

Laygate School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108672
Local Authority	South Tyneside
Inspection number	337117
Inspection dates	24–25 February 2010
Reporting inspector	Margaret Shepherd

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	268
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Cllr Tom Pigott
Headteacher	Mr Mike Dixon
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 20 lessons, seeing all of the teachers in the school. About half of the time was spent inspecting learning. Inspectors held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at documentation relating to self-evaluation, safeguarding and tracking information. They also analysed 105 parental questionnaires.

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

- the effectiveness of self-evaluation
- the impact of the teaching and curriculum on different groups of pupils' progress in English and mathematics
- how the multicultural aspect of the school affects personal development and well-being
- the effectiveness of leadership and management on provision and progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Information about the school

The school serves the immediate community around the school. It has a much higher proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals than usual. There are over 34 different minority ethnic groups, of which nearly three quarters do not speak English as a first language. The proportion of pupils with special education needs is higher than average and more pupils move in and out of the school during the school year than normal. There are a high proportion of pupils whose circumstances have made them vulnerable. The governors provide a breakfast club each morning. The school holds Investors in People, Healthy Schools, Sportsmark, International Schools and Financial Management awards.

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

Laygate Primary School is a satisfactory school with good features. It evaluates its provision for personal development and well-being very effectively, resulting in many strengths in this aspect of the school's provision, particularly in racial harmony and its contribution to the community. The self-evaluation is not as sharp about what the school needs to do to make significant academic improvement. This leads to some inconsistencies in standards and progress of different groups of pupils and between different subjects. There is a strong commitment from all staff to develop and improve provision but the weakness in the self-evaluation processes limits the school's capacity to improve.

The school has worked hard to improve the Early Years Foundation Stage provision and this has been successful. Children now make good progress across both year groups. Progress is satisfactory through the rest of the school. Pupils enter Year 1 with standards that are well below average and leave with standards well below those expected. The high level of mobility in the school has a negative impact on standards, particularly if pupils arrive towards the end of Key Stage 2, since many of these pupils speak no English when they join the school. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress through the school due to the well targeted support and the curriculum which is carefully matched to their needs. The progress of pupils who speak English as an additional language is predominantly good, although due to the differences in the quality of teaching, it varies and is sometimes satisfactory. More able pupils make inconsistent progress due to a lack of challenge. Progress is faster and standards are higher in mathematics due to the school's efforts to improve provision in this subject. There is good quality teaching and a well balanced curriculum in mathematics, but this has not been transferred across to the quality of the teaching and curriculum in English.

A key strength of the school is the way it cares and supports pupils and families from across every racial group. Safeguarding has a high priority and the child protection systems are rigorous. Community cohesion within the school is very effective. These features result in pupils who work and play in harmony with each other. Behaviour is good in lessons and it is excellent around the school. The headteacher and governors are very successful in gaining additional funding and this results in a stimulating and attractive environment for pupils' learning, which they appreciate. It also allows a good range of additional facilities for the local community.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- Refine academic self-evaluation by:
 - analysing data more rigorously to identify the varying rates of progress of all of the different groups of pupils and individuals
 - identifying more clearly key whole-school weaknesses in provision
 - providing more tightly focused school improvement documentation and systems
 - making the monitoring and evaluation of initiatives consistent.
- Use the good features in the teaching and curriculum in mathematics to improve provision in English by:
 - challenging more able pupils more effectively and raising teachers' expectations of these pupils
 - increasing the pace in lessons
 - providing more detailed marking of what pupils need to do to improve, linked more closely to their individual targets
 - increase the time for independent and extended writing.
- 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.

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

Pupils' learning varies between the different groups of pupils. Achievement is satisfactory. All pupils approach their work with enthusiasm and are keen to do their best. They enjoy interacting with each other and with staff. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are confident to tackle new learning and value the support from teaching assistants. These pupils readily contribute to whole-class sessions. The learning of more able pupils is inconsistent. In some lessons they make good progress because the work challenges their level of development but when the tasks or the questioning is not pitched at a higher level than the rest of the class, their progress slows. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make consistently good progress in Key Stage 1 and enjoy their group work. In Key Stage 2, their progress is inconsistent and depends on the different quality of support from staff.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy the many opportunities to develop their personal skills. They have high quality relationships with each other, are very confident and have very positive attitudes towards school. They have a good understanding of keeping healthy and join in activities such as 'wake up, shake up', where every pupil is fully involved in the movements and still manage to have beaming smiles. They are very appreciative of the school's safety systems and understand the importance of how to keep themselves and others safe. Pupils behave very considerately to each other and move around the school extremely sensibly. For example, in an emergency fire drill they lined up in their allocated spaces and kept very calm. Pupils' cultural development is of a very good standard, as is their moral understanding. Their contributions to the school community

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and the locality are high. They are proud of these contributions such as performing their steel drums at a high standard in front of the whole school or singing in the local carnival.

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	4
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	2
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?

Strengths in the quality of teaching include good partnerships between teachers and teaching assistants, the management of behaviour and a good range of practical activities that support pupils who speak English as an additional language well. In mathematics lessons, teaching is lively; tasks are interesting and learning proceeds at a good pace. In English, the pace in lessons is slower and in some cases too much time is spent in whole-class sessions. While some English lessons have more difficult tasks for the more able pupils, this is not consistent throughout the school and often the tasks set are too easy for the more able pupils. The curriculum is well matched to all groups of pupils' needs in mathematics and for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and for pupils who speak English as an additional language. The English curriculum does not provide enough opportunities for independent or extended writing.

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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The school provides very clearly targeted care, support and guidance for its many vulnerable pupils and for pupils who join the school during the year. The provision of interpreters for parents and carers of pupils who speak English as an additional language and the importance given to supporting the whole family contribute very effectively to pupils' development. The breakfast club provides a very good start to the school day.

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?

The headteacher, governors, senior leadership team and staff are united in their commitment to improving provision. The systems for providing good quality opportunities for personal development, for creating racial harmony and tackling discrimination work very well. There is a high emphasis on promoting equal opportunities and these are successful for the majority, apart from the more able pupils whose full needs are not met. Many effective strategies are in place to extend community cohesion through creating partnerships with parents and carers and in using a wide range of external specialists to support individual's and families' needs. Safeguarding is seen as a priority and there is an ongoing focus to extend the quality of this provision throughout the school. The weakness in leadership and management in their drive for improvement and embedding of ambition, is the consistency of the evaluation of individual or groups of pupil's progress across different subjects While some improvements since the previous inspection have been successful, such as the Early Years Foundation Stage, other aspects of the school's work, such as increasing progress in English have not been analysed as effectively. The governing body knows the school community well and visits the school regularly. It monitors aspects such as safeguarding and finances carefully, but is not involved directly enough in holding the school to account in relation to the progress of different groups of pupils.

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

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	
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
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	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

The school has worked hard to improve the consistency of provision in this key stage. The leadership of the coordinator, the partnership with the local authority to upgrade knowledge and practice, and the willingness of the staff to change systems after evaluating practice, all contribute to the current good quality provision. The allocation of resources to support these changes is also an important factor in the improvements. Independent learning is a strength of the provision, with a very good balance across the curriculum in both year groups. The team are working to extend the quality of the outdoor learning, but it is not at the same very effective level as the indoor learning. Teachers provide a good combination of this learning with whole-class sessions and group work. Staff work very effectively together to support individuals in the different areas of the accommodation. Children thoroughly enjoy choosing from the stimulating activities. They make good progress across all the areas of learning and particularly good progress in their personal development. The children who enter the key stage during the year, quickly settle into the well-established routines. Children who speak English as an additional language receive very well focused support, which extends their confidence in tackling their new language.

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

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Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. Comments such as, 'the staff and headteacher have made a substantial difference', 'my child loves school', and, 'my child has improved a lot this year', are typical. Very few parents and carers expressed any concerns about the school's provision and there was no pattern to the different issues raised.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Laygate 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 105 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 268 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	49	47	52	50	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	55	53	48	46	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	46	44	53	51	2	2	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	42	40	58	56	1	1	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	46	44	55	53	0	0	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	42	40	55	53	4	4	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	43	41	57	55	0	0	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)	28	27	62	60	4	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	40	38	57	55	4	4	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	36	35	52	50	10	10	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	33	32	58	56	4	4	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	36	35	56	54	4	4	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	51	49	49	47	1	1	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.



26 February 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Laygate School, South Shields, NE33 4JJ

The whole inspection team would like to thank you for the way you welcomed us into your school. You were all so friendly and helpful to us and were always willing to talk to us about your work and what you think about your school.

We think that you go to a satisfactory school. You told us that your personal development was good and we agree with you. You work and play together harmoniously across all the different ethnic groups. Your behaviour in lessons is good and you move around the school very sensibly. We were so impressed with how well you carried out the fire drill. Your school works hard to make your school a safe place to learn and we think that you have a very good understanding of how to keep safe and healthy. We were very impressed with how much you know about other cultures, particularly when you answer the register in so many different languages. We think that your school takes very good care of you and works very well with your parents and carers. We were impressed with all the ways you are involved with your local community.

Your school provides a good start to learning in the Nursery and Reception and these children make good progress. Through the rest of the school progress is satisfactory. Those of you with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress but the more able pupils' progress is not as good. We have asked your school to make the work harder for these pupils. Your progress is better in mathematics than in English and we think that your learning in lessons could be faster and you need more opportunities to write on your own and to have more time to produce longer pieces of writing. Your school leaders have good systems to check how well the school is helping your personal development to get better, but they are not as effective in analysing how well all the different groups of pupils in your school learn in different subjects. We have asked them to develop these school systems. You can do your best to show them how well you can work in every subject.

We wish you all the best in your future lives.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Shepherd Lead inspector

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