

Ramshaw Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114099
Local Authority	Durham
Inspection number	325944
Inspection date	16 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Ann Wallis

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)	55
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 Rachel Webb
Headteacher	Mr Dominic Brown
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	Oaks Bank Evenwood Bishop Auckland County Durham DL14 9SD
Telephone number	01388 832411
Fax number	01388 835593

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

This was a reduced tariff inspection carried out by an Additional inspector.

The inspection evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school. It also investigated the following issues:

- the achievement of all pupils particularly the highest attainers
- leadership and management across the school
- the impact of care, guidance and support on pupils' personal development.

Evidence was gathered from discussions with the headteacher, staff, pupils and the chair of governors. Lessons were observed and school documents and parents' questionnaires were scrutinised. Other aspects of the school's work, such as the curriculum, 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 form, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average school. It serves a rural area of south west Durham which has well above average levels of socio-economic deprivation. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is above average. All pupils are White British and none have English as an additional language. An above average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school makes provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage in its Reception class. The school has Healthy Schools and Activemark awards and holds Investors in Children status.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Ramshaw Primary is an outstanding school where pupils thrive. Children enter the Reception class with skills which are often below those typical for their age and make excellent progress to leave Year 6 with above and for some pupils well above average standards. Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is also outstanding and is exceptionally well promoted by the excellent care, guidance and support that the school gives to each and every pupil. In this very supportive atmosphere, where all staff, governors and parents work together as a seamless team, pupils achieve their very best. Pupils say how much they value having their opinions listened to and they have a real feeling of 'ownership' of their school. The school has forged excellent links with the local community and with parents. Many parents are now very involved in their children's learning and regularly assist them with homework and school activities. Parents are exceptionally appreciative of the school. Their comments were entirely positive and included frequent references to the 'excellent teachers', 'high standards' and 'very caring staff'.

Standards are above average and pupils' achievement is outstanding. Standards and achievement have been rising for the last three years. Although the numbers of pupils in each year group are small and standards do vary from year to year, pupils generally enter Year 1 with the skills expected for their age. They make excellent progress through both key stages to reach above and sometimes well above average standards when they leave Year 6. Results of teacher assessments and national tests in 2007 showed pupils reached average standards by the end of Year 2 and above average standards by Year 6. Provisional results of tests and assessments for 2008 indicate standards have risen to above average at the end of Year 2 and have remained above average in Year 6. In both 2007 and 2008 Year 6 pupils exceeded the very challenging targets the school had set for them although few reached the highest grades. The school recognises that not enough pupils are gaining the higher grades in tests and assessments in both Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve as well as their peers because they receive constructive individual support from teachers and teaching assistants.

Pupils achieve so well because the curriculum is well matched to their needs and teaching and learning are outstanding. Teachers radiate enthusiasm and consequently lessons are very lively and interesting. Pupils respond well, behave impeccably and are very keen to learn. Teachers ask perceptive questions and challenge their pupils to think for themselves. Pupils are independent and take responsibility for their own learning. Pupils of all ages really enjoy learning. Class 2 were as enthusiastic about learning French as class 3 were about their exciting trip to a lead mine. Increased use of information and communication technology (ICT) has enriched lessons further and an excellent range of resources are used to stimulate pupils' interest. Pupils' work is marked really thoroughly. Pupils are continually assessing their own learning and have an ongoing dialogue with their teacher about how to take the next steps to improve their work further.

The school provides the highest levels of care guidance and support for its pupils. All staff know the pupils very well and their health, safety and welfare are at the heart of the school's work. All safeguarding procedures are very robust. Pupils say how really safe they feel in school and relationships are excellent. Pupils' progress is tracked assiduously and immediate action is taken if any child is thought to be achieving less than their best. All pupils receive excellent

academic guidance and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are very well supported in their work.

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. They love coming to school and this is reflected in their above average attendance. Pupils are encouraged to be independent and relish the numerous opportunities they are given to take responsibility and contribute to their school and local communities. The school is now developing their awareness of the UK and global communities even further by establishing links with schools in other countries. Pupils really care for each other and work extremely well together in pairs and groups. The development of pupils' basic skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT is excellent so pupils are well equipped for future study and employment. They have an excellent understanding of healthy eating and large numbers of pupils enjoy attending the after school cookery club.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher has established an excellent atmosphere for learning within the school. He has high expectations of all pupils and a very clear vision for improving the already above average standards further. Both pupils and staff feel really valued and extremely well supported. Staff are very well deployed. Their potential is being developed even further through very appropriate training which is closely linked to the school's priorities for improvement.

Areas for improvement from the last inspection, such as improving target setting for pupils, have been addressed very successfully. The school now has outstanding capacity for further improvement. Governance is good. Governors are very supportive of the school, know its strengths well and are becoming more involved in monitoring its work. Resources are very well managed and the school provides excellent value for money.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children start school in Reception with skills which are usually below those typical for their age, particularly in communication, language and literacy and in their social and emotional development. The numbers of children in each year group are small but individuals make excellent progress and by the end of reception reach the learning goals expected for their age. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are quickly identified and very well supported to enable them to achieve their full potential. The very warm, welcoming and stimulating atmosphere gives children real confidence to learn and to experience the fantastic range of activities on offer. Teaching is excellent. All staff have a thorough understanding of the needs of this age range. They plan carefully to allow free choice as well as teaching skills in small groups. Letters and their sounds are taught especially well in a way which is lively, practical and fun. Children's progress is tracked rigorously and any gaps in their learning are quickly identified and filled. Children's personal development is outstanding. They have already made new friends, willingly help each other and behave very well. All staff are extremely caring and children's welfare is of paramount importance. Within the restricted space available a new outdoor learning area has been created which allows children access to an improved range of outdoor activities. The new but very knowledgeable and enthusiastic leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is excellent and is well supported by the headteacher. Support staff are very well deployed and are a real strength of this provision.

What the school should do to improve further

- Consistently challenge all higher attaining pupils to enable them to reach the higher grades in tests and assessments.

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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	2
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	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

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?	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	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

17 October 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ramshaw Primary School, Durham, DL14 9SD

Thank you so much for the warm welcome you gave me when I visited your school. I would particularly like to thank all those of you who took time to talk with me about all the things you like about your school.

These are some of the things I have included in my report:

- yours is an outstanding school
- your behaviour is excellent and you really enjoy learning
- you reach above average standards in your work and make excellent progress
- lessons are very lively and interesting because teaching and learning are outstanding
- your school gives you outstanding care, guidance and support so your personal development is excellent
- the leadership of your school is excellent.

I have now asked your school to:

- help you reach the highest grades in tests and examinations.

You can help your school improve even further by attending regularly and working with your teachers to achieve the very best you can.

Mrs A Wallis

Lead inspector