

Green Lane Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111646
Local Authority	Middlesbrough
Inspection number	325423
Inspection dates	1–2 December 2008
Reporting inspector	Andrew Scott

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)	621
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 Mark Pagan
Headteacher	Mrs Janet Lucas
Date of previous school inspection	1 March 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Green Lane Acklam Middlesbrough TS5 7RU
Telephone number	01642 277407
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by four Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This very large school serves a residential area of Middlesbrough where socio-economic conditions are broadly average. There is a high percentage of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, for many of whom English is an additional language. There is a low number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There is less movement within the pupil population than within schools nationally. The Early Year Foundation Stage (EYFS) comprises a Nursery class and three Reception classes.

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. It has many outstanding features. Despite its large size, it has a distinctive family ethos, in which pupils are highly valued as individuals. The quality of care is excellent and not only guarantees pupils' well-being and safety but also establishes an atmosphere of trust, tolerance and empathy between staff and pupils. As a result, pupils are wholly at ease in school and develop excellent attitudes to learning. Their personal development is outstanding; parents are understandably pleased about this. 'My son adores his teacher who makes every child in her class feel special', wrote one parent, reflecting the views of others.

Pupils' behaviour is extremely good and, in some cases, exceptional. Pupils know what is expected of them because teachers are excellent role models and establish very clear guidelines. In lessons, concentration is usually very good. Pupils enjoy playing a full part, although sometimes teachers take the lead too much. The many excellent opportunities provided by the school enable pupils to take ownership of a healthy lifestyle. The Food for Life project is reinforcing this. Through activities, such as the school council, pupils play a full part in the school community. Their involvement with the wider world is less well developed.

Pupils' achievement is good throughout the school. Standards by Year 6 have improved and are above average, as they are in Year 2. Pupils do well in all subjects, although writing is a comparative weakness. However, the school has been quick to tackle this and narrow the gap. Similarly, the school has improved boys' achievement. Overall, there is little major difference in achievement between the various groups of pupils. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or those for whom English is an additional language achieve as well as other pupils.

Teaching is good. Teachers are very organised and make learning objectives crystal clear. Because of their excellent rapport with pupils, little time is lost and teachers have ample time to support those in most need. The best lessons have the richest content and highest expectations. Some lessons are quite rigid in their activities and the use of structured worksheets limits pupils' scope to improve writing. Importantly, teachers do not routinely set work that is challenging enough, especially in literacy and numeracy, despite the wealth of assessment data they generate. The curriculum is excellent, notably in the sheer range and variety of activities on offer. Sport is high on the agenda and teams do well competitively. During the inspection, the school echoed to the sound of African drums, a brass ensemble and a woodwind quartet.

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher, with the capable support of the deputy headteacher, gives the school very clear direction and ensures that its commendable philosophy is shared by all. Leadership is shared effectively throughout the school. Governors play a full part in the school, especially in sharing their skills in financial management. Although they have limited opportunity to see for themselves what is happening on a daily basis, they are kept sufficiently informed. This enables them to partake effectively in decision making. The school has good self-evaluation that enables it to develop good action plans for further development. However, the leadership does not measure the quality of provision enough by its impact. As a result, some evaluation is too generous. Overall, though, the school is in good shape; it has improved well since the last inspection and is well placed to do even better.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children benefit from a good start in the EYFS. It has outstanding aspects. Children start Nursery with skills and knowledge typical for their age. They make good progress in their learning and, by the end of the Reception year, exceed expectations for five-year-olds. Their performance has been improving over the last two years. Aware that boys' performance has been lower than that of girls, the school acted to provide suitably stimulating activities, such as a 'builders' workshop' area. This has had a positive impact. Teaching is good because teachers have good subject knowledge and activities meet the needs of children well. Sometimes, though, children sit on the carpet for too long and this leads to some getting restless and restricts their independent skills.

High quality care and rigorous welfare arrangements ensure children are kept safe and secure. All children, regardless of their backgrounds, play harmoniously together and enjoy each other's company; they are well supported by all staff, including a support assistant who translates for children who need it. The excellent rapport between adults and children underpins the good learning. Children are confident in their surroundings and show interest in activities; their behaviour is very good. They make the most of the variety of activities outside; for example, they take an active part in collecting their fruit leftovers for compost. The school does very well to overcome the limitations of the split accommodation for EYFS, and has good plans to incorporate a garden area. The good leadership of the EYFS is typified by the full involvement of parents and the smooth transition by children into Year 1.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teachers consistently provide a greater level of challenge for all pupils.
- Ensure that self-evaluation of the school's work is more tightly linked to outcomes at all levels of management.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement is good and standards are above average. Pupils' attainment on entry to Year 1 has been average until recently and is currently above average. Standards by the end of Year 2 are routinely above average, reflecting good achievement from the pupils' starting points at the time. Standards by the end of Year 6 have been slightly more variable: sometimes average but often above average. In 2007, a number of factors, including attendance issues, caused standards and achievement to dip. The school has done well to remedy the situation and, in 2008, the provisional results of national tests show pupils' performance was above expectations for their age. The school's data show that pupils in the current Year 6 are likely to do at least as well and are on track to meet challenging targets. Achievement through Key Stage 2 has improved since 2007 and looks set to continue in the same vein. There are slight variations between different groups of pupils but little of significance. Well targeted support means that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with English as an additional language achieve as well as other pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Personal development and well-being are outstanding. Throughout the school, pupils are very courteous, considerate and extremely well behaved. Their self-discipline is remarkable, particularly in their attitudes to work. The maturity of pupils in a Year 3 literacy lesson, for example, was breathtaking. Pupils' concentration only wanes if lessons are less interesting. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent, although opportunities are missed in assemblies to promote spirituality.

Pupils love their school and appreciate all that staff do for them. They feel highly valued and very secure. As a result, their confidence and self-esteem are high. Attendance has improved and is now above average. Pupils do their best to adopt a healthy lifestyle, led by the School Nutritional Action Group with its elected pupils. Pupils make sensible choices in their diet and many take regular exercise through, for example, Freddy Fit sessions. Most take part in the many extra sporting activities offered; the range of sporting trophies is testament to their success.

Pupils look after one another extremely well. Older pupils readily take care of younger ones or lead them in games. The playground buddies are an integral part of everyday life. The school council is thriving and older pupils relish extra responsibilities, such as acting as peer mediators. Good interaction with the local community is not yet extended enough in the wider UK and overseas communities. All in all, pupils are extremely well prepared for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good. There is a delightful atmosphere in most classrooms. The relaxed yet structured approach by adults gives pupils a feeling of security and self-worth that encourages them to share their ideas and participate fully in lessons. Behaviour and attitudes to learning are so good that pupils automatically get on with their work independently or in groups, with or without an adult presence. Teachers have good levels of subject knowledge and convey new information adeptly at the right level so that pupils understand readily. Teachers consolidate pupils' understanding through skilful questioning that extends their thinking. More and more, pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own learning. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively to support less confident pupils or those with particular needs. In some lessons, pupils' enthusiasm and concentration wane when they sit for too long listening to the teacher. This reduces opportunities for investigation and collaborative work, and limits progress. Teachers are well aware of pupils' different abilities but do not consistently plan work that challenges all of them. The quality of marking, an issue at the last inspection, has improved appreciably.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding, especially in the excellent enrichment that crosses subject boundaries. Such activity is not fully developed in literacy and numeracy, and so pupils miss some opportunities to strengthen basic skills, especially in writing. Several activities involve specialist staff that not only form effective links with secondary schools, but also give pupils the benefit of additional expertise. For example, pupils have worked on a design project and

their finished sculptures will be incorporated into a community improvement programme. An excellent range of activities after school and at lunchtimes broadens pupils' interests and achievements. These give pupils more opportunities to play team sports, take extra exercise and learn to rely upon others. The provision for pupils' personal and social development is excellent and is evident in their understanding of the needs of others and in leading healthy lifestyles. Such provision successfully enhances their skills for dealing with life ahead.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The care, guidance and support for pupils are outstanding. All the latest safeguarding procedures have been implemented and all staff have up-to-date training. Health and safety procedures are very well met. The school works very productively with external experts, such as the educational psychologist, to meet pupils' needs. The parent support adviser works very effectively with pupils and their parents who speak Punjabi and Urdu. The learning mentor provides valuable support for the emotional well-being of vulnerable pupils. The school has vigorously and successfully promoted attendance, although there is still an issue of term time holidays. Pupils are given very good personal and moral guidance. Rigorous systems give teachers a very clear view of pupils' academic progress and help them set targets for pupils. These are providing useful support for most pupils and they know how to improve, although a few need more reminding to ensure they refer to them as they work. Parents appreciate the very good information they receive about their children's progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school is well led and managed. The strong leadership of the headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher and senior staff, ensures that all staff share a common vision and very consistent approach. The leadership is highly organised, very cohesive and distributed skilfully among senior staff so that all play a valuable role. Leaders are especially effective in providing an excellent level of care for all pupils and developing initiatives, such as a creative curriculum. Governors are fully involved in the school's development and act as good critical friends, especially in maintaining a healthy budget and helping with improvements to the accommodation.

The school's self-evaluation is good. It clearly identifies particular strengths and the school responds well to perceived weaknesses, such as writing and attendance. The school improvement plan is comprehensive, and monitoring of the school's work is managed very efficiently. However, the school does not measure its provision enough by its outcomes; this is especially true of teaching and learning. The school has improved well since the last inspection. Progress by children in the EYFS has improved, attendance is better and the provision for information and communication technology is much more wide-ranging. The provision for community cohesion is good. This is a school that celebrates the diversity of pupils' backgrounds and teaches tolerance and respect that leads to a harmonious community. It prepares pupils well to live in a multi-cultural society and recognises the need for a more strategic approach to include links with overseas communities.

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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?	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?	1
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?	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	2
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?	1

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?	2
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**

3 December 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Green Lane Primary School, Middlesbrough, TS5 7RU

I am writing to thank you for the part you played in the recent inspection of your school. Mrs Cochrane, Mr Watson, Mr Kingston and I thoroughly enjoyed our time at your school and appreciated all that you told us. Your opinions were important in helping us gain a clear picture of your school. I would like to tell you what we found.

Yours is a good school with many excellent features. We were impressed in particular by the high level of care and the great atmosphere in the school. It certainly did not seem that there were more than 600 of you. We know you feel safe in school, respect the staff and all other pupils, and really enjoy life at school. Your improving attendance shows this. We think you develop extremely well as individuals. Your behaviour is truly outstanding. Some of the maturity and self-discipline that you showed at times was extraordinary. You are whole-hearted in your approach to leading a healthy lifestyle and you play an important role in the school community.

You all achieve well in your work and standards are better than average. This is because teaching is good and the curriculum is excellent. Classrooms are busy, active places. Teachers make new learning clear and often make lessons exciting. As a result, you maintain very good concentration and make good progress. You are increasingly involved in assessing your own progress, so this may well help you to become even better. However, your work is not always challenging enough for each of you, nor always allows for your different needs. Therefore, we have asked that lessons should challenge you more.

Your headteacher, the senior staff and governors do a good job in making the school what it is. They work tirelessly together to maintain the school's strengths and improve it further. They are good at checking how well the school is doing. We have asked them, though, to make sure that they measure the school's progress more carefully so that all that they do has the maximum benefit for you.

I wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Scott

Lead inspector