

Ravenswood Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108475
Local Authority	Newcastle Upon Tyne
Inspection number	337086
Inspection dates	14–15 January 2010
Reporting inspector	Kate Pringle

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	543
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs C Murray
Headteacher	Mrs P Summerhill
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 23 lessons, spent 63% of time observing learning and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils and parents. They observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' books, assessment information, records of the school's review of its actions for improvement, school development plans and updates of progress towards identified priorities. Inspectors also considered 108 questionnaires from parents and carers, 94 from pupils and 24 from staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the current attainment and progress of all pupils and different groups of pupils
- how well teaching and assessment supports progress for all pupils to meet challenging targets
- the effectiveness with which the school promotes understanding of cultural diversity
- how effectively leaders and managers monitor, review and evaluate the impact of actions to improve outcomes for pupils.

Information about the school

Ravenswood is considerably larger than the average primary school and includes a 60 place Nursery. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is lower than levels found nationally. Most pupils are of White British heritage and the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is just below the national average with pupils coming from 19 countries of origin with 22 different languages spoken. As a result, a higher than average number of pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or difficulties is lower than found nationally.

The school holds awards for: Healthy Schools, Artsmark Silver, Activemark Gold, Smoking Education Gold and the local authority Gold Quality Mark for Drugs Education.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Central to the ethos of this welcoming school are the caring relationships that ensure highly successful support and pupils' outstanding achievement. The strengths of leadership lie in the strong motivation and highly effective communication between all groups who contribute to the strong vision of continual improvement. This is recognised by an overwhelming proportion of parents and carers who appreciate the dedication of the school to provide excellent outcomes for their children. Overall, exciting learning opportunities, together with good teaching, provide pupils with experiences which engage their interest and enthusiasm. Pupils feel extremely safe and they really do enjoy school and make good progress because of their positive attitudes to work, in which they engage wholeheartedly. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, new outdoor equipment has extended opportunities for physical development. However, there are fewer opportunities for children to freely access these areas which limits their independence.

From entry points broadly in line with those expected for their age, pupils leave with standards significantly above average. This contributes to the outstanding outcomes for their future economic well-being. The good progress children make in the Early Years Foundation Stage is built on in Key Stage 1 and similar improvement over Key Stage 2 ensures that pupils attain challenging targets. Good teaching and good relationships motivate pupils to learn. Progress is tracked rigorously and this contributes well to the organisation of learning provision. However, assessment information is not used consistently well across classes to support pupils, which leads to variations in progress across different year groups. The needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language and for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are exceptionally well met, enabling these pupils to make excellent progress. The school provides highly effective care, guidance and support.

Leaders have a good understanding of the qualities of the school and self-evaluation successfully identifies key areas for action, which lead to effective improvements. The school is very well supported by parents and other partners because of the outstanding communication with them and because of how well the school listens to any concerns. Pupils identify the issues which affect their school and local community and are instrumental in making improvements. The wide range of cultures found within the school and links with other international groups contribute well to pupils' understanding of children from different backgrounds. Areas identified at the previous inspection have been addressed. In particular, the unswerving focus upon tracking attainment has effectively raised standards significantly. Other improvements, including the developing creative curriculum, further support the good capacity of the school for sustained

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improvement. Overall, outcomes for pupils are outstanding and the school provides excellent value for money.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the consistency of teaching and the use of assessment information in order to ensure that work challenges pupils of all abilities, and to use marking to give a clear indication as to what pupils need to do next in order to make progress towards their next target.
- Increase the opportunities for children in Early Years Foundation Stage to have free access to the outdoor provision so that they have more choice as to how, and where they learn.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Pupils' achievement and enjoyment of learning are outstanding. Good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning contribute effectively to the good overall progress pupils make. Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent and pupils respect their teachers and are motivated to learn. Progress is best in lessons where pupils understand how well they achieve against individual targets and are involved in their next steps in learning. There is high motivation in lessons where there is active participation in learning through discussion, problem solving and creative activities.

The good progress that children make in the Early Years Foundation Stage continues through Key Stage 1, building upon their previous achievement. Well above average standards in Key Stage 2 have been maintained over a three year period and have been improved on most recently in all subjects. However, although overall progress is good, it is variable. Present Key Stage 2 data indicates that there is a significant increase in progress in Year 6 compared to other year groups.

Pupils are extremely knowledgeable about how to keep safe. They are very secure in their belief that staff will quickly help them with concerns and speak knowledgeably about dealing with different situations which may arise, for example, when using the internet. Pupils understand the benefits of a healthy lifestyle and many take advantage of the wide range of additional activities to extend their physical well-being through a variety of sporting and other opportunities, for example, the gardening club. Behaviour is good. Pupils are unanimous in their love of school and are enthusiastic about ways in which to help to improve their school and the wider community. They have a strong sense of belonging and share their celebration of different cultures through the creative arts. Pupils are proud of their roles, for example, as school councilors, through which they learn about taking responsibility. Excellent achievement, combined with above average attendance and a strong sense of respect for themselves and others, as they work successfully together, ensures that pupils are very well placed for their future learning.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Good relationships and high expectations contribute to good behaviour in lessons and positive attitudes to learning. Teachers use their skills and knowledge to provide different strategies to motivate pupils in lessons. Interactive whiteboards are used imaginatively to bring learning alive, as pupils increasingly use software programs. Teachers conscientiously share objectives, which enable pupils to understand the purpose of the lesson and what is expected of them. They are ably supported by assistants within and outside the classroom. Assessment is rigorous, clearly identifying the progress pupils make over time. However, not all teachers use this information effectively enough to influence planning or to address the differing needs of individual pupils on a daily basis. Teachers' mark pupils' work regularly. However, its consistent use to confirm individual pupils' achievement against identified targets and the next steps in learning is at an early stage.

The rich curriculum provides a range of well-planned activities, which are effectively supported by a range of visits and visitors. Recent developments to provide a creative curriculum are extending meaningful links between subjects offering pupils a broader range of experience and understanding. Focused topics include opportunities for pupils to understand their local and regional identity through, for example, the project 'Being a Geordie'. Learning is increasingly supported by the use of information and communication technology (ICT) skills, numeracy and literacy. There are real strengths

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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demonstrated in pupils' achievements in the creative arts and in sporting activities. The excellent range of extra-curricular activities, which are attended well, further enhance pupils' skills and abilities, demonstrating the enthusiasm that pupils have to take every advantage this school offers. Opportunities for pupils in Year 6 to take part in residential visits to activity/ICT centres provide new and challenging situations through which their confidence and self-esteem are raised.

There is a strong caring and inclusive nature to this school. All safeguarding requirements are well met. The sensitive, rapid and successful support for vulnerable pupils and for those with difficulties in learning ensures that concerns are quickly highlighted and successfully addressed. These pupils are well supported to access the whole curriculum successfully. Interventions are underpinned with a raft of strategies, which include individual programmes and highly focused tracking of achievement. The excellent communication between staff and parents and other agencies involved in their children's learning is extremely well extended through the provision of opportunities for Family Learning. Transition at all stages is a positive experience as staff work closely with parents and other schools to ensure that pupils settle quickly and confidently in new surroundings.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders and managers have high aspirations for the school and they share a clear sense of purpose as they work closely together. There is a strong team spirit and all staff interact and engage with each other towards well developed lines of communication. This creates high motivation and expectations. Leaders have ownership of their responsibilities. Plans for improvement, which are supported by accurate self-assessment, identify priorities for development in individual subject areas. This is supported by well-defined opportunities for individual professional development, strongly linked to the needs of the school. Monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching demonstrates significant impact upon many areas of the school's development, including the overall improvement in pupils' achievement towards their challenging targets. However, the variable progress of some year groups has not yet been fully addressed. However, the school clearly identifies where improvements need to be made to overcome these variations to ensure all pupils achieve equally well. The school's effectiveness in promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination is good.

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The improved expertise of the governing body enables them to use their experience and individual skills to the benefit of the school. They are extremely positive about the work of the headteacher and all staff and of the improvements that have been achieved. Because of their better understanding of, for example, data and tracking, they are prepared to challenge and question how improvements are prioritised. Their good understanding of key responsibilities means that safeguarding arrangements are well developed and documented, creating a secure environment which is recognised by pupils and their parents. The school has a good understanding of the wide range of cultures represented within the school, local community and beyond.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter with skills largely in line with those expected for their age, although levels fluctuate slightly from year-to-year. They settle quickly within the positive environment. Good relationships develop with their teachers and with other children, which contributes to their high levels of confidence. Children happily work together, sharing and taking turns. They are practically encouraged to understand simple rules which contribute to their safety and well-being. The needs of those with special educational needs and/or difficulties, and with English as an additional language, are extremely well met. By the time children are ready to enter Year 1, their good progress means that many exceed national averages.

Children enjoy a stimulating range of learning opportunities. The use of the well-resourced learning environment is integral to teachers' planning, which takes into account the needs and interests of young children. As a result, they have excellent

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attitudes to learning. Outdoor resources provide a good range of activities which include opportunities to access large apparatus. However, unlimited access to outside areas is not yet fully developed which restricts children in their choice of how, and where, they engage in all areas of learning. Observations of the progress children make are well recorded in their 'Learning Journeys'. These records are detailed and adults use them effectively to identify the next steps in learning.

Leadership is good. There is a common sense of purpose within the team and adults work well together to ensure high levels of achievement and welfare. Policies and procedures are consistently applied and this contributes to the security of the setting. Overall, children's needs are well met, supported by highly effective partnerships with parents and a range of external partners.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers are extremely positive about the school. They hold the headteacher and her staff in very high regard and greatly appreciate the care and consideration given to their children. They are confident that any concerns are listened to carefully and acted upon appropriately. The school received much praise for the efforts it makes to 'build self- and mutual respect between pupils' and it is 'very approachable and keen to listen to the views of parents, providing opportunities for this to happen'. Of the small numbers of concerns raised, all were fully investigated and there were no serious issues found.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ravenswood Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 122 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 543 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	75	61	46	38	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	80	66	41	34	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	57	47	60	49	3	2	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	71	58	47	39	3	2	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	73	60	47	39	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	63	52	54	44	4	3	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	61	50	56	46	3	2	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	54	44	53	43	2	2	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	67	55	47	39	2	2	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	55	45	59	48	2	2	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	55	45	55	45	7	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	63	52	55	45	2	2	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	77	63	44	36	0	0	1	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



16 January 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ravenswood Primary School, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE6 5TU

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave the inspectors when we inspected your school recently. We enjoyed talking to many of you and particularly liked the way in which you respect and care about each other and your school.

Your school is good with many strengths. Staff take outstanding care of you and you told us they are always there to help you when you have concerns. This means that you feel safe and confident and because of this you learn extremely well. We know that you feel that your school is a really happy place to be and many of your parents agree with you.

We found your behaviour to be good and you obviously enjoy all of the many experiences your school provides because you listen well and work hard to complete the tasks your teachers set you. The many additional opportunities for you to visit other places, to work with visitors and take part in lots of after-school activities help you to increase your skills even further.

We have asked your school to help you to understand more about what you are learning. I have asked your headteacher and teachers to concentrate on these things in particular to:

- make sure that all teachers provide work that meets your individual needs and to set clear targets with you. I would like them to make sure that their marking shows what you have achieved against these targets and what you need to do next to progress to the next level
- increase the number of opportunities for the very young children in the Nursery and Reception classes to work in the outdoor play area so that they can choose how, and where, they learn.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Kate Pringle

Lead inspector

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