

Cramlington Shanklea Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122194
Local Authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	334902
Inspection dates	25–26 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Mary Sewell

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)	400
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 Andrew Hodson
Headteacher	Mrs Janet Holland
Date of previous school inspection	1 June 2007
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Nairn Road Parkside Chase Cramlington Northumberland NE23 1RQ

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	25–26 June 2009
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average school which became a primary school in September 2007 following local reorganisation of schools. A significant number of pupils, especially those now in Year 6, joined the school following the closure of a neighbouring school. This is the first year that the school has accommodated Year 6 pupils. The school runs a nursery and out-of-school club on the premises that operate during term time only. Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is in the Nursery class and the Reception class.

The school is situated in a residential area where socio-economic conditions are broadly average and almost all pupils are from White British families. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The school has Healthy Schools Award and the Activemark for sport.

To allow for a staff development day, the school was closed to pupils on the second day of the inspection.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Shanklea Primary is a good school. It provides good value for money and has made effective improvements since the last inspection. Children are at the heart of this school because staff are committed to providing every opportunity for pupils to learn and develop. Staff are vigilant in ensuring a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment.

Pupils love school. They know how to stay healthy and safe and feel their voice is heard. Their behaviour and attitudes to learning are good. They are learning quickly how to prepare for adult life in the community. Parents are overwhelmingly positive and really value being involved in their children's learning. Many parents said they love visiting the pupils' assemblies. The assembly that took place during the inspection was lively, informed and immensely entertaining. Pupils took an active part as narrators and members of the choir, and they were able to show their parents exactly what they had learned. One parent said, 'It's amazing just how much they know and how confident they have become.' The curriculum is good and provides interesting links between subjects based on topics or themes. One such topic on rivers was enriched by a boat ride up the River Tyne when pupils also learned about the construction of bridges. The school acknowledges that pupils lack a depth of understanding of life in other cultures and religions and that this needs further promotion.

A real strength of the school is the way in which it uses other professionals to support pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities including those who have social, emotional or behavioural problems. The school is justifiably proud of its success with more vulnerable pupils who, as a result of support, settle well into the school's caring ethos.

Achievement is good and standards are above average. Good progress is a direct result of good teaching and teamwork. Lesson planning is thorough and every opportunity is taken to provide exciting and stimulating activities which are well matched to pupils' needs. Science is particularly well taught and pupils understand how to investigate, form a hypothesis and work independently to carry out a 'fair test'. Teaching assistants are used very effectively to support learning. The marking of pupils' work is inconsistent. Although most of it is generally thorough and detailed, some marking fails to give pupils a clear idea on what they need to do to improve.

The headteacher has a good overview of school life and is well supported by a knowledgeable governing body. The systems for monitoring and evaluating are thorough and provide a very fulsome and accurate picture of the strengths and areas for improvement in the school. As a result, the school is in a good position to make further improvements.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Currently children start in the nursery with skills and abilities that are slightly below those expected for their age. They make good progress and, by the time they leave the Reception class, they reach standards in all areas of learning that are generally in line with expectations for their age. Children make very good progress in personal and social development. Teaching is good. Adults plan an interesting range of activities for children to support their learning and development. Whilst there is generally a good balance between activities that are led by teachers and others where children have more choice and decision making, there are times when a class is expected to listen to the teacher for too long. Parents say they are pleased with the information and guidance they receive and

they are becoming increasingly involved with their children's learning. Children are happy, secure, and are proud of their achievements. Children behave very well and are keen to talk about their experiences because they have very good relationships with all adults. Their personal development and welfare are promoted well, although at times, running in classrooms is unchecked. The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led. Priorities for development are correctly identified and tackled. For example, children's writing has improved as a result of a recent focus on that aspect of their work. Until recently, the development of outside areas has been held back due to building work. The school recognises the pressing need to extend and develop outside provision to provide a continuously accessible enhancement to children's learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise awareness of British and international cultural diversity to enhance personal development and contribute to community cohesion.
- Achieve consistency in marking in order that pupils have clear guidance on how to improve their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good and, overall, standards are above average. Pupils start Year 1 with average standards and make good progress, reaching above average standards in English and mathematics by the end of Year 2. The school has established a consistent track record of high standards at the end of Year 2. The 2009 teacher assessments reflect similar attainment for pupils in Year 2.

Pupils continue to make good overall progress in Years 3 to 6. Pupils in Year 4 and 5 make very good progress. Many pupils in Year 5 already exceed their Year 6 targets and the standards they are reaching are above the national expectations for their age. Standards in science are high throughout the school, because teachers take every opportunity to encourage scientific enquiry.

This is the first year that the school has had pupils in Year 6 and there are, as yet, no national test results to compare with the national picture. The school's tracking shows that the progress of Year 6 pupils, including those new to the school, has accelerated rapidly as they respond to the positive ethos of the school and settle down well. They make good progress from their individual starting points when they joined the school. Although rising quickly, standards in Year 6 are not as high as in the rest of the school and are close to average in English and mathematics, although above average in science. Most pupils in Year 6 have met their challenging targets in mathematics and science. This is especially pleasing as a third of these pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and is testimony to the school's well targeted support which enables them to make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils speak confidently of how they feel safe in school, and behaviour in the classrooms and around the school is good. Pupils act very sensibly in and out of doors, and are aware how to stay safe in the world beyond school.

Pupils contribute enthusiastically in lessons, enjoy their work and are keen to learn. They say 'lessons are fun' and 'we love the choir'. These positive attitudes are reflected in their good

attendance. Pupils have a good understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and take up lots of additional sports. The contribution that pupils make to the community is good. They eagerly participate in a wide variety of events and activities such as performing at local venues and supporting local charities. In school, many pupils take on responsibilities such as sports leaders and school councillors. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils are confident and articulate young people who are used to working together and are well prepared for moving on to the next stage in their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. All staff are enthusiastic in lessons and motivate their pupils well. As a result, pupils' behaviour is good; they concentrate well and produce high quality work. Good planning underpins all high quality teaching and learning because it ensures that expectations are high and that the work set is appropriately challenging. Pupils love their lessons; they say that 'they are exciting and fun'. This is because teachers use every opportunity to create interesting activities which are well matched to pupils' interests and needs. Questioning is used well and frequently to encourage pupils to give their views and to clarify their understanding. Pupils' knowledge is extended, skills reinforced, and self-confidence developed because teachers deliberately consolidate learning by making links across other subject areas. In a food technology lesson, pupils relished learning about healthy eating by preparing fruit kebabs.

In the very few less successful lessons, pupils are not as engaged and become restless because they lose track of what is expected of them. In most classes marking is rigorous, thorough and helpful. However, it is not consistently good across the school, nor does it always give pupils clear guidance on how to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good, with some outstanding features, and has been well planned to meet the needs of the school. Pupils benefit from a wide and balanced range of activities in all subjects, enriched by visits, sports, and after-school clubs. The pupils particularly love the ocarina club, where they play wind instruments. Personal and social education is taught through well structured lessons and it makes a strong contribution to pupils' personal development. Pupils' awareness of their own community and its industrial heritage is successfully developed by studying and visiting the local area. Less secure is their understanding of life in other cultures and societies. Pupils have good opportunities to develop team-building skills by taking part in visits and, for older pupils, there are good residential outdoor activities.

The provision for pupils to extend their information and communication technology (ICT) is outstanding. As well as accessing a sophisticated and extensive range of computers, pupils are given ample opportunities in many other subjects to use the skills they have gained through the excellent ICT lessons.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school's arrangements for the care, guidance and support of its pupils are good.

High quality care, which frequently involves other professionals, has a significant influence on pupils' personal development, especially in their ability to deal confidently with adults, and their self-assurance. They feel their contributions are valued. Effective measures for safeguarding children are in place, such as those required for child protection, recruiting staff, health and safety and risk assessment for visits and activities. The support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good. Support teachers and assistants know the pupils well and their guidance enhances pupils' progress. A similar level of individual support for more able pupils is also evident where needed.

There are extensive systems for assessing pupils' work as they move through the school which give teachers a comprehensive picture of the progress, standards and learning targets of their pupils. However, the next steps in learning are not always made clear enough in the pupils' individual targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership and management of the headteacher, staff and governors are good.

The senior team has successfully dealt with construction work, staffing changes and an influx of a number of pupils from a closing school. The headteacher shows great commitment and resolve to develop and improve the new school. She successfully promotes the caring ethos and positive climate for learning that is evident throughout the school. This vision is shared with governors, the new leadership team and staff, who all show a strong team spirit and sense of purpose.

Governors are fully involved in partnership with the headteacher and have a very clear knowledge of the school. They contribute to accurate self-evaluation and give priority to raising standards in the school's thorough development plan. Improvements include those made to the school's environment and more effective staffing ratios. As a result, the school is in a good position to make further improvements.

Governors and leaders successfully promote many partnerships and activities which foster pupils' well-being and their contribution to their school and local community. Their approach to fostering community cohesion is largely satisfactory rather than good, because pupils have insufficient opportunities to increase their awareness of the diversity of British and world-wide cultures.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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?	2
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?	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?	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?	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	2

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?	2
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?	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?	3
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**

27 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Cramlington Shanklea Primary School, Northumberland, NE23 1RQ

It was a pleasure to inspect your school. What a pity that we could only talk to you on the first day because there was so much you wanted to say to us. Never mind, we were able to look at your books and talk to your teachers but the school was not as nice without you!

This is what we found out about your school. You go to a good school which is well run by the headteacher, senior teachers and the school governors. We thought you were really well cared for and you told us you felt safe and happy. We found that your lessons were good and, because you also behave well, you all make good progress in your learning. You were keen to tell us about the exciting and interesting activities you take part in both in your lessons and in your clubs after school. We were delighted by the choir and the ocarina. You were certainly able to make some lovely sounds!

We have just asked your school to do two things for us. We would like all your teachers to mark your books in a way which tells you exactly what you need to do to make your work better. We have also asked your teachers to tell you even more about the way in which people from other cultures and traditions live. We hope that you will find this interesting and exciting.

You all looked lovely in your school uniforms, especially the black sweatshirts the play leaders wore so that the younger children could see them in the playground. You are well behaved, and are all so kind and helpful to each other.

A very special 'thank you' to the school council who took time to come and talk to us at lunchtime. We know how very busy you all were.

Yours faithfully

Mary Sewell, Geoffrey Watson and James Hall

Inspectors