Key Stage 2
- the way the school uses marking and other assessments to support pupils' learning
- the progress the new leadership team has made in setting challenging targets and planning to achieve them.

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 where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This smaller than average sized school serves families in a relatively disadvantaged part of South Shields. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for a free school meal is well above average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is also above average, although none has a statement of special educational need. The school has provision for the EYFS. Almost all pupils come from a White British heritage. Of the others, mainly from Asian families, a very small number are learning to speak English as an additional language.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Lord Blyton is a good, very inclusive school. Some aspects of its work are outstanding. The recently appointed headteacher, ably assisted by her senior team, provides clear educational direction to the school's work, and has set out with great resolve to promote improvement. All staff successfully apply the principle that every child does matter. Pupils benefit from good teaching, an outstandingly rich curriculum enhanced by the contribution of many visitors and visits, and good care, guidance and support. When taking pupils' starting points into account, their accomplishments reflect good achievement and outstanding personal development. The school forges very effective partnerships with parents, the church, local government, businesses and community organisations. These partnerships, together with pupils' study of life in other countries such as in the recent Africa project, greatly widen their understanding, enhance their well-being and make an outstanding contribution to community cohesion. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school, like it the way it is and value the friendships they make. Attendance is broadly average despite the strenuous efforts of the school working with families to reduce the extent of term-time holidays and persistent absence. Most parents have full confidence in the school. One sums up their views: 'Since my daughter has come to this school she has come on in leaps and bounds. She has never said she doesn't want to go to school in all the years she has been here.'

Standards are broadly average, as demonstrated by assessment results in both Year 2 and Year 6. Children begin Reception with skills and abilities well below those typical for their age. In Year 2, provisional results for the 2008 assessments were broadly average, although standards fell in mathematics compared to 2007. Pupils make good progress in the EYFS and good progress through Key Stage 1. In Year 6, provisional results in 2008 for reading rose noticeably: all pupils gained Level 4 and many gained Level 5, which contributed to English results exceeding the challenging target set. Science and mathematics standards were similar to last year, although the proportion gaining the higher Level 5 in mathematics fell. The school's record of progress for current pupils shows good progress in reading and writing where new initiatives to develop phonics and extend vocabulary are clearly helping pupils to improve their skills. Progress in mathematics is satisfactory. Last year fewer pupils than expected reached the higher levels.

Pupils' spiritual development is good, and their moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They have a very strong grasp of the need for healthy eating, reflected in their choices at lunchtime, and many take part enthusiastically in the wide range of physical activities during and after school. Exemplary behaviour in lessons and assemblies and very polite and courteous conduct in corridors carries over to the playground where pupils act exuberantly but safely at playtimes. They say bullying is minimal and friendships are fostered. Pupils are delighted when they do well and happily share the accomplishments and success of others. Pupils contribute really well in many ways to their school and wider community. Very effective partnerships with local business, sound basic skills and well developed social skills ensure pupils are well prepared for their future. The school deservedly holds the Healthy School, Activemark and Education Business Partnerships awards.

Teaching is good overall. Recently initiated arrangements, which use information about pupils' progress to set targets and match lesson activities to their abilities, are developing well but are not yet having their full effect. There are strengths on which to build further. Lessons are well-planned with interesting and challenging activities. Relationships between adults and pupils are exemplary. In general, pupils are fully engaged, thoroughly enjoy learning and make

good progress. Teaching assistants are well deployed and give effective support which ensures that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and those from other countries learning English, fully participate in lessons and make good progress. Effective phonics work promotes pupils' reading development. On a small number of occasions questioning lacks lustre and challenge, and does not involve as many pupils as it should in contributing to the lesson. Teachers' marking of pupils' work, particularly in writing, congratulates them on their accomplishments and gives specific guidance about how they can improve. Marking of mathematics does not consistently set pupils clear expectations or give pointers to improve their work.

The recently appointed headteacher shows great commitment and resolve to develop and improve the school. Good leadership and management have led to pupils' good achievement and the school giving good value for money. Governors are very supportive and readily contribute to enhance pupils' personal development. They ensure safeguarding requirements are met. They have a clear knowledge of the school from reports they receive and know their next step is to develop their role in systematically gaining a first hand view of its work. Senior leaders diligently monitor pupils' progress and their review of the school's performance is mostly accurate if at times modest. Although they have a good understanding of what needs to be done to improve pupils' progress further, some elements of action planning to promote higher standards and achievement lack sufficient precision, especially with regard to their anticipated impact. Taking this alongside the school's determination to consolidate initiatives to improve all pupils' progress, with clear signs of success emerging in reading and writing, the school has a satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children make a good start to their primary school education in the Reception class of the EYFS. They develop confidence, respond positively and become totally involved in the activities arranged for them both outdoors and in the newly extended indoor facilities.

Good teaching encourages children to participate and their choice of activities are carefully monitored and guided. When children begin Reception their skills and knowledge are well below those typical for this age group, especially in communication and language development. Staff hold the welfare of children in the highest regard and offer a good level of care and appropriate support. Children are courteous and considerate which reflects well-formed positive relationships. Most make good progress by the end of Reception. Last year they made good progress to reach the expected levels in all areas of learning except in writing, which was a little below the targets expected for their age. Although most did as well as expected, none exceeded the early learning goals.

The leadership has a systematic approach to promote higher achievement. Assessment procedures ensure staff have a good grasp of each child's progress and can foster individual learning. The refurbished indoor facilities are effectively organised with well-coordinated arrangements for children to take part in activities they initiate or adults direct. The leadership shows determination to improve and recognises that widening use of the outdoor area will realise the potential of all the facilities to extend children's development.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve progress and standards in mathematics, especially at the higher levels in Years 3 to 6.

- Increase consistency and clarity in action planning and evaluation of initiatives to promote good achievement.

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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	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?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
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	3
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	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?	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	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
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	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**

20 October 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Lord Blyton Primary School, South Tyneside, NE34 9BN

I really enjoyed my recent visit to inspect your school. Thank you for helping me when I came into your classrooms and assembly to see you at work. You were very polite and helpful and I did enjoy talking with those of you whom I met. I was delighted 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. I was pleased to see how you contribute to school life, for example as school councillors and monitors 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. It is warm and welcoming and well organised. All the adults in the school look after you very well and that is why you feel safe and happy. Last year many children in the Reception class made good progress. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 also made good progress, especially in reading. I noted that last year pupils in Year 2, and some in Years 3 to 6, did not do as well at the highest level in mathematics. I was especially pleased that pupils who get extra help do well. When I looked at your books I was pleased to see how much care you take to make your work neat. I saw how the marking tells you how well you are doing and, especially in your writing books, how you can improve.

I have asked your school to help you all learn to use mathematics in many interesting ways so as many of you as possible can reach the highest level. I have also asked your school to help you to improve further by making sure that staff work in the same way when they measure your progress and plan learning activities.

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

Graeme Clarke

Lead inspector