

Frederick Nattrass Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111653
Local Authority	Stockton-on-Tees
Inspection number	337717
Inspection dates	15–16 October 2009
Reporting inspector	Kate Pringle

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	200
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr John Copping
Headteacher	Caroline Reed
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 12 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils, parents and carers, and representatives from the local authority. They observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' workbooks, assessment information about pupils' progress, records of the school's reviews of its actions for improvement, current school development plans and updates of progress towards meeting identified priorities. Inspectors also considered questionnaire responses from parents and carers, pupils and staff.

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

- the present attainment of pupils across the school, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- evidence to indicate the extent of pupils' progress
- how well school strategies are impacting on improving attendance
- how well the school promotes community cohesion
- the effectiveness of strategies to raise achievement and to increase pupils' progress.

Information about the school

Frederick Nattrass Primary School is of average size. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is considerably higher than that found nationally. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage consists of a large combined unit for children of Nursery and Reception class age. The school holds a number of awards including Healthy Schools, Basic Skills, Activemark, Financial Management Standard in Schools (FMSIS) and the Football Foundation Quality mark. It is part of the Creative Partnerships Change Schools programme.

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?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to pupils' attainment and to their academic progress over time.

Since her appointment two years ago, the headteacher has given a strong lead and set high expectations for improvements in pupils' behaviour, attitudes, and attendance, to which staff and pupils have responded positively. In focusing on establishing a positive environment for learning has meant that until very recently there has been insufficient focus on raising attainment and ensuring that pupils make at least satisfactory academic progress. Shortcomings exist in systems to assess and track individual's attainment and progress, and there is too much teaching that is no better than satisfactory. These shortcomings have contributed significantly to pupils' underachievement and to their low standards in mathematics and English. Much more robust assessment and tracking systems have recently been introduced and teachers are becoming adept at interpreting data and using assessment information more productively. While this indicates potential for improvement, pupils' current attainment and progress are still not good enough. Because pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities have more precise targets better suited to their needs, their progress is satisfactory. Excellent provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage enables children in this key stage to get off to a flying start to their education.

Pupils now behave well, enjoy their enriched curriculum and feel safe, as a result of successful programmes and strategies to manage their behaviour, to provide them with more interesting experiences and to care for and support them.

Overall, the school's satisfactory self-evaluation has enabled it to identify the key areas that need improving. There is now a common purpose among leaders and managers, staff and governors to address the weaknesses in pupils' attainment and progress. While most senior leaders are effective in driving improvement and are increasingly well supported by governors in this work, the quality of middle management is uneven. Some middle leaders have yet to understand and develop fully their roles and responsibilities to improve academic outcomes for pupils. Improvements in pupils' personal development and well-being indicate that the school has the capacity to identify the areas most in need of improvement and to take effective action to secure those improvements. Overall, the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in English, especially in writing, and in mathematics, and ensure that pupils make much better academic progress in Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good by:
 - rigorously using assessment information to plan tasks which effectively meet the needs of all pupils, especially those of average and higher ability
 - using individual targets to help pupils understand much more clearly their next steps in learning
 - ensuring that activities are practical and that they encourage pupils to investigate, enquire and be creative.
- Improve further pupils' attendance.
- Enhance the effectiveness of middle leaders and managers in improving academic outcomes for pupils.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

4

Pupils' attainment is low and their achievement is inadequate. Despite the good and often excellent progress made during the Early Years Foundation Stage, children enter Year 1 with attainment that remains below the expectations for their age. By the end of Key Stage 1 progress slows. Attainment in mathematics is broadly average. However, in reading and writing it is significantly below average. About half of the pupils do not attain the levels expected for their age. There is a similar picture in Key Stage 2, with inadequate overall progress in Years 3 to 6. Writing standards are weaker compared with those in reading, especially in Key Stage 2, and this contributes to the low overall attainment in English by the end of Year 6. Pupils of average ability and more-able pupils are insufficiently challenged, meaning that too few pupils attain at the higher levels in both key stages. In contrast, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress from their starting points because they have more suitable work and are supported effectively.

Pupils learn more successfully in the lessons where they have good opportunities to engage in practical tasks, problem solving and investigative activities. In these lessons, they are motivated and progress well. Currently, these opportunities are too few. Pupils make slower progress and learn too little in the less-effective lessons, because they are not challenged and their interest wanes.

Pupils feel very safe and behaviour is good. Pupils understand the consequences of their behaviour and know the difference between right and wrong. They are confident that when they have concerns teachers are always there to help. Pupils talk very well about the need to eat sensibly and many engage in the after-school sporting activities, enjoying the benefits of regular exercise. The vast majority of pupils like coming to school and relationships between pupils and staff are exceptionally good. Improving attendance reflects the better engagement of pupils as more want to take part in the increasing range of opportunities the school offers.

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Because pupils do not gain sufficient basic literacy and numeracy skills, they are not as adequately prepared as they might be to meet the challenges of future education.

Inspectors found pupils to be friendly, polite and helpful. Pupils have many opportunities to serve their school as school councillors, playground buddies and monitors. Pupils are extremely proud to take responsibility, to help to improve their school and to look after each other. There are strong links with the local community. Pupils enjoy opportunities to learn about the similarities and differences of people from other cultures and faiths from around the world, through sporting and cultural activities.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
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	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The lack of consistency in classroom practice means that the quality of teaching is no better than satisfactory overall. Some teaching is good or better and, where this is so there is good pace and realistically high expectations that promote good-quality learning. However, not all teachers plan effectively to meet the individual needs of pupils and targets are not set consistently to reflect individual pupils' abilities. Some pupils are therefore set work that is either too difficult or too easy. Consequently, they

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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do not make enough progress. Teachers' marking does not consistently inform pupils of their achievements or indicate their next steps in learning. In response to the pupils' questionnaire almost one fifth of pupils said that they did not know how well they were doing.

In this school, warm relationships support pupils' development. Improving pupils' well-being and increasing their enjoyment of learning is central to the curriculum. The varied opportunities provide pupils with increasingly rich experiences. New approaches to learning mean that pupils have a better understanding of the links between subjects. There is an increasing use of English to support learning in other subjects through opportunities for discussion and for writing in different ways, such as writing diaries, reports and instructions. Despite these opportunities, the needs of average and higher-ability pupils are not sufficiently met. Most pupils' low attainment in the basic skills limits their access to the wider curriculum. Pupils are enthusiastic about the opportunities to widen their understanding of the world. They take part in visits, welcome visitors and engage in a number of clubs that offer a wide range of activities to extend their knowledge and skills. The residential visits for pupils in Key Stage 2 contribute considerably to raising their confidence, self-esteem and cooperation.

Staff know pupils very well and this enables them to provide very good quality care and sensitive pastoral support at the right time. The school meets current government requirements to safeguard pupils. Induction and transition arrangements as pupils enter and leave the school are effective. Parents and carers are confident that their children's personal needs are met well. The pastoral needs of vulnerable pupils, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who present challenging behaviour are addressed well with good support to ensure that they have access to the full curriculum. Strategies to improve their learning are specific and successful which means that these pupils make satisfactory, and sometimes good, progress.

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, senior leaders and managers have worked effectively to identify the school's main strengths and areas of weakness. The improvement in pupils' personal development demonstrates significant progress and the school's capacity to improve further. Although there is some good teaching, checks made on the quality of teaching and learning are not rigorous enough to ensure consistency. As a result, pupils'

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attainment and their rate of progress are not good enough. Middle leaders do not exercise and demonstrate enough responsibility for improvement in their areas of management. This has also contributed to the lack of improvement in pupils' attainment and progress. The introduction of a new tracking system is beginning to help teachers to understand how well individual pupils are progressing, but too few use this information sufficiently well to plan lessons which will enable all pupils to make better progress. Senior leaders are taking the right actions for improvement, especially in relation to teaching and learning.

Safeguarding procedures are secure and meet current government requirements. Effective procedures ensure that the school has a safe and healthy environment and that regular checks are made to minimise risks. The promotion of equal opportunities and the way in which the school tackles discrimination are satisfactory. They are no better than satisfactory because not all groups of pupils do as well as they should in developing their basic academic skills or making enough progress. The school promotes community cohesion well and pupils have a good understanding of cultural differences. Links with the immediate area are strong as the school works very well to engage with a range of groups enabling pupils, and parents and carers, to strengthen their commitment and responsibility in their locality. Pupils' knowledge of communities further afield is supported well through their links with those more disadvantaged than themselves from a range of countries.

The quality of governance is satisfactory. Experienced members of the governing body have a range of relevant expertise and knowledge which enables them to support and challenge the school satisfactorily. Pupils' low standards and inadequate progress have been partly caused by the school setting itself relatively unchallenging targets for improvement in attainment in the past. Given the low academic outcomes for pupils, the school provides inadequate value for money.

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	2
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

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The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4
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Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and abilities significantly below expectations for their age. As a result of very effective provision, most make good progress and some make outstanding progress. By the time they leave Reception their skills are just below the levels expected for their age. Excellent induction and welfare arrangements ensure that children settle quickly in this warm, vibrant and creative environment, which provides a wealth of exciting opportunities for them to explore the world around them. Children are happy, confident and eager to try out new experiences. They play well together as they share, take turns and work together in teams. For example, a group of firefighters responded with a ladder to 'rescue a cat stuck in the tree' reported by a small girl acting as secretary in the vet's office.

Teaching is outstanding with an excellent balance between activities. The discrete teaching of letters and sounds and of number enables children to use their new knowledge effectively through the wide-ranging investigations offered. For example, children use their sounds and letters to record the initial letter of sounds they hear and things they see in the outside environment. Developing independent learning is a priority and children make full use of the free flow between indoor and outdoor activities. They select and choose activities that are carefully prepared to build on previous learning. Assessments, including formal and informal observations, are finely tuned and result in a detailed picture of each child's progress that staff use to considerable effect to plan the next steps in learning. Behaviour and relationships between children and with adults are excellent. Parents and carers are extremely happy with how well their children thrive in this caring environment in which children's needs are paramount.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

Just over one quarter of parents and carers responded to their questionnaire. Parents and carers are very positive about all aspects of the school. They know that their children are safe in school and report that their children enjoy school. The majority feel

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that teaching in the school is good and that their children make good progress. However, a very small minority feel that there is not enough information given to them about their children's progress. A very small minority also feel that the school does not help parents and carers to support learning. Inspectors found that most parents and carers were happy with the amount of information about children's learning. In discussion with parents and carers there is clear evidence that family learning workshops offer them appropriate support to help their children with literacy and numeracy. A large majority of parents and carers feel that their children's needs are met well and that the school successfully addresses behaviour issues when they arise. Inspectors judged that the school has made good progress in improving behaviour and is working effectively to engage with increasing numbers of parents and carers. However, contrary to most parents' and carers' views, inspectors judge that the majority of pupils do not progress well enough academically. Most parents and carers are happy with their children's experience of school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Frederick Nattrass 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 12 statements about the school.

The inspector received and read 63 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection, of which 59 were analysed. In total, there are 199 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	25	40	32	51	2	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	29	46	28	44	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	16	25	36	57	6	10	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	20	32	35	56	3	5	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	21	33	36	57	1	2	1	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	17	27	34	54	7	11	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	21	33	36	57	2	3	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)	21	33	33	52	4	6	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	21	33	36	57	1	2	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	20	32	34	54	4	6	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	17	27	37	59	4	6	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	20	32	34	54	4	6	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	25	40	30	48	3	5	1	2

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.



19 October 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Frederick Nattrass Primary School, Stockton-on-Tees, TS20 IBZ

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave the inspectors when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking to many of you and liked the way in which you care for each other and for your school. We found some things are successful in your school, but other things need urgent attention because they are not good enough. We have given your school a 'notice to improve' and this means other inspectors will visit in a few months' time to see if things are getting better.

We were really pleased to see how well you all get on together. We thought your behaviour was good and the fact that many more of you are coming to school regularly means that you are enjoying school much better now. The adults who care for you make sure that you are well looked after. We found that children in Nursery and Reception make an excellent start as they are surrounded by so many new things to do. Your teachers plan lots of things for you to do but we have asked your school to help you understand your lessons more clearly and make learning even more enjoyable. I have asked your headteacher and teachers to concentrate on these four things in particular:

help you to achieve higher standards in mathematics and English, especially in writing, so that you do as well as other children of your age

make sure that all teaching in lessons is good by:

- helping teachers to use what they know about what you can do to plan for your different abilities, especially for those of you who need bigger challenges
- giving each one of you targets to help with your next steps in learning
- making activities more interesting and making sure that they include lots of practical things to do to help you to investigate, enquire and be creative

improve further your attendance

improve the effectiveness of leaders and managers, to help you do better in your work, which will mean that you are better prepared for your future.

I'm sure that you will be able to think of more ways to help your school become even better than it is now.

Best wishes for the future

Yours sincerely

Mrs Kate Pringle

Lead inspector

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