

John F Kennedy Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108825
Local Authority	Sunderland
Inspection number	337163
Inspection dates	21–22 April 2010
Reporting inspector	Graeme Clarke

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	430
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Frank Carroll
Headteacher	Mrs Mandy Tellyn
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. A little over half of the time was spent looking at pupils' learning. In addition to short visits to lessons, the inspectors made extended visits to 14 lessons taught by 16 teachers or specialist support staff. They attended school assemblies and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at arrangements for safeguarding pupils' welfare, school policies and documentation, pupils' work, assessment data, monitoring records and strategic planning. They also looked at 107 questionnaires returned by parents and carers as well as 18 questionnaires from staff and 99 from pupils.

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

- the attainment and progress of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage in recent years and that of higher attaining pupils
- the extent to which work in lessons challenges and engages higher attaining pupils
- the appropriateness of the school's priorities for improvement and how successfully are they being addressed.

Information about the school

This much larger than average primary school serves an urban locality in Washington. Almost all pupils are White British. An above average proportion is eligible for free school meals. An average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities; fewer than average have a statement of special educational needs. Early Years Foundation Stage provision is in the Nursery and Reception Years. The school holds Healthy School and International School awards, the Activemark and the Artsmark. Long term absence has affected the stability of staffing over the past year. A new headteacher joined the school in September 2009.

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

Pupils receive a satisfactory education overall. Some aspects of their development are good. Governors have ensured that sound arrangements safeguard the welfare of pupils and, in turn, they feel very safe. An atmosphere of calm, characterised by pupils' good behaviour, prevails throughout. Many opportunities widen pupils' horizons and contribute to their good personal development. In particular, carefully planned arrangements successfully promote community cohesion and lead to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are well versed in maintaining a healthy lifestyle. They contribute in many ways to their school, local and overseas communities. Productive partnerships with parents augment pupils' learning and development.

Children's skills and knowledge are as expected for their age when they enter the Nursery. Pupils participate wholeheartedly in lessons and thoroughly enjoy learning. Most make steady progress through the school. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress. Boys do noticeably well. Too few pupils though, particularly more able pupils, make sufficiently good progress to reach the highest standards. This is because much of the teaching is satisfactory, and higher attaining pupils are not extended with sufficiently challenging work. When marking pupils' work, teachers do not consistently give pupils clear enough pointers to improve. Standards rose last year to above average in English, mathematics and science by Year 6. Currently, pupils are making satisfactory progress and are on track to reach the standards expected for their age.

The recently appointed headteacher, her new senior team and governors foster a caring ethos and promote the school's values. Since the last inspection, their rigorous monitoring and review give an accurate knowledge of the school's strengths. It has enabled them to set appropriate priorities for development, although plans to address them are not all sharply-focused enough upon improving pupils' progress and standards. Arrangements for all teachers to assess pupils' work accurately and make use of the information when planning lessons are in hand but practice remains inconsistent. A new curriculum is becoming established but, as the school recognises, it does not yet extend pupils' basic skills progressively year-on-year. Taking all this into account, the school's capacity for improvement is satisfactory.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the progress and raise the standards of more able pupils by ensuring that:
 - pupils know the levels they can aspire to in reading, writing and mathematics

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and what they are expected to do to reach them

- activities in lessons challenge and motivate them so they have a strong sense of accomplishment and high achievement.
- Increase the effectiveness of teaching by:
 - making greater use of information from the assessment of pupils' work to match learning activities to their abilities
 - balancing the deployment of teaching assistants to support learning in and out of classes
 - increasing the consistency of marking to comment on pupils' accomplishments and give them clear pointers to improve to the next level.
- Enhance the value of development planning by:
 - ensuring actions to be taken focus sharply on improving progress and raising attainment and achievement
 - setting precise criteria for success at the outset in order to facilitate judging when they are met.
- 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**

Pupils learn well. They enjoy taking part in lessons and are motivated to work well. They become engrossed in activities and work responsibly on their own or collaboratively in small groups and happily contribute to whole-class discussion. As they get older they take care to present their written work neatly.

Over the last three years attainment has been close to national averages in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6. From levels that are expected for their age when they join the school, pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. Although in 2009 many Year 6 pupils made good progress in English, mathematics and science to reach above average standards, higher attaining pupils did not make the progress they should. Only in science have standards been above average at the highest level in recent years. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress. Taking their starting points into consideration, the school's assessments show that pupils, at present, are making satisfactory progress towards reaching the standards expected for their age. Given this pattern of satisfactory progress and broadly average attainment, pupils' achievement is satisfactory.

Pupils say they feel safe in school. Although a few parents voiced concerns about bullying, and pupils noted concerns about misbehaviour, the school is calm and orderly. Pupils behave well in lessons and conduct themselves sensibly in halls, corridors and when outside. They know the importance of a balanced diet, exercise and emotional health, reflected by their keen participation in physical activities during and after school. Pupils contribute admirably to their own community through an effective school council,

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a playground buddies scheme and involvement in activities to make the school run smoothly. Through effective links with community organisations, churches and nearby schools, pupils make a good contribution to others in their locality. Through their charitable work, they care about others less fortunate than themselves. They have a strong understanding of cultures other than their own through the innovative way the school studies life in other countries and forges international links. Pupils' good attendance and well developed social and enterprise skills are offset by adequate basic skills which equip them satisfactorily for future life.

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	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Much of the teaching is satisfactory. In the better lessons, teachers are clear about what they want pupils to learn. Their carefully organised activities sustain pupils' interest, promote active involvement and endeavour, and lead to good learning and progress. In all classes seen, pupils follow classroom routines diligently and work responsibly in small groups. Behaviour is skilfully managed. However, in many lessons teachers share what pupils will do but not what they expect them to learn. Questioning too often does not

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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challenge the more able pupils and they find tasks rather easy. In turn, they do not make as much progress as they could. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit from well chosen activities and expert assistance, particularly when working in small groups withdrawn from their class. Often though, the amount of time teaching assistants give to pupils is more towards out-of-class support than to helping more pupils with particular needs in their classrooms. Consequently, many make satisfactory progress. Teachers' marking is at its most useful in Year 6 where pupils are given helpful pointers to meet their targets or raise their standards. In other years though, pupils do not have clear standards to aspire to, and teachers rarely give and follow through pointers for improvement in order to make pupils' learning fully effective. Strengths in the curriculum lie in the many and varied enrichment activities that broaden pupils' experience. Visitors, visits and special projects substantially contribute to develop pupils' social skills and cultural awareness. A structured approach to personal, social and emotional aspects of learning plays a key part in fostering positive attitudes to health and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Well-planned opportunities widen pupils' awareness of local and international community perspectives and make a major contribution to community cohesion. The school is part way through reorganising the day-to-day curriculum to make closer links between subjects but recognises that a vital aspect - progressively developing and using basic skills - is not yet firmly established. A welcoming and caring environment prevails throughout. Together with considerate relationships and assiduously followed safeguarding arrangements, the school assures the welfare of all pupils. Partnerships with local agencies provide specialist help precisely where it is needed. Well trained teaching assistants make a key contribution to support vulnerable pupils and help them develop confidence. Good arrangements effectively foster children's transition from home and successfully prepare pupils for moving on to secondary education. Effective procedures encourage higher attendance and lower persistent absenteeism than in most similar schools.

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 new headteacher's leadership is a strength. Recent changes to the senior staff team are yet to show their full effect. Nevertheless, senior staff have undertaken a diligent and accurate review of the school's strengths and priorities for development. The school eliminates discrimination by making certain vulnerable pupils can participate fully but

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recognises that equality of opportunity is only satisfactory because higher attaining pupils are yet to make best progress. Detailed planning for improvement incorporates well chosen activities. However, criteria for success are not specified with sufficient precision, nor focused sharply enough on accelerating pupils' progress to fully inform future evaluation. Although well informed, and entirely supportive of the school's work, governors rely upon the headteacher's very analytical reports to provide up-to-date perspectives. Their involvement is developing well, particularly in gathering information at first hand and being proactive in evaluation and strategic planning. The school fosters a strong partnership with parents and keeps them well informed. Following a thorough analysis, and by promoting partnerships with local agencies and fostering links with faith and heritage centres and other schools, governors have assured a good contribution to community cohesion. Given pupils' satisfactory progress and broadly average standards, value for money is satisfactory.

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	3
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	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
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

Children make satisfactory progress overall in both the Nursery and Reception Years. They begin Nursery with starting points in all areas of learning that are broadly as expected for their age. Standards at the end of Reception have fluctuated in recent years. Last year they were close to the national average. Children made more progress in their personal development, in mathematics and in creative development than in other areas. Standards in language development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development were a little lower than expected. Children quickly

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follow routines and settle as soon as they come in each day. The indoor and outdoor facilities are well organised so that children can move freely between them. Effective welfare arrangements and care ensure children's safety is paramount. Skilled staff ensure that a wide range of activities which stimulate their imagination and enjoyment. Adult directed activities, such as helping children to grasp phonics or develop knowledge of growing seeds, are successful. At times though, fostering learning is not sufficiently well managed because children's own choices to follow their interests are not sufficiently monitored to ensure a balanced experience in all areas. Difficulties caused by unavoidable extensive absence within the leadership are just being resolved. A rigorous assessment system enables children's learning to be monitored throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage but reporting is not fully established to enable staff to share information about children's progress reliably and consistently. Parents value the extensive arrangements to liaise with them before their children begin Nursery and good arrangements help provide ideas for them to contribute to learning at home.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Most parents who returned questionnaires were overwhelmingly supportive. All those replying were particularly pleased with the way the school is managed so that their children are safe. They believe they are well prepared for their future. A high proportion expressed concerns about misbehaviour. Amongst the written comments were some that were very positive and some which expressed concern about bullying. Inspectors found that, should any bullying occur, it is dealt with quickly and effectively. Pupils behaved well in all lessons. They were orderly as they moved around the premises and played sensibly in the yard.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at John F Kennedy 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 107 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 430 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	61	57	40	37	3	3	2	2
The school keeps my child safe	63	59	41	38	3	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	42	39	55	51	10	9	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	40	37	54	50	9	8	2	2
The teaching is good at this school	47	44	49	46	10	9	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	37	35	55	51	14	13	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	35	33	61	57	7	7	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)	34	32	59	55	6	6	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	40	37	52	49	8	7	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	30	28	47	44	25	23	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	38	36	50	47	11	10	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	39	36	58	54	6	6	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	43	40	54	50	8	7	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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.



23 April 2010

Dear Pupils

My colleagues and I really enjoyed our visit to inspect your school. Thank you for helping us when we came to see you in lessons and assemblies. You were very polite and helpful and we did enjoy talking with those of you whom we met. We know your headteacher and all the staff are very proud of you. We were delighted to see how much you like to take part in lessons and that you were well behaved. We were pleased to see how well you contribute to school life, for example, as school councillors and in the ways you help others.

Your school gives you a satisfactory education. All the adults in the school look after you very well and make arrangements to keep you safe. You make satisfactory progress throughout the school. Some, especially those of you capable of gaining the highest levels, do not make as much progress as you should. We have asked your school to help you do as well as possible by making activities more challenging and to give you a strong sense of accomplishment when you succeed with a difficult task. Results in tests you all have to take in Year 6 improved last year. In recent years, though, standards in the English and mathematics tests have been average. We have asked the school to see if they can help more of you make good progress and keep your results above average in future. When we looked at your books we liked the way your teachers let you know how well you are doing and we have asked them to always let you know the levels they expect you reach and give you clear pointers to help you reach them.

We have also asked your headteacher and the governors to plan carefully to help you improve so that they can be very precise when they check how well you are doing.

You have many opportunities at John F Kennedy Primary School to learn about life and these help you to prepare for the future. We hope that you all do really well.

Yours sincerely

Graeme Clarke

Lead inspector

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