

Whitecliffe Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111654
Local Authority	Redcar and Cleveland
Inspection number	325424
Inspection dates	30 April –1 May 2009
Reporting inspector	Margaret Armstrong

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)	117
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 Ross McMillan
Headteacher	Mrs Christine Shannon
Date of previous school inspection	1 February 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Kilton Lane Carlin How Saltburn-by-the-Sea TS13 4AD
Telephone number	01287 640414
Fax number	01287 640326

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one additional inspector.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average sized school in an area of considerable social and economic disadvantage. All pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is higher than the national average, as is the percentage who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The number of pupils who have a statement of special educational need is above average. A very small number of pupils are looked after by the local authority. The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises of a Nursery and a Reception class. There is a Sure Start Centre adjacent to the school. The school provides breakfast and after-school clubs. It holds the Activemark and Healthy and Bronze Eco School awards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory and improving school. Its strengths are in the pupils' personal development, the good provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the strong partnerships with parents and other agencies. The headteacher and her staff know the pupils well. This has resulted in a good level of care and support for vulnerable pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Parents are very appreciative of the work of the school and speak highly of the 'friendly atmosphere' which contributes to the 'strong, supportive learning environment'.

Children enter the Nursery with a range of skills which are well below those expected for their age. The good provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage means children quickly become active learners and achieve well. Progress slows in Key Stage 1 so that by the end of Year 2, standards are still very low. Although there is evidence that standards are beginning to rise, action taken by the school has not been swift enough. Progress accelerates in Key Stage 2 so pupils achieve well to reach average standards by the end of Year 6. The unevenness in progress is linked to variability in the quality of teaching. Teaching is consistently good in Key Stage 2 because teachers set a good pace to learning and expectations are high. However, it is only just satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 because teaching takes too little account of individual ability and need. As a result, there is insufficient challenge for the most able pupils. The school makes effective use of a range of intervention programmes to support pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with other additional needs. As a result, these pupils make good progress and achieve well. However, the school has not adapted the curriculum sufficiently to ensure a consistent approach to extending the learning of higher attaining pupils across the school.

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Relationships are good and, as a result, pupils are well behaved and show mature attitudes to learning. Pupils have a secure understanding of how to stay healthy and safe. They contribute well to the wider community through their involvement in fundraising for a wide range of charities and through their participation in initiatives such as the 'Skinningrove Jetty Project'. Pupils like their school and see it as a place where they can enjoy learning in a 'friendly' and 'safe' environment. While their personal qualities prepare them well for their future, their literacy and numeracy skills are satisfactory.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Following a number of staff changes, the headteacher and new leadership team have a sharper focus on raising standards and achievement for all pupils. This has resulted, for example, in the improved standards in English at the end of Key Stage 2. Self-evaluation procedures are satisfactory. Recent development of the skills of senior leaders is enabling them to make a fuller contribution to evaluating the school's work. However, monitoring of teaching and learning lacks rigour. This has meant that teachers are not always sure how they can improve their practice and ensure pupils achieve as well as they should. Governance is satisfactory. Governors work regularly in the school, but they have not been as effective in holding the senior leadership team to account in relation to achievement. Governors are well informed and they support the school well through new initiatives. For example, they have made certain there is a good range of resources to support pupils' learning in information and communication technology (ICT). The school provides satisfactory value for money.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children get off to a good start because the provision is good. Their personal development is good. Children quickly develop into confident, articulate individuals who learn to concentrate and enjoy learning. Parents are pleased with the start their children make. They comment favourably about the 'individual portfolios' which keep them well informed about the progress their children make. Children are well cared for and the school fulfils all welfare requirements. Staff work and plan together effectively as a team to provide high-quality learning experiences, both inside and outside of the classroom. For example 'The Zoo' role-play area and 'Story Space' excite and inspire children. Adults make regular observations and assessments to plan the next steps of learning for each child. As a result, the balance between adult-led activities and those from which children can choose is good. Consequently, children make good progress in relation to their starting points which are generally well below what is typical for their age. By the end of Reception, children mostly achieve below average standards, although this can vary in some years. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well because of effective support from adults. Leadership and management are good and comprehensive plans are in place to improve outdoor provision further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of teaching in Key Stage 1.
- Accelerate progress in Key Stage 1 by setting higher expectations for the most able pupils.
- Monitor and evaluate the school's performance more rigorously and take prompt action to make the required improvements.

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

Standards are average and the achievement of pupils is satisfactory. Standards vary year on year because of the small cohorts and the differing ability profiles of the intakes. Progress is erratic as pupils move through the school. In 2008, standards were well below average for Year 2 pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. This represents barely satisfactory progress from this group's point of entry to Year 1. This is particularly the case for the higher attaining pupils, who do not receive a consistent level of challenge. Pupils in Year 6 made good progress to reach average standards. A key factor in the school's success has been the use of a well-planned programme of 'targeted support' which has resulted in pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and other vulnerable pupils achieving well. Higher attaining pupils performed well in English and mathematics, although they did not do as well as expected in science. Although there is some variation in the attainment of boys and girls, there is no measurable pattern.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. By the time they leave the school in Year 6 they are well rounded, thoughtful individuals who are proud of their achievements. They behave well because relationships are good and they know what is expected of them. They

enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in satisfactory and improving levels of attendance. Pupils have a secure understanding of the importance of a healthy diet and taking regular exercise. They say they feel safe and are confident issues such as bullying would not be tolerated. Pupils are a credit to the school and are proud of their contributions to the community. For example, they act responsibly as 'playground leaders', serve on the active school council and contribute positively to the local community. Their literacy and numeracy skills are satisfactory but well developed social skills stand them in good stead for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. However, teaching is too variable in quality to promote consistent progress. Teaching is good in Key Stage 2 because teachers promote a fast pace, have high expectations of every pupil and use perceptive questioning to extend thinking. Explanations are clear and this helps pupils know precisely what they need to do to be successful in their learning. Lessons are well planned and resources, including computer technology, are used well to enrich learning. There are weaknesses in teaching in Key Stage 1. This is because work is not always matched to pupils' needs and this has a particularly negative impact on the progress of the most able pupils. As a result, the pace of learning is slower and the level of pupils' engagement less secure. Throughout the school, teaching assistants are well trained and provide high-quality, targeted support. This means pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are able to play a full and active part in lessons and achieve well.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. There are some good features. The curriculum meets all statutory requirements and provides pupils with a range of experiences which they enjoy. For example, pupils talked excitedly about how much they enjoy learning French and taking part in the 'Philosophy for Children' programme. Personal, social, health and citizenship education contributes positively to their behaviour, and helps them learn to work and play together happily. The school provides a range of visits and visitors. These include a residential visit to an outdoor centre, specialist sports tuition and involvement in enterprise initiatives. Opportunities for learning beyond the classroom are increasing and pupils are keen to attend the sporting and creative activities offered by the school. A weakness of the curriculum's is the lack of challenge it provides for higher attaining pupils in Key Stage 1. As a consequence, these pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care and support are good. The good links with outside agencies ensure pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and other vulnerable pupils are supported well. Procedures for child protection, risk assessment and health and safety are fully in place. Induction arrangements are good and this helps pupils new to the school settle in quickly and feel part of the school community. Expectations for the behaviour of pupils are high within a caring environment in which all feel valued and supported. The work of the learning mentor has been particularly successful in helping pupils at risk of exclusion to engage in their learning. The school has a

good partnership with parents and this supports learning well. Strong links with local secondary schools ensure a smooth transfer as pupils move to the next stage in their learning. Academic guidance is satisfactory. The school regularly tracks pupils' progress but teachers do not always use this information well enough to plan sufficient challenge for the most able, especially in Key Stage 1.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher and new leadership team work together effectively and this has helped them develop a good team spirit in the school. Self-evaluation procedures are generally effective. Senior staff have begun to analyse data carefully and set challenging targets for improvement. They have not yet ensured that data about pupils' progress are used consistently across the school. In addition, monitoring of teaching and learning is not rigorous enough and teachers are not given sufficient guidance on how they can improve their practice. As a result, teaching is variable in quality and higher attaining pupils do not always achieve as well as they should. Governors are supportive of the school. They have been successful in ensuring good partnerships with parents, outside agencies and the local and global communities to support the school's work and promote community cohesion well. However, they have not been able to ensure pupils achieve as well as they should in Key Stage 1. The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection and it has a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

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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?	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	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?	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?	3
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**

4 May 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Whitecliffe Primary School, Redcar and Cleveland, TS13 4AD

I am writing to thank you for the part you played in the inspection of your school. I really enjoyed spending time with you and listening to your views about your school and why you enjoy learning. I was impressed with your good behaviour and the thoughtful way in which you look after each other. I enjoyed visiting your classrooms and I was pleased to see how hard you work with your teachers and other adults. The staff take good care of you and many of you told me how kind the adults are and how safe you feel in school. You develop into confident, well-mannered children with a good awareness of right and wrong. Many of you help with the running of your school, for example, by serving on the school council or by acting as playground leaders. Well done! You told me how much you enjoy the after-school clubs such as chess and gardening and special activities such as the 'Huff n Puff' group. I also know you appreciate the visits out of school which help make your learning interesting.

Yours is a satisfactory and improving school, and it is good in the care and support and personal development it provides. Your school works very closely with outside groups like the Sports Partnership to make sure there are lots of interesting things for you to do. You make a really good start to your learning in Nursery, Reception and in the Key Stage 2 classes. I found some of your lessons made you really think and work hard but they were not all like this. I have asked the headteacher and governors to join you in your lessons so that they can watch how you learn. Your school is going to make sure that the work for the pupils who learn faster in Key Stage 1 is more challenging to help them reach higher standards. You can help by always doing your best and continuing to involve yourselves fully in the life of the school.

Thank you again for welcoming me to your school. I wish you every success for the future.

Yours faithfully

Margaret Armstrong

Lead inspector