

# Biddick Hall Infants' School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	108682
<b>Local Authority</b>	South Tyneside
<b>Inspection number</b>	337120
<b>Inspection dates</b>	13–14 January 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Shearsmith

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	244
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr K Cannon
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Myra Edwards
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 14 lessons and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of the school's documentation, including the school improvement plan, assessment and monitoring documentation and safeguarding arrangements. They also scrutinised the 63 questionnaires returned by parents and carers as well as those returned by staff.

- the attainment and progress of more-able pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- the effectiveness of the curriculum, with a focus on how well it develops the skills of all pupils, particularly in information communication technology (ICT) ė
- how effectively leadership at all levels is involved in the school's process of self-evaluation
- the attendance of pupils and particularly the number of pupils who are persistently absent
- the use of assessment to provide effective academic guidance.

## Information about the school

Biddick Hall Infant School is average in size. The very large majority of pupils are White British. The proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above average, as is the number of pupils entitled to free school meals. Early Years Foundation Stage provision consists of one Nursery and two Reception classes. The school has a designated children's centre and the governing body manages a number of extended services, including a breakfast club and after-school club. These extended services were also inspected. The school holds the Healthy Schools Award, Activemark, Investors in People and also Financial Management Standards.

**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

Biddick Hall Infants is a good school providing a happy, secure and exciting learning environment for its pupils. Parents and carers are strongly supportive of the school and many praise it highly. Many parents and carers comment that they feel welcomed into the school with their children from the moment they first set foot through the door.

The headteacher has a clear vision for the school, with a commitment to ensuring that pupils get access to good-quality learning. She is well supported by a relatively new leadership team; its members have a high level of commitment to the school and its community. School leaders are aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses, through rigorous self-evaluation processes. Plans for improvement are clearly focused on appropriate priorities. As a result, there has been a track record of improvement since the last inspection, such as rising levels of attainment. This clearly illustrates the school's good capacity to improve further.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage children get off to a good start, often from very low starting points. The quality of teaching in the main school is consistently good; consequently, pupils generally progress well and their achievement is good.

However, assessment strategies to support learning are not always consistently used in some lessons and this means that pupils do not always know how to improve their work further. A whole-school approach to literacy has resulted in pupils making good progress in literacy lessons, particularly in reading. However, pupils who are more able do not perform as well as would be expected in mathematics as they are not always sufficiently challenged. The curriculum, both in and out of school, provides exciting and stimulating activities promoting learning that meets the needs of the majority of pupils. The school has recently enhanced the resources for ICT. Although these are used well in some classes, the school is aware of the need to use ICT further to enhance pupils' learning across the curriculum.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Provide more opportunities for pupils to use ICT to enhance learning across the curriculum.
- Ensure the consistent use of assessment in lessons to show pupils how to improve their work further.
- Improve standards for the more able in mathematics by providing more challenge in lessons.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**

2

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Pupils enjoy their lessons and behave well. They work hard and take pride in their achievements. Current work in lessons and pupils' exercise books shows that most pupils are working at an appropriate level for their age. Levels of attainment over the last two years have risen and are now broadly average. However, the school recognises that more-able pupils do not attain as well as they could in mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities do well because they get good-quality extra help.

Pupils make strong progress from a low starting point in their personal, social and emotional development. They are very well supported by the school's commitment to promoting personal development and social skills. As a result, for the large majority of pupils, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good by the time they leave the school. Pupils value their community and willingly take on responsibility in and around the school by being monitors and playground buddies.

Pupils' attainment in basic skills, their learning about the world of work, and the personal attributes they develop prepare them well for the future. Pupils say they feel safe in school and are confident that they can turn to adults to help resolve any problems they may have. This was confirmed by many pupils and their families.

Pupils know what makes for a healthy lifestyle. For example, they are aware of the 'five a day' target for eating fruit and vegetables. A high proportion of pupils eat the high-quality healthy school meals that the school provides. Many pupils also attend the good range of sporting activities. By Year 2, pupils have developed a good understanding of risk and how to stay safe. Levels of attendance are broadly average and have risen. This is a result of the school's effective strategies to encourage pupils to attend well and to reduce the number of pupils who are persistently absent.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
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	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>

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

<b>Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate</b> Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b> Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	<b>2</b>
	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Teaching is consistently good, and staff work hard to enthuse and inspire their pupils. Teaching of reading and writing is strong. Questioning is good and pupils are encouraged to explain their answers in full sentences. This is helping to develop their speaking and thinking skills effectively. Teachers effectively plan a range of tasks to meet pupils' needs, so that all are appropriately challenged or supported. Pupils have plenty of opportunities to discuss and compare their thinking with partners. Marking is generally good, particularly in writing, but it is not used as well in mathematics and this leads misconceptions. In addition, teachers do not always use assessment information well enough to inform pupils how well they have learned during the lesson or how they can improve their work further. Staff work hard and provide interesting and stimulating activities for pupils. This adds to pupils' enjoyment and is one reason why they speak so positively about their school. Pupils particularly enjoy finding out things out for themselves. Good links are made across a range of subjects, which enable pupils to practise their basic reading and writing skills; however, opportunities to use ICT to enhance learning across the curriculum are not fully used. A variety of good artwork enlivens the school environment and demonstrates well how the school values the efforts of its pupils. A wide range of visits and visitors, as well as a good range of out-of-school activities, provide pupils with many additional opportunities to enhance their learning.

The school works closely with parents, carers and a wide range of outside agencies to ensure that pupils' needs are known and well catered for. Transition arrangements for Reception to Years 1 and 2 and on to the junior school are well thought through and effective. In addition, the extended care the school provides makes a good contribution to pupils' learning and their well-being.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

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## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides clear, purposeful leadership and a strong sense of community within and around the school. The newly formed senior leadership team is becoming well established. School leaders deploy resources well and recent improvement in standards shows the impact of actions taken and demonstrates good value for money. The monitoring of teaching and learning is effective as it involves all staff in evaluating the school's performance. A recently refined system for tracking pupils' progress is used to set challenging targets and is leading to improved rates of progress. Governors ensure that statutory requirements are met. They are building a much more detailed understanding of information about pupils' performance, which they use to ask pertinent questions of the headteacher as necessary.

The school works effectively with external agencies, and parents and carers, to support pupils' needs and to ensure that all pupils have the same equality of opportunity and make good progress. At the time of the inspection, the school's safeguarding procedures were robust and met requirements. The school has a positive approach towards promoting community cohesion. Pupils are closely involved in their local community; however, the school is aware that it needs to ensure that pupils gain a better understanding of life in multicultural Britain.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children have a good start to their education in the Reception classes and make good

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progress. Their attainment on entry is well below expectations for their age; for some it is very low. The huge level of commitment and care shown by all Early Years Foundation Stage staff helps children settle into the school quickly and immediately begin to learn. Staff get to know all the children very well. Adults have high expectations, provide very clear routines and enable children to build strong, positive relationships.

Careful planning creates a good balance between formal and creative work and encourages children to be independent, think for themselves and organise their own learning. Parents and carers confirm that their children enjoy their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage, typically commenting, 'My child talks about what she does in school enthusiastically and loves coming to school.' The classrooms are stimulating and resources are generally used very well as children move from one activity to another. However, pupils do not always make as much progress as they could during the activities provided, as occasionally there is insufficient focus on learning. The good outside area provides the same exciting level of challenge and stimulation. This is especially well used by the staff to provide tasks to support boys' learning. The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led and managed and there are clear plans for further improvement.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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**

Inspectors analysed the 63 questionnaires returned from families attending the school. Nearly all the parents and carers who responded are pleased with all that the school has to offer and this was reflected in the comments made. Parents and carers are very confident that their children are safe and well cared for. They also express confidence in the leadership and management of the school. All parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire are happy with the experiences their children are receiving at school.



### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Biddick Hall Infants' 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 63 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 244 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	45	71	17	27	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	41	65	21	33	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	30	48	31	49	2	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	37	59	26	41	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	42	67	20	32	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	34	54	25	40	3	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	36	57	26	41	1	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)	33	52	29	46	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	37	59	25	40	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	29	46	27	43	4	6	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	28	44	30	48	2	3	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	36	57	25	40	2	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	41	65	22	35	0	0	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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



15 January 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Biddick Hall Infants' School, South Shields, NE34 9JD

I am writing to thank you all for making us so welcome when we came to your school recently. We did enjoy our visit. Yours is a good school and we agree with the children who told us, 'It is a happy school.' Here is a list of some of the things that we think are good.

- You all make good progress in your learning.
- You behave well, get along with each other and feel safe in school.
- You have a good understanding of how to live healthily.
- You find lessons interesting and really enjoy school.
- There are plenty of exciting things for you to do both in school and on visits and in clubs.
- The headteacher and staff manage the school well.

Even in good schools, there are ways of getting better. We have asked your headteacher and staff to look at a few ways of making a difference to how well you learn. We have asked them to:

- provide more opportunities for you to use computers to help you learn across the curriculum
- provide more challenging activities in mathematics lessons, so you have to think really hard
- show you how you can do even better with your work.

Keep working hard and enjoying your school!

Yours sincerely

Mr David Shearsmith

Lead inspector

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