

Westoe Crown Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	134187
Local Authority	South Tyneside
Inspection number	328849
Inspection dates	12–13 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Gianna Ulyatt

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)	658
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	Councillor Mrs Audrey McMillan
Headteacher	Mrs Lenise Lilico
Date of previous school inspection	4 July 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Village Centre Sea Whinnings Way South Shields Tyne and Wear NE33 3NS
Telephone number	0191 4272160
Fax number	0191 4272169

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by four Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is very large and is situated in a newly built urban development. The socio-economic factors and the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals are both broadly average. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic groups is low. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational need, is below average. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage receive part-time provision in the Nursery and full-time provision in Reception classes.

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 school that is beginning to improve. Its provision for academic development is satisfactory. Pupils' personal development is good. It is an inclusive school and welcomes all pupils. Parents value the work of the school. A typical comment is 'The ethos of the school is very caring. It looks after the well-being of the children and prepares them greatly for secondary school.'

Achievement is satisfactory in Key Stages 1 and 2. Standards at the beginning of Year 1 and at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are broadly average. Teaching and learning and the curriculum are satisfactory and there are variations and inconsistencies in these aspects across the school. Consequently, progress in some classes and year groups is better than in others. Progress in English and mathematics is satisfactory with an improving picture in English due to newly introduced teaching methods. In mathematics pupils' progress is slower because assessment procedures are not as firmly embedded. Pupils from minority ethnic groups progress satisfactorily. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress but the progress of more able pupils is inconsistent and could be better. This is because the teaching and the curriculum are not always challenging enough.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Relationships in most classes are excellent, consequently pupils concentrate and try their best. Where teaching is good, the pace is fast and high expectations accelerate learning. In satisfactory lessons introductions are too long and pupils are not actively engaged in consolidating new ideas. Marking is inconsistent between classes and subjects. Pupils are given clear guidance in English about how to improve but in mathematics such support is not as effective. The curriculum is satisfactory and meets statutory requirements. Art and design are particular strengths. The school has started work on making the curriculum more creative and personalised, but this is still at the early stage of development.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are confident and self-assured. They are secure and very well cared for. Their attendance is above average. There are effective partnerships within the locality and there is good emphasis on being part of the large school community. Pupils willingly fundraise and support charities and are compassionate for those less fortunate than themselves. They enjoy physical activity through the range of sport on offer. Pupils relish the responsibility of being buddies and peer mentors and are proud of their Eco awards. Council members take their responsibilities very seriously and have brought about improvements. Pupils manage the stationery shop, thus learning simple economics. Pupils' future economic well-being and academic skills are satisfactory. They are looking forward to their next school.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Managers are effective in promoting community cohesion, both in the locality and through some international links. The monitoring of teaching, learning and the curriculum is not robust enough resulting in inconsistencies in progress across different classes and subjects. The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection despite significant staffing turbulence and changes in responsibilities. Many middle managers are new to their area of leadership. Nevertheless they are enthusiastic and very willing to implement new initiatives. Consequently the capacity to improve is satisfactory. Governance is satisfactory.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The quality of provision is good. Most children enter Nursery with standards below those expected for their age except in personal, social and emotional development where they are broadly typical. Children make good progress and by the end of Reception, standards in all areas of learning are average. These good results are due to good teaching, sensitive support for younger children and the quality of adult-to-child interaction. Adults assess and guide children well as they play and plan appropriate activities to match their stages of development. The introduction of a new and systematic phonics programme is having a positive impact on attainment in reading and writing. Staff encourage children's spoken language with carefully worded questioning. Stories are used well as a base for topic activity. Children learn how to count and record numbers. They enjoy constructing large models, such as a rocket, and inventing imaginative scenarios. Popular computer games are used to enhance learning across all areas. The atmosphere is happy and purposeful, consequently children settle well. Rooms are attractive with a range of stimulating and accessible resources. Children learn to share, become independent and make choices because the teaching style strongly promotes this aspect of learning. Nevertheless, there is an appropriate balance between adult-led and child-chosen activities. Nursery children have regular opportunities for free access to outdoor play and learning, but there are not enough such opportunities for children in Reception. Visits to the baker's shop or the Marine Park link well to topic work, make learning meaningful and extend children's experiences of the world outside. Children are safe and secure throughout the provision and welfare requirements are met. Parents are welcomed daily and are very positive about the provision. Good leadership ensures strong teamwork and has a clear vision for future improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the use of monitoring and evaluation to tackle inconsistencies in progress between classes and between subjects.
- Raise standards in mathematics.
- Improve the progress of the more able pupils.
- Improve the quality of marking in mathematics so that pupils are clearer about what they have done well and how they can improve.

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

On entry to Year 1 standards are broadly average. At the end of both Key Stages standards are average and achievement is satisfactory. National assessment results in 2008 for Year 2 pupils were average in reading, writing and mathematics. Girls tend to achieve better than boys in writing and boys slightly better than girls in mathematics. Progress in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory. National and school data show that standards in Key Stage 2 have varied over the past three years. In the 2007 tests, the school's results were well above average. The school confirms that this was due to a very able cohort. The provisional test results for 2008 indicate that standards are broadly average, again consistent with the composition of the cohort. The results in English

and science were better than those in mathematics. School data for the current 2009 cohort indicate a similar picture to that in 2008. Mathematics is the weakest subject and one in which boys achieve better than girls. In all subjects, more able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress overall, as do pupils from minority ethnic groups.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Pupils enjoy being at school, consequently attendance is above average. Pupils appreciate the varied visits and visitors to the school because these widen their horizons. Pupils feel safe at school because they know adults are close at hand should they have any problems. Behaviour around school and during lessons is good and pupils and adults demonstrate true respect and care for one another. Pupils take a full and active part in the life of the school community. Council members take their responsibilities very seriously and through class representatives, have brought about improvements, including behaviour at playtimes. Pupils have worked hard to improve the environment and have been rewarded with a Silver Eco-Award for their efforts. Pupils are developing good citizenship skills and willingly take on responsibilities, as buddies and peer mediators, especially at break time. They willingly fundraise for those less fortunate than themselves and run the stationery shop, therefore gaining some financial experience. Pupils enjoy community activities, including singing at local events and raising money to fund a child's education in Africa. They know how important it is to eat fruit and vegetables and explain what is harmful to themselves and others. They participate enthusiastically in regular physical activity and enjoy the range of sport on offer. Pupils' standards in the key skills of English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) are average and their economic well-being is adequately catered for. Pupils are satisfactorily prepared for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, although variable through the school. Relationships in most classes are excellent and pupils behave well. In good lessons, the pace keeps pupils focused well and teachers have high expectations. Pupils are well challenged and work matches their ability. Resources are used creatively to motivate and inspire pupils. Planning is used effectively and pupils are very clear about the purpose of lessons. Teaching assistants and other professionals are used well to support pupils with additional needs. In a minority of lessons, lengthy teacher input reduces opportunities for pupils to collaborate and discuss ideas, and limits the time for them to practise new skills. Marking is inconsistent. It is good in literacy, particularly in Key Stage 2 because pupils have clear guidelines for improvement. In mathematics marking does not always show pupils what they have done well or how they can improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and provides a broad and balanced range of learning opportunities. It provides continuity from year to year and has some good features. Art, for example is well developed which is reflected in the good displays around the school. The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum is extended into Year 1 for pupils requiring additional early learning experiences. Much time is given to the acquisition of literacy and numeracy skills throughout the school and pupils have increasing opportunities to develop speaking and listening through role-play and drama. However, in writing and mathematics are pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to apply their skills other subjects. The school has started work on making the curriculum more creative and personalised; this is still at the early stage of development.

Pupils have many opportunities to enrich their learning both during and out of school hours. Pupils produce Rangoli patterns to develop their understanding of the Hindu Festival of Diwali and older pupils enjoyed dressing up in Victorian costumes for their history topic. Pupils learn about cultivating plants in the school garden and make good use of technology to enhance their work and to research a range of topics. Extra-curricular activities are well attended and help pupils to keep fit. Visits and visitors further enrich pupils' learning experience and add to their personal development. For example, Year 6 pupils enjoyed working in teams and developing self-confidence during a residential visit to the Lake District.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Pastoral care is good because pupils' needs are identified quickly. The school has strong links with a range of other professionals and takes great care that all pupils' medical and physical needs are known to all members of staff and are well met. Vulnerable pupils are well supported. The school complies with the requirements to safeguard children and child protection procedures are in place. Pupils say they feel safe and always have someone to talk to.

Academic guidance is effective overall. The school uses tracking information to note the progress of pupils. The information is used to support pupils whose progress is faster or slower than the majority. Pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported. The school is paying closer attention to the needs of the more able pupils but the impact on the standards they achieve has yet to be felt. Further use is made of tracking information to set targets for pupils. These make a positive contribution to pupils' academic guidance, notably in English but less so in mathematics. The school has recently introduced a new system for marking pupils' work but this is not yet operating consistently through the school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Staffing turbulence over the past two years has caused significant difficulties in bringing about improvements. Recent staffing changes have resulted in many leaders being new to their areas of responsibility and they have not yet had sufficient preparation for their new role to discharge their duties effectively. However, new initiatives are in place and the new team are enthusiastic and keen to bring about improvements.

Consequently the capacity to improve is satisfactory. Leaders have a clear vision of promoting personal development successfully and are using effective strategies to improve academic standards. The recent emphasis on English has resulted in improving progress in this subject. A good start has been made to the monitoring of teaching, learning and the curriculum and, as a result, the school has an accurate picture of its strengths and areas for development. This improved understanding is helping the school set challenging targets which are having an impact on raising standards in English but not as yet to the same degree in mathematics. Written plans for improvement provide a sound basis for moving the school forward. Monitoring does not have sufficient rigour to eliminate inconsistencies in pupils' progress between classes. The school has audited its provision for community cohesion and is aware of aspects that need strengthening. It has good links within the locality and internationally, but few on the national scene. Governance is satisfactory. The school has plans in place for all governors to play a greater part in first hand monitoring and review of the school's work. The school has made satisfactory improvements since the last inspection.

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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	3

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	2
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?	3
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**

13 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Westoe Crown Primary School, South Tyneside, NE33 3NS

Thank you for talking to the inspectors about your work and the things you like best about your school. Your brand new building is impressive and the range of art work is quite stunning. I am not surprised that many of you said that art is one of your favourite subjects. I know you enjoy school because your attendance is very good so keep it up! It was good to see you enjoying healthy choices at lunchtime and I can tell you really enjoy sport. The school council certainly makes sure your ideas are heard and the Eco awards clearly show how much you care about your environment. You show high levels of care for those less fortunate than you through the many worthwhile charities you support. Some of you are now learning simple business skills by running a stationery shop.

I was very impressed to see how hard you work in lessons. Standards are improving in English and will continue to do so if you keep this up. Your reading is improving and your writing is certainly getting better. Your progress in mathematics is not fast enough and I have asked the school to look at this subject in particular to see why you do better in English than in mathematics. I also believe that more of you are capable of reaching above average standards so I have asked the school to see what can be done to improve your chances.

I have asked the school to consider some points to make your school even better. Your English books are marked regularly and you can see if your work is right or wrong. However, in mathematics many of you are not sure about what you have to do to improve your work and what you have next to think about. I have asked the school to make changes to the way marking is done to help you make faster progress. I have also asked your staff to keep a closer eye on how well you do in all classes so that where you could do better, action is taken to achieve this.

Continue to practise your mathematics as much as you can. Read what is written when your work has been marked and take good note of the advice you are given. This should also help you to make faster progress.

I wish you good luck for your future and remember - the harder you work the better your chances will be in life.

All the best

Gianna Ulyatt

Lead inspector