

Benfieldside Primary School

Inspection report

| | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 114045 |
| Local Authority | Durham |
| Inspection number | 338282 |
| Inspection dates | 24–25 February 2010 |
| Reporting inspector | Ann Wallis |

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

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|--|--|
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 287 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mrs Karen Brierley |
| Headteacher | Mr David Kerry |
| Date of previous school inspection | Not previously inspected |
| School address | Moorlands Blackhill Consett DH8 0JX |
| Telephone number | 01207 591369 |
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors spent 85% of the inspection looking at learning, visited 12 lessons and saw nine teachers teach. They held meetings with the Chair of the Governing Body, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school improvement plan, pupils' books, assessment and tracking data and other documentation. Inspectors also analysed the responses to questionnaires of 67 parent and carers and of 117 pupils.

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

- the progress of all groups of pupils, particularly those who join the school during the school year, and progress in reading at Key Stage 1
- the effectiveness of tracking systems in identifying pupils who need extra help
- whether the quality of care, guidance and support pupils receive is a strength of the school
- whether teaching is consistently good, as the school's self-evaluation suggests
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers in improving the school.

Information about the school

This is a primary school of above average size which serves an area on the outskirts of Consett. A well above average proportion of pupils are entitled to free school meals. Most pupils are White British and few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above average. A well above average number of pupils join and leave the school mid-way through their primary education. The school has gained Activemark, Basic Skills and Healthy Schools 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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school where pupils make good progress overall and achieve well. From low starting points when they enter the Nursery pupils' progress accelerates as they move through the school. By the time they leave Year 6 they attain broadly average standards. Well above average numbers of pupils join and leave the school part-way through their education and these pupils also make good progress from their starting points because the school is welcoming and helps them settle quickly. Pupils have good relationships with their teachers and most behave well, work hard and enjoy lessons. Since the last inspection, pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 has continued to rise, notably in mathematics and in the attainment of boys. Marking of pupils' work has improved. The school's good track record of improvement and its accurate self-evaluation show it has good capacity to improve further.

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills which are particularly low in communication, language and literacy. Although their progress is satisfactory and they make good gains in mathematical development, they are not given sufficient structured guidance to help them develop their literacy skills as quickly as they might. Not all children make a sufficiently prompt start in learning to read.

Teaching is good overall in most lessons, but does vary across the school. In the good and occasionally outstanding lessons pupils make good progress because work is challenging, the pace is brisk and activities are varied and interesting. Some of this best practice is extending into other lessons but is not yet widespread enough to ensure good teaching in every lesson.

Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe and healthy which reflects the good care, guidance and support the school gives them. They clearly know the difference between right and wrong and respect each other and their teachers. While they contribute well to their school community, they have limited opportunities to engage with people from different religious, ethnic and cultural backgrounds beyond the local community.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and accelerate pupils' progress, particularly in reading at Key Stage 1 and in communication, language and literacy in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - extending good practice across the school to raise the quality of all teaching to good

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- ensuring that children make a prompt start to reading and that it is more effectively taught
- giving children in the Early Years Foundation Stage more structured guidance in how to develop their communication, language and literacy skills and more opportunities to practise them.
- Develop the school's work in promoting community cohesion by providing pupils with further opportunities to engage with people from different religious, ethnic and cultural backgrounds beyond the local community.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils were seen to be making good progress in most lessons. They are keen to succeed, contribute willingly to lessons and most work at a good pace so little learning time is wasted. Work seen in pupils' books, particularly those of the older pupils, confirmed the good progress they are making. From low starting points pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1, although results of tests show that their attainment in reading is lower than that in writing and mathematics. In Key Stage 2 pupils make consistently good progress because teaching is consistently good. They reach broadly average standards in tests in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because they receive constructive individual support from teachers and teaching assistants.

Most pupils say how safe they feel in school and how much they enjoy learning. They especially like lessons where they can find out information for themselves and when activities are practical. Year 5 and 6 pupils were particularly enjoying learning how to follow a sequence of instructions as they used a recipe to make a bread pudding. Pupils work well together and share ideas and information sensibly. They have satisfactory basic skills and, consequently, are given a sound preparation for future life.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

| | |
|--|----------|
| Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning | 2 |
| Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹ | 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 |
| The extent to which pupils feel safe | 2 |

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

| Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms | |
|--|----------|
| 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 Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹ | 3 |
| | 3 |
| The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 3 |

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is good. In good and outstanding lessons pupils make good progress because work matches their needs well. In these lessons teachers check pupils' learning regularly. They use these checks effectively to alter their lesson planning so it suits the learning needs of pupils better. These qualities were not as evident in the minority of lessons where teaching was no better than satisfactory. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and give them clear and helpful pointers for improvement.

The school provides a balanced curriculum, well tailored to the needs of pupils. It is reviewed regularly. Linking subjects together has stimulated pupils' interest so they are keen to bring extra resources to school and find out more about topics at home. Visits to places of interest, visitors to the school and after-school clubs all enrich the curriculum and add to pupils' enjoyment of school.

The well above average number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities who join Benfieldside during their primary education receive good support and guidance. The school has good partnerships with other schools and outside agencies that help support pupils' individual needs and ensure a smooth transition between schools.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders and managers demonstrate a clear vision of how to improve the school and communicate this well to all staff. While recognising that the quality of teaching is good

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overall, they accurately recognise the need to ensure that it is good in all lessons. They are taking steps that share good practice, particularly in developing literacy and reading skills. There are effective new systems in place that track pupils' progress well and lead to extra help in learning for those who need it. Governors are supportive of the school and aware of its strengths and weaknesses, although not fully involved in determining its strategic direction. Safeguarding is robust. Staff are suitably trained and clear policies and procedures are in place to ensure that pupils, including the most vulnerable, are safe. The school promotes equality of opportunity well so by the end of Year 6 no groups of pupils are consistently achieving less well than others. The school communicates effectively with most parents and carers. However, it has not yet been successful in fully involving the 'hard to reach' parents and carers in their children's learning. Community cohesion is promoted satisfactorily, but links with a sufficiently wide range of different communities beyond the local area are underdeveloped.

These are the grades for leadership and management

| | |
|--|----------|
| The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement | 2 |
| Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning | 2 |
| 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 | 3 |
| The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being | 2 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination | 2 |
| The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures | 2 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion | 3 |
| The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money | 2 |

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter Nursery with skills well below the levels expected for their age, especially in communication, language and literacy. They settle quickly in the positive Nursery environment, establishing good relationships with their teachers and with other children. This contributes well to their confidence as they play happily together, showing increasing levels of respect for others as they share and take turns. The strong emphasis upon developing children's personal and social skills drives their early learning. Children are encouraged to understand simple rules which contribute to their safety and

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well-being. By the time children are ready to enter Year 1 they have made satisfactory progress, particularly in mathematical skills, although their attainment is still well below national averages. Children enjoy a range of learning opportunities. In the Nursery, observations of children's progress are used well and there is a well-structured programme of exciting activities. These have an appropriate level of challenge and the pace of learning accelerates. However, this is not consistent across the Early Years Foundation Stage and progress slows during the Reception Year. This is particularly evident in communication, language and literacy, where there is insufficient guidance and opportunities for children to develop their skills. There are not enough opportunities for outdoor activities and this restricts children in their choices of how and where they may take part in all areas of learning.

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

The large majority of parents and carers are supportive of the school and pleased with the education it provides. A few parents and carers felt the school did not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour and that the school did not keep them sufficiently well informed about their children's progress. Inspectors found no evidence to support these views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Benfieldside 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 67 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 287 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|---|-------------------|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 28 | 42 | 31 | 46 | 5 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 32 | 48 | 33 | 49 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school informs me about my child's progress | 20 | 30 | 40 | 60 | 4 | 6 | 1 | 1 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 20 | 30 | 44 | 66 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 28 | 42 | 39 | 58 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 24 | 36 | 40 | 60 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 28 | 42 | 37 | 55 | 1 | 1 | 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) | 22 | 33 | 37 | 55 | 4 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 25 | 37 | 40 | 60 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 25 | 37 | 38 | 57 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 26 | 39 | 37 | 55 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 28 | 42 | 34 | 51 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 29 | 43 | 33 | 49 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

| Grade | Judgement | Description |
|---------|--------------|--|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding | These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs. |
| Grade 2 | Good | These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well. |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory | These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils. |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate | These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves. |

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

| Type of school | Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools) | | | |
|----------------------|---|------|--------------|------------|
| | Outstanding | Good | Satisfactory | Inadequate |
| Nursery schools | 39 | 58 | 3 | 0 |
| Primary schools | 13 | 50 | 33 | 4 |
| Secondary schools | 17 | 40 | 34 | 9 |
| Sixth forms | 18 | 43 | 37 | 2 |
| Special schools | 26 | 54 | 18 | 2 |
| Pupil referral units | 7 | 55 | 30 | 7 |
| All schools | 15 | 49 | 32 | 5 |

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Achievement: | the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training. |
| Attainment: | the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons. |
| Capacity to improve: | the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement. |
| Leadership and management: | the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school. |
| Learning: | how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners. |
| Overall effectiveness: | <p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support. |
| Progress: | the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started. |

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



26 February 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Benfieldside Primary School, Consett, DH8 0JX

Thank you for making the inspection team so welcome when we visited your school this week. We would particularly like to thank those of you who took time to talk with us and tell us all about the many things you enjoy doing at school.

These are some of the things we have said about your school in our report.

- Yours is a good school where you make good progress and reach average standards.
- You behave well, enjoy learning and know how to stay safe and healthy.
- You are taught well and learn about interesting topics.
- Your school is well led and managed by your headteacher and senior staff.
- You are given good care, guidance and support by all the adults at your school.

This is what we have asked your school to do now.

- Help you to make even better progress, particularly the younger children in reading and literacy.
- Make sure teaching is equally good in all lessons.
- Give you more opportunities to find out about people from other countries and communities which are different from your own.

You can help your school to improve even further by working with your teachers to achieve the very best you can.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Ann Wallis

Lead Inspector

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