

West Boldon Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108701
Local Authority	South Tyneside
Inspection number	324819
Inspection date	5 February 2009
Reporting inspector	Jonathan Sutcliffe

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)	218
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 Joe Oxley
Headteacher	Mr Peter Millington
Date of previous school inspection	1 April 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Hindmarch Drive West Boldon East Boldon Tyne and Wear NE36 0HX
Telephone number	0191 536 2846
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- the effectiveness of the strategies to improve pupils' progress in writing
- the use of information and communications technology (ICT) to raise standards further across the curriculum
- whether pupils have a secure knowledge and understanding of the richness and diversity of modern society.

Evidence was gathered from the school's performance data and other school documentation, observations of teaching and learning, the work produced by pupils (including how pupils interact with each other and their response to what is provided for them), parents' questionnaires and discussions with pupils, staff and three governors. Other aspects of the school were not investigated in detail. The inspectors found that almost all of the judgements made in the school's self-evaluation form were justified and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

West Boldon is an average sized primary school. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals and that of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. The vast majority of pupils are from a White British background and no pupils are at an early stage of learning English.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

West Boldon provides its pupils with an outstanding standard of education. Within the school's warm and caring environment pupils flourish and do extremely well both academically and in their personal development. By the end of Year 6 pupils' standards and achievements are well above average. This is because of the outstanding leadership and management and the challenging targets the school sets. The school is a valued part of the local community with which it has close links that are mutually beneficial. Parents' positive views of the school's work are ratified by the findings of the inspection. A comment typical of many parents is, 'The school has an excellent community spirit and communication skills are extremely good.'

The pupils' personal development and their care, support and guidance are excellent. A particularly strong feature is the school's promotion of community cohesion within its immediate area. The school has recently been awarded the Boldon Residents Community Shield for its outstanding work in the community. Pupils willingly and responsibly take on a wide variety of tasks in school and are very involved in the local community, for example singing carols locally and distributing harvest produce to senior citizens. Pupils show high levels of respect for each other, they act very safely and their behaviour is exemplary. Older pupils enjoy the opportunities to help younger ones with their work. Pupils make sensible choices about what they eat and talk knowledgeably about the ill effects of a poor diet because of the very good understanding of healthy lifestyles. Pupils are keen to participate in the many physical activities the school offers because they recognise that exercise plays an important part in keeping fit. Attendance is very good and is an important factor in the high standards achieved. Pupils feel safe and secure. Arrangements for safeguarding, child protection and risk assessment meet statutory requirements. Vulnerable children are particularly well cared for and the school works extremely well with external agencies to support families.

The advanced levels of pupils' personal development and their well-being have a very positive influence on academic achievement. The attainment of the annual intake of children to the school is significantly lower than in most other schools. From this starting point, the children make very good progress in Reception to reach levels just below those expected nationally by the time they enter Year 1. This very good progress continues in Year 1 and 2 and many pupils reach standards that are on or above average. In Key Stage 2 pupils make excellent progress in English, mathematics and science and by the end of Year 6 standards are consistently well above average. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are identified early and specific support is provided promptly. They make similar progress to their peers. The current focus on raising standards and progress in writing is evident in the high quality of their extended stories and other texts on display around the school.

There are two key factors in pupils' outstanding academic progress. The first is the quality of teaching; the other is the high quality of academic support and guidance the pupils receive. The quality of teaching is outstanding. Throughout the school, teachers have high expectations of pupils. They have a good insight into pupils' needs and set work that extends their knowledge and understanding. Teaching is a team effort, with teaching assistants playing a vital part, in particular supporting pupils with additional needs. Very good subject knowledge ensures that lessons are exciting and relevant, which captures the pupils' interests. Lessons zip along and at no time is there any slack. Teachers are very skilful in asking probing questions to increase further pupils' learning. For example, in a Year 6 literacy lesson pupils discussed and then enthusiastically set about writing letters to the Natural History Museum on their imaginary

finds of wild and exotic creatures. The teacher skilfully involved the pupils in assessing their own work and gave them an understanding of how they could improve it. The effective tracking procedures are used well by teachers to check on pupils' progress and to put in place extra support for any who are in danger of slipping behind. Challenging annual targets are set for pupils' progress and pupils are given short-term targets to tell them what they need to learn next.

The curriculum is good and has outstanding features. Excellent provision in the core subjects of English and mathematics ensures pupils have opportunities to reach very high standards. An increasing integration of subjects enhances pupils' learning, and skills in writing are used effectively to develop progress in other subjects. Pupils have good opportunities to gain knowledge and skills in ICT. However there are inconsistent opportunities throughout the school for pupils to use these skills to further improve their learning across all curriculum areas. Curriculum enrichment is outstanding. Pupils participate in a wide range of extra-curricular activities and day trips. This enrichment broadens pupils' knowledge and understanding of the local and wider community and is extended with residential visits for the older pupils. The provision within the curriculum for developing pupil's knowledge and understanding of the richness and diversity of modern society is good but not as strong as other areas.

Leadership and management are excellent. All those in leadership roles contribute well to the school's overall success. The leadership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher is inspirational and team work is very strong. From the school administrator, to the class teachers, to the support staff, to the pupils and parents – everyone is valued and has their part to play. Governors' involvement and knowledge of the school is outstanding. They offer good levels of challenge and are supportive of leaders and managers. Systems of self-evaluation are very thorough and present a very accurate picture of the school's performance. Bearing in mind the drive and determination for further improvement, allied to the progress already made, there is no danger of complacency and the school is extremely well placed to continue to improve.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding. In the most recent group leaving the Reception class, a significant number of children did not reach the average levels in all areas of learning. Nevertheless, they made good progress and achieved very well in relation to their low starting points. Parents are very pleased with what is provided for their children, along with the information and quality of guidance they themselves receive. The children in both Reception classes grow rapidly in confidence because of the happy and secure family atmosphere presented by a well-qualified and experienced staff. The relationships with, and welfare of, children are outstanding. The majority of the children are able to express their enjoyment and pride in their work and play. Staff are skilled in what they do, giving children opportunities to make choices and follow through their own ideas whilst guiding and supporting them. Staff interact with children well, developing their language and social skills. The great majority of the children are confident contributors in lessons and behave exceptionally well. They use ICT to support their learning and can take digital photographs of their own. The Early Years Foundation Stage team is highly effective in analysing data. This ensures that next steps for learning are appropriate and children make good progress. The Early Years Foundation Stage is very well managed with a fully inclusive approach.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that when information and communication technology is used it enhances learning in all curriculum areas.

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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?	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	1
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	2
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?	1
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?	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**

7 February 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of West Boldon Primary School, South Tyneside, NE36 OHX

Thank you for making the inspection team so welcome when it visited your school recently. We really enjoyed meeting you, visiting some of your lessons and seeing the exciting things you do.

You have an outstanding school, and the people in charge and your teachers do an extremely good job. This helps you reach high standards by Year 6 and to make outstanding progress in your work.

Here are some of the things we thought were excellent about your school:

- you do extremely well in your work and this is helping to prepare you for your future
- you make a very good contribution to your school and the surrounding community
- you are very good at keeping yourself healthy and safe from harm
- you really like your school and you love to learn because your lessons are exciting
- your behaviour is extremely good and you are keen to help those less fortunate than you are
- you are well cared for and you say you feel safe and happy in school
- you take part in many exciting activities after school
- your headteacher and other staff lead and manage the school very well.

I have asked the people in charge and your teachers to work together on one thing:

- make sure in Years 1 to 6 that you are given more opportunities to use your ICT skills.

You can all help by keeping up the very good work! My best wishes to you.

Yours faithfully

Jonathan Sutcliffe

Lead inspector