

Battle Hill Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108595
Local Authority	North Tyneside
Inspection number	337107
Inspection dates	11–12 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Brian Blake HMI

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	273
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Bill Appleby
Headteacher	Mr Kevin Arthur
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Berwick Drive Battle Hill Estate Wallsend NE28 9DH
Telephone number	0191 2007246
Fax number	0191 2007247
Email address	battlehill.primary@northtyneside.gov.uk

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	11–12 November 2009
Inspection number	337107

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2009

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors, one of whom reviewed all the safeguarding procedures in the school. The inspectors visited eight lessons, including an extended observation in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and held discussions with the Chair of the Governing Body, headteacher, teachers and other support staff who work in the school. The inspectors also spoke with the pupils in lessons and around the school, in addition to holding a more formal meeting with a group representing different age groups. The inspectors observed the vast majority of the school's work, and looked at 42 parents' questionnaires, 30 staff and 79 pupil questionnaires. A range of school documentation was read, including details relating to safeguarding procedures in place at the school.

- attainment at the end of Key Stage 2
- the quality of teaching as an aid to raising standards across the school
- the effectiveness of leadership and management, at all levels, in bringing about school improvement
- children's progress during the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Information about the school

Battle Hill Primary School takes pupils from three to 11 years of age. The school is larger than the average size primary school. The percentage of pupils entitled to take free school meals is twice the national average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational need, is also twice the national average. The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The school has a playgroup provision, which was registered with Ofsted in March 2009. The school holds a number of awards for its work, including the Healthy Schools Award, International Gold Award and Activemark, in addition to local authority accreditation for the quality of its school meals.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Battle Hill Primary School provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils. Some aspects of the school's work are good.

The school serves an area that has a number of factors that affect the economic standing of its community. The effects of these factors are seen in the entry levels of attainment from the children who start in the Nursery. However, concerted work by the school means that by the time the children start Year 1, the majority have achieved the standards expected for their age. Despite very modest improvements at Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment at this key stage is too low. The overall standard at Key Stage 2 has been maintained at an average level since the previous inspection, but science has been performing consistently at too low a level when compared with English and mathematics. Pupils' overall progress is satisfactory.

The school provides a very safe working environment for its pupils. As a result pupils report that they feel safe and that they know there is always an adult to whom they can talk, if the need arises. The school promotes the general well-being of its pupils and provides healthy eating options for lunch and many opportunities for a range of physical activities. However, a small number of parents responding to the inspection questionnaire raised concerns about the availability of hot food and the contents of 'grab bag', the alternative to the hot food choice. These concerns have been shared with the school.

Senior leaders are aware of the issues that the school faces, especially in raising standards. The most recent initiative to tackle the issue of standards has been to develop a new curriculum at Key Stage 1, and, although this has only been in place since September, there is too little evidence to indicate that this provision is robust or focused enough to raise standards sufficiently at this key stage. Although teaching is generally satisfactory, and occasionally good, the assessment of pupils' work is occasionally inaccurate. While senior leaders are fully involved in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school, this does not yet include all staff with subject responsibilities. Overall, however, the school has still shown that it has satisfactory capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science at Key Stage 1, and science at Key Stage 2 by July 2010, and maintain these improvements in the following years.
- Improve the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:

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

- providing more learning experiences that reinforce cultural diversity
- improving the evidence gathering of children's progress across all areas of learning.
- Immediately improve the way in which pupils' work is monitored and assessed.
- Improve the Key Stage 1 curriculum by ensuring that there is sufficient coverage of all key areas of learning. This should be achieved by January 2010.
- Provide subject leaders with more opportunities to evaluate the impact of their curricular area on raising pupils' standards and improving progress. This should be planned and implemented as soon as possible.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

The most recent unvalidated data for 2009 show that at Key Stage 2 overall standards have been maintained at a broadly average level since the previous inspection. However, standards in science are much lower than seen in English and mathematics. There were marginal improvements at Key Stage 1, but standards remain far too low, particularly in reading and writing: this is a trend that has gone on since 2004, predating the previous inspection. The school is attempting to tackle these issues and has introduced a variety of school-based initiatives to raise levels of attainment, particularly at Key Stage 1. However, the recent change to a transitional curriculum at this key stage, which is based on six areas of learning delivered on the organisation style seen in the Early Years Foundation Stage, is at a very early point of implementation and has yet to provide the school with robust evidence that this will raise standards to a more acceptable level.

Pupils' progress, overall, is satisfactory. The majority of pupils are making satisfactory gains in acquiring key literacy and numeracy skills so that they are well prepared for the next stage of their education. In lessons, pupils generally show good levels of concentration and are positive in their attitudes to new learning activities and tasks. These characteristics are common to most lessons.

Pupils are clear in their views that they feel safe and secure in school. Inspectors observed the pupils moving around the school sensibly and safely, showing high levels of awareness and consideration for others; this makes a significant contribution to the good standards of behaviour seen in the school. The school is very aware of the need to promote the well-being of its pupils, including eating healthily at lunch time and engaging in regular exercise. The pupils enjoy the additional activities on offer, although Key Stage 1 pupils do not currently have the same access to provision as other year groups in the school. Attendance is broadly average, with a decreasing number of pupils whose attendance remains below acceptable levels.

Pupils clearly know the difference between right and wrong, and show good social skills when working in whole-class or group work in lessons. Pupils are good listeners and are

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

keen to share their views/experiences with peers and teachers in lessons. Pupils have a good understanding of the beliefs and values of others, particularly those from different faith backgrounds.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
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	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching and assessment is satisfactory. In some lessons, teaching reaches a good standard because activities challenge the pupils to think for themselves, and to use their knowledge to work individually or in small groups. In these lessons, also, teachers use their subject knowledge to ensure that the pupils make good progress by acquiring a deeper understanding of the subject content, which can be used in written or oral work. Not all lessons reach this standard, which means that some pupils do not always make the progress in their learning that they are capable of achieving. Generally, the vast majority of pupils listen carefully to teachers, are able to respond quickly to instructions and can use resources sensibly and safely. Levels of concentration are satisfactory overall, but better in those lessons where the teacher does not spend too long on whole-class plenary explanation or question and answer, which reduces the

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

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

time where the pupils can take greater responsibility for aspects of their own learning. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are fully included in class activities due, in part, to the focused work of teaching assistants.

Teachers' marking of pupils' work is broadly satisfactory, but is occasionally weak in the way it is assessed and graded against National Curriculum levels. Accordingly, there are occasions when the teacher's assessment of pupils' work inaccurately reflects the actual quality of what is produced. This was seen in some English marking at Key Stage 1, where judgements were over-generous. This is unhelpful to the pupils, as it means they are not getting a true picture of the standard of their work.

The curriculum satisfactorily meets the learning needs of the pupils, with additional activities helping to enhance the range of learning opportunities provided. However, although the newly introduced curriculum at Key Stage 1 is in transition, it lacks sufficient focus on key areas for improvement, particularly in relation to raising standards in the three core subjects.

The care, guidance and support provided for the pupils are good. There are effective links with a range of external partners which provide additional support for those most in need. The school's link with the Children's Centre, which is located on the same site, is particularly effective in supporting the families of pupils in need of additional help. The pupils appreciate the transitional arrangements that prepare them for transfer to secondary school, with opportunities to visit schools, join lessons and talk to staff and pupils. This helps the pupils overcome any concerns about leaving the school and moving on to the next stage of their education. Pupils feel confident that there is always someone to whom they can talk, should they have any personal worries.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher provides experienced leadership, which is focused on school improvement; he is well supported by an enthusiastic senior leadership team and dedicated staff. Senior managers use a range of appropriate strategies to monitor the quality of teaching across the school, although the impact of this work is not yet evident in helping to raise standards, especially at Key Stage 1. The tracking of pupils progress in the three core subjects is satisfactory, with the school currently at the stage of transferring from 'paper and pen recording' to a local authority electronic database. Although there are limited data on the new tracking

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

system, senior managers are beginning to see and use its potential as an aid to recording and analysing National Curriculum levels from teachers' assessments of pupils' work. However, the school does not yet record pupils' attainments and progress in subjects other than in the three core areas of English, mathematics and science. While subject leaders are having an impact on curricular developments, particularly in English, there are insufficient opportunities for them to monitor the quality of provision in their subject across the whole school. This means, therefore, that overall evaluation and monitoring of the curriculum as an aid to accurately assessing pupils' all-round progress is underdeveloped. Governance is good. Governors are knowledgeable and enthusiastic to support the school. The governing body has a clear overview of the important issues for improvement and they provide effective challenge to the senior staff to ensure that actions are fully evaluated for their impact on the quality of provision.

The school has established good relationships with the parents and the local community; this was evidenced well in the response from parents in the inspection questionnaire. The parents are generally appreciative of the efforts that the school makes to care for their children, and to provide an enjoyable, safe and secure learning environment. Strong community links are fostering positive relationships with the school, are helping to promote pupils' learning and well-being and also develop a greater awareness of the importance of good quality community cohesion. The school effectively promotes equality and has clear procedures for dealing quickly with any incident of discrimination, especially racist incidents.

The school is meticulous in its work to safeguard the pupils and minimise risks to their well-being. All adults are checked for their suitability to work in the school. There are robust systems in place for child protection, including focused work with the pupils to ensure they understand fully, how to stay safe.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
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	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
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	3

<p>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</p>	
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

The children get a good start to their education in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The staff work well together as a team to provide a welcoming, safe and secure learning environment. The children start in the Nursery with skills and personal attributes that are below those expected for their age, especially in early literacy and numeracy skills. However, the children generally make good overall progress so that by the time they start Year 1, standards are broadly average. The children make particularly good progress in personal, social and emotional development because staff have high expectations of their behaviour and help them to learn to share and work together. Activities are well planned, both indoors and outside, which provides the children with good access to all six areas of learning. The integration of Nursery and Reception children in the Early Years Foundation Stage works well as it allows them flexibility and opportunity in their learning. However, the children do not have a wide enough introduction to the diversity of other cultures. Partnerships links with the co-located Children's Centre and playgroup are very good. Parents are very happy with the Early Years Foundation Stage provision and the overwhelming majority feel that their children are progressing well. Although evidence is collected by staff about the children's progress, it is currently too limited to ensure that it provides a clear overview across all areas of learning.

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 rate of response from parents, at 15%, is relatively low. Of those parents who did respond, the overwhelming majority is positive about the school's provision for their children. A very small number took the opportunity to write additional comments on the questionnaire, and, although there was no significant pattern to these, some raised concerns about school lunches; in particular, the school's use of 'grab bags' and the availability of hot food. However, during their time in school, inspectors found no evidence to indicate that either of these two 'food issues' were significant.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Battle Hill 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 42 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 273 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	19	61	11	35	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	22	71	9	29	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	15	48	15	48	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	20	65	8	26	2	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	21	68	10	32	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	18	58	13	42	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	15	48	13	42	2	6	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)	15	48	13	42	2	6	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	16	52	13	42	1	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	13	42	15	48	2	6	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	14	45	14	45	3	10	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	19	61	10	32	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	21	68	8	26	2	6	0	0

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.



Dear Pupils

You will know that I recently visited Battle Hill, along with two other inspectors, to find out how well you are doing at school. During this visit we watched you and your teachers in lessons and chatted to you and your teachers about the school. We also read all the questionnaires returned by you, the staff and your parents.

I should like to highlight some of the important things that we found out about the school. These include the following.

- The school provides you with a satisfactory standard of education.
- Almost all of you achieve the standards expected by the time you leave the school at the end of Year 6, although your standards in science are much lower than you achieve in English and mathematics. The standards at the end of Key Stage 1, Year 2, are too low. We are, therefore, asking the school to improve standards in these areas by July next year, and ensure that these continue to improve further in future years.
- You make satisfactory progress during your time at school.
- Your attendance at school is satisfactory and your behaviour is good.
- Those of you who spoke with inspectors said you enjoy school and that you feel safe.
- The school provides you with many opportunities to exercise and eat healthily, but a small number of your parents are concerned about the availability of hot food and the contents of the 'grab bags'.
- Your teachers provide you with good quality care and support, and, although their teaching is satisfactory or better, we are asking them to improve the way in which they assess your work, so that you know very clearly how good it is and what else you need to do to improve further.
- Your headteacher and governors are aware of what the school needs to do to improve, but we are asking that those teachers responsible for different subjects have opportunities to see how well you are doing in these subjects.
- During your time in Nursery and Reception, you make good progress in your learning. However, we are asking the school to provide you with more opportunities to learn about different cultures, and for your teachers to collect more information about your progress in all the areas of learning that you experience in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

We are extremely grateful to all of you for making the inspection so enjoyable. We would encourage you to continue working hard and to attend school regularly.

We wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.