

Whitburn Village Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131917
Local Authority	South Tyneside
Inspection number	341249
Inspection dates	11–12 January 2010
Reporting inspector	Linda Buller

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	251
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Eddie Oliver
Headteacher	Mrs Judith Knill
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Cleadon Lane Whitburn Sunderland SR6 7NS
Telephone number	0191 5293069
Fax number	0191 5295202
Email address	jknill@whitburnvillage.s-tyneside.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited nine lessons and visited classrooms on a learning walk to sample the breadth and balance of curriculum provision, behaviour and resources. They attended an assembly and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the start and end-of-day provision, examined pupils' books and school documents, including the school development plan, school improvement reports, governing body minutes, safety records and assessment information. Responses to 79 questionnaires completed by parents/carers were scrutinised as were others returned by pupils and staff.

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

- the attainment and progress of more able pupils particularly in science
- the impact of curriculum provision on pupils' attainment and progress in the foundation subjects
- the effectiveness of leadership and management in driving improvement in the quality of teaching.

Information about the school

The school is an average-size primary school. The proportion of pupils who claim a free school meal is broadly average. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. A well below average proportion of pupils are identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. Since the previous inspection the school has experienced a number of disruptions to staffing. A new headteacher took up post 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

This is a satisfactory and improving school where all pupils are made welcome. Pupils are effectively cared for. They feel safe and have a well developed understanding of potential dangers and how to minimise the risk to themselves and others. Effective support and guidance lead to good behaviour and a good understanding of how to follow a healthy lifestyle.

Pupils' attainment is average overall. Standards in English have risen well since the last inspection and are now above average. This success is in the most part due to the actions taken by leaders and managers to improve provision for the teaching of writing. As a result, pupils' progress in writing in Years 3 to 6 is generally good and it is often very good for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Challenging targets, effective monitoring and careful tracking of pupils' progress are driving improvements in mathematics. In the current Year 6 more pupils than in previous years are on track to attain above average standards in mathematics. Attainment in science is weaker than in English and mathematics.

Pupils who are identified as more able, including those who are gifted or talented, make progress at a rate that is no more than satisfactory. While teaching is satisfactory overall and often good in Key Stage 2, teachers' expectations of more able pupils are not always high enough. Consequently, these pupils are not always challenged to do as well as they can and can spend too much time in lessons consolidating what they already know. Satisfactory use is made of assessment information to support learning in English and mathematics. However, teachers do not always make best use of ongoing assessment in lessons to move learning on at a fast enough rate.

Self-evaluation is broadly accurate. However, monitoring and evaluation procedures are not as well developed in science and other subjects as they are in English and mathematics. Although the curriculum is satisfactory, the school does not have a clear picture of whole-school provision or a system to ensure that pupils' knowledge and skills build incrementally in every subject as they move through the school. Analysis of how well pupils are doing in subjects other than English and mathematics is not rigorous enough. Although steps are being taken to improve performance in science, the school do not have the information needed to check the success of these actions. Therefore, despite some good improvements since the last inspection, the school's capacity to improve further remains satisfactory.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching by:

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- making effective use of ongoing assessment in lessons to intervene and move learning on at a faster rate
- raising the level of expectation and challenge provided for more able pupils
- helping pupils to understand the links between past, current and future learning.
- Raise standards in science by:
 - improving assessment procedures
 - tracking pupils' progress more effectively
 - using assessment information to plan challenging practical activities in all year groups.
- Improve the curriculum by:
 - rigorously monitoring and evaluating the provision in each subject and its impact on outcomes for pupils
 - using the information gained from monitoring to plan a whole-school curriculum which incrementally builds pupils' skills as they move through the school.
- About 40% of 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 thoroughly enjoy school and are keen to do their best in lessons. They are particularly enthusiastic when involved in practical activities and when given the opportunity to research, investigate and explore new topics for themselves. Overall pupils' achievement is satisfactory and most groups make satisfactory progress. Throughout the school pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress and often reach the expected level for their age by the time they leave the school. More able pupils, however, rarely make better than expected progress.

Older pupils do particularly well in English where they respond positively to opportunities to practise their writing skills. They use a good range of vocabulary, for example when describing the feelings of children evacuated during the Second World War. In the current Year 6, pupils are beginning to make good progress in mathematics, using their well-developed calculation skills to solve problems. Pupils' ability to hypothesise, investigate and draw conclusions in science is improving but the development of scientific knowledge and skills is not yet consistent throughout the school.

Pupils are thoughtful and reflective, have a clear understanding of right and wrong and have good social skills. They can and do reflect on their actions, particularly if they upset someone. They are polite, well mannered and understand the importance of treating each other with respect. They know they live in a multicultural society and the school functions well as a cohesive community.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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' 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	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is satisfactory and improving. In the better lessons, teachers make effective use of questioning strategies. Initial answers are probed and pupils' thinking is consolidated and extended. These lessons proceed at a quick pace and there is a good balance between the teacher's and the pupils' contributions. However, good practice is not yet consistent in all classes. Although teachers ensure that lessons have a clear purpose which pupils understand, they do not always take the time to help pupils appreciate how this builds on their prior learning or how what they are learning will benefit future progress. Teachers generally assess pupils' work well and use this information to provide additional support or explanation if pupils are struggling with their learning. The use of this assessment information to recognise when pupils are ready to take the next step in their learning is not yet consistent. As a result, work is not always sufficiently challenging, especially for the most able pupils.

Staff have begun to modify the curriculum to develop a more creative approach and further improve pupils' enjoyment of learning. This has met with some success, with links between subjects such as history and literacy one of the reasons why older pupils are making good progress in writing. However, this has also led to some imbalance in subject coverage with no whole-school curriculum plan to ensure that pupils build progressively in their knowledge and skills from one year group to another. Visits, such as Year 2's recent trip to Souter Lighthouse, enliven the curriculum. After-school

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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activities are limited; those which are provided are well attended and appreciated by pupils. The effective programme for personal, social and health education contributes well to pupils' good knowledge of healthy living and how to stay safe.

The school looks after its pupils well as individuals, especially those who are most vulnerable. There are many examples of significant successes in the way in which the school helps pupils overcome difficulties to achieve well. This was seen to good effect during the inspection in the use of support staff to ensure the good progress of those pupils with learning, social or emotional needs. Attendance is monitored systematically. Any absence is followed up quickly. As a result, attendance rates are improving.

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?

Leaders and managers have successfully focused on raising attainment in English and more recently accelerating the rate of progress in mathematics. The new headteacher has quickly developed a clear vision of where the school needs to go and the school improvement plan accurately reflects key priorities. Senior leaders regularly monitor teaching and have an accurate view of its quality. Useful points for improvement are provided and the result of these can be seen, for example, in a more consistent approach to the marking of pupils' work. The school is aware of its responsibility to promote equality of opportunity. As a result, for example, it carefully tracks the performance of the different groups of pupils in the school and uses the information particularly successfully to bring about the good progress of those who have special educational needs or who are vulnerable socially or emotionally. Middle leaders are not yet involved in rigorously monitoring and evaluating their areas of responsibility. As a result, the school does not have a clear enough view of the impact of provision on outcomes for pupils in subjects other than English and mathematics.

Leaders work in partnership with a range of agencies to support pupils' welfare. They have a productive relationship with parents and are keen to develop this further. Safeguarding policies and procedures are satisfactory. Staff are appropriately trained and follow the school's established procedures. Governors meet their statutory responsibilities. They are visible and active around the school. They provide good levels of support but they are not yet sufficiently challenging or fully involved in evaluating the school's performance. Actions to promote community cohesion are planned and generally well implemented within school and the local community. Those aimed at

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promoting cohesion nationally and internationally are yet to be fully established.

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	3
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	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make satisfactory progress and at the end of the Reception Year reach the levels expected for their age in most areas of learning. Their welfare needs are met well. Consequently, children settle quickly, feel safe and develop their self-confidence. Effective and timely intervention by staff in children's learning helps to promote language and children's understanding of what they are learning. A calm and orderly atmosphere in which to learn promotes children's good social skills. Children play together well and behaviour is good. On occasions in the Reception class children do not have enough opportunities to develop their independence and discover things for themselves. This is because there is sometimes an imbalance between activities led by adults and those children can choose for themselves. The Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactorily led and managed. Good liaison between staff ensures that resources are adequate and that children are safe. Assessment systems to track children's progress are satisfactory in both the Nursery and Reception. However, leadership and management are not yet fully effective in ensuring that provision in the Reception class builds progressively on the gains in learning which children have made in the Nursery.

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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

Parents hold mainly positive views about the school. Inspectors agree with their positive comments. A few parents raised concerns about some aspects. They were most concerned with behaviour. Inspectors are satisfied that the school has in place a range of suitable strategies to deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour and promote good behaviour. Pupils told inspectors that staff are fair and promptly deal with any concerns they may have.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Whitburn Village 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 inspector received 79 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 251 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	54	68	21	27	2	3	2	3
The school keeps my child safe	51	65	26	33	2	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	21	27	50	63	7	9	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	28	35	42	53	7	9	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	27	34	49	62	2	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	24	30	47	59	6	8	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	29	37	46	58	4	5	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)	18	23	46	58	4	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	25	32	46	58	7	9	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	24	30	37	47	10	13	2	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	20	25	47	59	5	6	2	3
The school is led and managed effectively	24	30	44	56	3	4	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	34	43	39	49	3	4	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.



13 January 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Whitburn Village Primary School, Sunderland, SR6 7NS

On behalf of the inspection team I would like to thank you for your friendly welcome. We enjoyed meeting and talking to many of you, looking at your work and visiting your lessons. We would also like to say thank you to the groups of pupils who had discussions with us and the pupils in Years 3 to 6 who completed the inspection questionnaire.

You go to a satisfactory and improving school. This means that there are lots of things that it does well, but also there are some things that could be better. Most of you are making satisfactory progress and some of you are making good progress, particularly in your writing. The standards you reach in science, however, could be higher. We have asked the school to check more regularly how you are doing in science and in other subjects such as history, geography and religious education and to make sure what they plan for you to learn helps you to make good progress.

You behave well, and know how to stay safe and keep yourselves healthy. The headteacher, the staff and governors work hard to make sure you are safe and well looked after.

In some lessons we found that those of you who are capable of working at higher levels found your work too easy. We have asked the school to make sure that your work always challenges you to reach higher standards and that teachers expect you to do your best in all of your work.

Thank you once again for making us feel so welcome. We wish you the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Linda Buller

Lead inspector

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