

## Trimdon Grange Infant and Nursery School

### Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 114071          |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | Durham          |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 325937          |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>        | 23–24 June 2009 |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Rosemary Rodger |

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.

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| <b>Type of school</b>  | Infant   |
| <b>School category</b>   | Community  |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>   | 3–7  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>  | Mixed  |
| <b>Number on roll</b>  |  |
| School (total)   | 114  |
| 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  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>   | The governing body   |
| <b>Chair</b>   | Ms Kaye Marshall   |
| <b>Headteacher</b>   | Miss Catherine Worton  |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 1 February 2006  |
| <b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>                              | Not previously inspected                                       |
| <b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>   | Not previously inspected                                       |
| <b>School address</b>  | Trimdon Grange<br>Trimdon Station<br>County Durham<br>TS29 6EY |
| <b>Telephone number</b>  | 01429 880347   |
| <b>Fax number</b>  | 01429 880347   |

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|--------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Age group</b>         | 3–7             |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>  | 23–24 June 2009 |
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one additional inspector.

## Description of the school

This small village school serves the immediate area. Children travel from outlying villages to attend the Nursery. The area is mixed but has a higher than average level of social and economic disadvantage. All pupils are White British. An above average number of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including pupils with a statement of special educational need. The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises a Nursery, which children attend part-time when they are three, and a Reception class.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

Trimdon Grange Infant and Nursery school is outstanding in every respect. Its reputation is justifiably high both within the local authority and further afield because of its inspirational curriculum and amazing levels of creativity reflected in a Gold Artsmark award. Pupils excel in their learning and make outstanding progress based on their below age-related attainment when they start in the Nursery. Standards are consistently well above national averages, especially in writing and mathematics. All pupils, including more able pupils and pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, achieve exceptionally well. This is a direct result of the stimulating and innovative approach to teaching and learning in which pupils' interests in innovative, practical topics form the basis for learning. Alongside this approach, the teaching of basic skills is firmly embedded and linked to what pupils are learning in their topics. For example, Year 2 pupils knowledgeably devised questions to use when conducting an interview with a coal miner's widow. Parents are effusive in their praise for the impact of the provision on their children's all-round development. This is captured in the following comments, 'A well-run, positive and happy atmosphere with excellent facilities in which children's interests are acted upon, for example, growing fruit and vegetables and watching birds nesting'.

Personal development and well-being are outstanding. Pupils develop an exceptional sense of personal enrichment through encounters with cultural media and traditions from a range of cultures through a residential visit to a culturally diverse urban school and visitors to school. Community cohesion is excellent in the local and wider communities as well as globally through the curriculum. Pupils have an outstanding awareness of the importance of promoting a healthy lifestyle well reflected in the recent reaccreditation of a Healthy School Award. The provision of a healthy food café and growing their own vegetables help pupils understand their responsibility to maintain this lifestyle. Pupils' views are collected to ensure that attention to safety is successful. Pupils thrive in the outstanding curriculum which additionally contributes to palpable enjoyment around the school and exceptionally good behaviour. Pupils' excellent basic skills prepare them well for future learning. Teaching is consistently excellent because of the skilled ways in which pupils are involved in their learning, and because of teachers' high expectations and the challenges provided, especially in applying basic skills into a relevant context linked to topics being studied, such as the local area past and present, and holidays. The excellent curriculum is developing very well in Key Stage 1 as the practical and child-initiated approaches of the Early Years Foundation Stage are transferred into Years 1 and 2. The provision for pupils' care, guidance and support is excellent. Pupils take on buddy responsibilities in the playground to ensure pupils maintain their excellent behaviour. Staff are very well trained. Assessment arrangements are thorough. All pupils have targets known by parents and used on a day-to-day basis to involve pupils in their learning.

Leadership and management are excellent. The headteacher is an innovative and inspirational, creative practitioner first and foremost. She has created a very strong team of like-minded colleagues and governors who ensure that pupils have equality of opportunity in every way. She has an exceptional level of knowledge relating to pupils' learning and astutely prioritises what is needed from national initiatives. This results in a shared vision and great consistency in pupils' learning from Nursery to the end of Year 2. Improvement since the last inspection is excellent as is the school's capacity to improve. The school provides excellent value for money.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 1

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding. Children start in the Nursery with skills that are below those typical for their age. As a result of the high priority to promoting and building on prior learning through well-planned practical activities inside and outside, children make outstanding progress in their learning and personal development. By the time they leave Reception, attainment is above national expectations in all areas of learning. At the heart of the excellent provision is the exceptional skill and levels of creativity of all the staff. They are able to extend children's play through their intervention and help children to apply basic skills in a fun way. For example, following a group session in which children counted and recognised numbers linked to getting ready for a holiday, they went off 'camping' with rucksacks packed out into the spacious and excellently resourced outdoor area. More able children are challenged because of the regular use of volunteer helpers to read with them. A key to successful learning is the detailed planning for the adult-led learning alongside children's play inside and outside. Vibrant and stimulating displays celebrate the richness of the curriculum and the efforts of each and every child. Links with literature are fundamental in everything that goes on, thus developing a love of books and stories in the children. Assessment arrangements are comprehensive and provide each parent with useful information about their children's development. However, this is rather cumbersome and does not make enough links with the individual progress of children. The school is currently reviewing this. Welfare arrangements and the leadership by the headteacher are outstanding.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the use of evidence for assessment in the Early Years Foundation Stage to show more clearly how individual children progress in their learning.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 1

Pupils' achievement is excellent. Standards are significantly above average by the time pupils leave school. More able pupils achieve particularly well. Actions to improve the achievement of a few pupils making only average progress in reading last year are especially noteworthy due to the impact of one-to-one support for pupils in need of extra help, involvement of parents and improvements to the management of the home-reading scheme. Standards in writing and mathematics are exceptionally high as a result of sustained actions to build on the high level of attainment when the children leave the Reception class. Numeracy and literacy levels are excellent because of the innovative ways in which children acquire basic skills. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are identified in the Early Years Foundation Stage and, as a result of early intervention and well pitched support, quickly catch up with their peers. The school has exceeded its targets for reading, writing and mathematics this year and is likely to have maintained the high standards achieved last year based on current standards in lessons.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 1

The prominent display, stating that 'everyone belongs to different communities' captures the impressive priority that is given to pupils' understanding of cultural ethnicity and faith diversity in society. The exceptionally strong awareness by pupils of their own beliefs, the respect for

themselves and others and an appreciation of the beauty within their own environment all contribute to outstanding personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils say they feel very safe in school because of the excellent care and vigilance in and out of classrooms. Above average attendance reflects pupils' excellent enjoyment of school. This is very evident in lessons as pupils are so enthusiastic and behaviour is excellent. Pupils have many responsibilities such as, buddies, members of the school council and caring for the large number of pets. Pupils develop an excellent understanding of the wider community and in particular its diversity. Year 2 pupils, twinned with an urban London school, have visited the school and met the pupils there. They are also beginning to understand the range of cultural and ethnic diversity through links with African countries, visitors to school and in their enjoyment of books depicting traditional tales of other cultures. Pupils have exceptionally high standards in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) which prepare them well for the next stage in their learning.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

The quality of teaching and learning is excellent. There is a high level of challenge for pupils because teaching expectations are high. As a result, pupils work consistently above age-related expectations throughout school. They become confident and independent learners who are able to sustain concentration, persevere and cooperate exceptionally well with each other. This was very notable in the impromptu paired talk sessions where they discussed ideas about the reasons for the miner's wife's sadness in a Year 2 literacy lesson. Planning is thorough and consistently matched to the wide range of abilities in each class. Questioning is probing and explanations make clear what pupils are learning. Support staff play a key role and work very well in partnership with teachers. Excellent preparation, innovative use of ICT and outstanding relationships mean that pupils make excellent progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are fully included in lessons. Parents are fully aware of what happens in school and have appreciated the help they are provided to assist their children at home, especially with reading.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 1**

The curriculum is outstanding. It fully reflects the headteacher's passion for practical learning. A phenomenal level of attention to providing pupils with inspirational resources and practical tasks, such as growing vegetables or dismantling a car, alongside well-focused adult-led activities to promote basic skills is typical. Parents appreciate this and said, 'We love the way in which practical learning about life is brought into the national curriculum'. Pupils write about everything they are learning. This is certainly not only in literacy lessons. Year 1 pupils, for example, recorded the same and different features of their village. Large scale art is an impressive key feature of displays. Visits to, for example, botanical gardens provided the stimulus for a recount of the visit as well as skilful observational drawings. A different way of life shared with parents during Chinese New Year celebrations is another example. Links with an urban London school are contributing well to providing pupils with greater awareness of other areas and in developing their responsibilities to look after guests and becoming independent, for example, through the sleep-over activity. Displays are stunning and always celebrate pupils' emerging and well developed writing skills either word-processed or as bold captions. There is further

excellent enrichment of the curriculum through after-school and lunchtime clubs such as martial arts, art, computers, cricket, urban active dance, cheerleading and cookery clubs.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

A very strong ethos of care, guidance and support pervades the school so that pupils have the very best opportunities to thrive in a safe and secure environment. Links with feeder schools are well established for pupils to make a very smooth transition to the next stage of their education. Arrangements to record pupils' accidents, to check they are free from risk when learning outdoors, indoors or on trips are robust. A system for early identification of pupils at risk of falling behind with their learning is securely in place and support is provided in consultation with outside agencies and parents. Parents highly praise the attention given to the special needs of their children. Pupils' progress tracked throughout their time in school in detail is impressive. Their work is always marked and older pupils provided with targets to work towards for literacy and numeracy. These targets are shared and celebrated in good work assemblies as well as with parents.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

The outstanding vision and commitment of the headteacher, with the support of the assistant headteacher, have enabled this school to become a beacon of success across the country. Teamwork is strong. There is rigorous monitoring and checking of progress and the quality of teaching, resulting in an accurate self-evaluation. Impressive actions to spread the excellence in the Early Years Foundation Stage into Key Stage 1 are in place. A comprehensive programme of professional development for staff and visits to other schools has supported the continuity between the two phases. The school's success is characterised by the key priorities to learning and teaching and the curriculum. The school is ahead of much practice in the effectiveness with which they are able to apply basic skills so admirably across the curriculum to make learning fun and infinitely enjoyable. The school promotes equality of opportunity very well. Governors are fully involved in the work of the school and use their professional expertise very well. Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements and key staff have completed relevant training. Community cohesion is outstanding. Pupils have an excellent understanding of contrasting communities locally, nationally and globally through the curriculum, visits and visitors and short residential experiences. Actions have taken place to reach out into the local communities to develop awareness of cultural and ethnic diversity. In religious education, pupils learn about a range of faiths and celebrate the main festivals throughout the year. Pupils' views show that they celebrate the similarities rather than differences in children of minority ethnicities. This is an excellent testimony to the superb level of inclusion and pupils' awareness of equality issues.

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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 |
|---|----------------|

### 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 <sup>1</sup> 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 |

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<sup>1</sup>Grade 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

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>                          | 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                                    | 1 |
| How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 1 |

## The quality of provision

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>       | 1 |
| 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

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| <b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>                                       | 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?   | 1   |
| 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**

25 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Trimdon Grange Infant and Nursery School, Durham,

TS29 6EY

Thank you all very much for the welcome given to me when I inspected your school recently. It was very interesting and enjoyable to see all the work you do and to talk to some of you. You go to an outstanding school. I have listed below the reasons for this.

- You enjoy learning at all times and make excellent progress all through school.
- You work very hard and, because your teaching is so good, you reach high standards by the time you leave school.
- Your teaching is very creative and makes sure that you have exciting projects to enjoy and to write about.
- Your behaviour is excellent and many of you have important responsibilities around school.
- The children in the Nursery and Reception class get an excellent start and really enjoy all the outdoor space for learning.

Because you attend an excellent school there is very little that needs to be done to improve it. I am aware that there are plans to change the assessment arrangements for children when they first start school to give parents a clearer picture of their children's progress. I agree this is an area for improvement.

Yours faithfully

Rosemary Rodger

Lead inspector