



Whitley Lodge First School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 108600
LEA North Tyneside
Inspection number 294770
Inspection dates 20 June 2006 to 21 June 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Arthur Allison

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

Type of school	First	School address	Woodburn Drive
School category	Community		Whitley Bay
Age range of pupils	3 to 9		Tyne and Wear NE26 3HW
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0191 200 8781
Number on roll	272	Fax number	0191 200 1430
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Margaret Jackson
Date of previous inspection	1 February 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Megan Nixon

Age group 3 to 9	Inspection dates 20 June 2006 - 21 June 2006	Inspection number 294770
----------------------------	---	------------------------------------

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school, catering for children aged from 3 to 9, is larger than most schools of its type. In addition to children in the Nursery who attend part-time, there are eight classes, two of which are mixed-age classes. The area served by the school is one of social advantage overall. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is low. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is much lower than in most schools, but rising. Attainment on entry to the school is above average overall. Very few pupils are from minority ethnic groups or for whom English is not the language of the home.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school with many outstanding features, where all pupils achieve very well. Standards are exceptionally high so ensuring that the school gives good value for money. Leadership and management are good. Led by a visionary headteacher with high aspirations, fully supported by all staff and governors who are equally committed, the school has the capacity to improve further. The school's thorough analysis of its effectiveness is completely accurate, all previously identified shortcomings have been tackled successfully and the school continues to improve what it provides for all pupils. The vast majority of parents fully support the school and make a good contribution to the achievement of the pupils. One parent wrote 'The school has impressed me from my first child starting Nursery in 2000'. The pupils are very friendly and talk enthusiastically about what the school provides. They want to do well, as their attitude to work in the classrooms clearly demonstrates. The school is strongly committed to helping all pupils to do their best. There are good levels of care, guidance and support. Hallmarks of the good personal development are the confidence and maturity shown by the older pupils.

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. All children make good progress so that by the end of the Reception year almost all reach, and many exceed, the early learning goals. Teaching is consistently good and the school has good plans to improve marking in mathematics to help pupils know what to do to improve their work. The curriculum is outstanding and provides a rich experience for all pupils to help them gain the skills they will need as young persons.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the current good practice for marking in English is also used in mathematics in order to help children know what to do to improve their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve very well and standards are exceptionally high. In the Foundation Stage, children make particularly good gains in personal, social and emotional development and many exceed the early goals in other areas of learning. This provides the springboard for learning that ensures they continue to make very good progress in Years 1 to 4.

In last year's national tests, all of the pupils in Year 2 reached the standards expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. However, standards were exceptional because almost two thirds achieved a higher level in reading and more than a third did so in writing and mathematics. The school's performance in national tests has been consistently high over the last three years and this year's pupils are expected to do equally well.

Pupils make very good progress in Years 3 and 4 and standards continue to be exceptional. Almost all pupils reach the level expected in English and mathematics and a high proportion do better than this.

Early identification of pupils who might struggle or have problems ensures that those who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and pupils who do not speak English at home are given all the help they need to achieve as well as other groups. Some do very well to overcome their difficulties and reach the levels expected for their age. In this school, the most able pupils are given the chance to shine and they often achieve the higher levels.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. That they enjoy school and take pleasure in learning is evident in the high attendance figures. The youngest children can hardly wait to get started on the day's activities and older pupils have a growing maturity and independence that helps prepare them for life outside of school. They talk enthusiastically about the subjects they most enjoy and thoughtfully about the world they live in. Pupils have a keen sense of staying healthy through exercise and a sensible diet and say that they particularly enjoy sports and playtimes. They know how to be safe from dangers and to make wise choices about lifestyles as young adults. Pupils make a positive contribution to the community and understand their rights and responsibilities in school and society. They are proud to be monitors or members of the school council and say that they have a say about issues that are important, such as what happens in the playground. They have a keen sense of right and wrong and of the need to respect the traditions of others. This tolerance is one of the key reasons why bullying is rare. On a wider scale, pupils respect other cultures and religions and are keen to help those less fortunate than themselves.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Consistently good teaching enables pupils to make very good progress. In the Foundation Stage, the emphasis on developing personal, social and emotional skills ensures that children have the right attitudes to learning as they get older and this is a key factor in why they achieve so well. Teachers ensure that the work pupils do is pitched at the right level. This helps pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities or for whom English is not the language of the home to make progress and grow in confidence. The most able pupils are challenged by work that extends their learning. Consequently, pupils of all abilities achieve equally well even when they are in classes of more than one age group. Teachers put the time and talents of teaching assistants to good use to work with groups of pupils and many parents help their children with homework such as reading. This has a good effect on standards and on

children's enjoyment of books. The strategies used to assess pupils' knowledge and plan work generally work well. In lessons, teachers are particularly good at using questions to assess what pupils know and to deepen their understanding. In English, the marking in pupils' books is very good and lets them know what they are doing well and what they need to do to improve. Marking is not as good in mathematics and this is an area that the school has good plans to develop.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

All children, including those in the Foundation Stage, benefit from an outstanding curriculum that is exciting and fully matches their needs and interests. The emphasis given to literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) ensures that pupils have the economic skills they need as young persons. Numerous first-hand experiences, such as educational visits, make learning fun. The wide range of after school activities that includes sports, arts, technology and languages is extremely popular with pupils. It is these aspects of school life that they often talk of most enthusiastically. Encouraging pupils to be healthy and stay safe are key elements of the curriculum. The school responds to local circumstances by offering expert coaching in sports and music and through programmes whereby pupils gain certificates for cycling proficiency. From Foundation Stage onwards, pupils are given many opportunities to develop the skills they need to be lifelong learners and to work with others. For example, they learn to solve problems and gain communication skills through activities that fire their imagination and bring the curriculum to life.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides good care, guidance and support for pupils. Arrangements for the safeguarding of pupils are well established and appropriate. Pupils say that they are 'in the care of good adults' when in school. Staff show that they care for their pupils and families by the way that they forge close relationships with both and are always ready with a sympathetic ear if pupils have a problem or hurt themselves. The school usually reaches or exceeds its challenging targets. Those who might be struggling are identified early and good quality advice and guidance enables those who have learning difficulties and disabilities or who do not speak English at home to reach, and sometimes exceed, challenging targets. The school works very effectively with parents to support learning at home and in school. This close cooperation fosters a strong sense of partnership and is one reason why pupils make such good progress. Pupils are confident about moving to the next stage of their education. Good induction procedures ease the transition.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Though the leadership and management are good overall, the vision and direction of the headteacher are highly instrumental in the success of the school. All staff strive as a team to improve on the exceptionally high standards. The strong emphasis on personal development is the foundation on which the very good progress of all pupils is built. The headteacher remains determined to enrich the school's provision, for example through improvements to provision in ICT. With the support of all staff, the headteacher promotes strategies to prepare pupils well for life, for example through encouraging them to work hard, take on responsibilities and to work well in pairs or small groups.

The school has thoroughly and accurately assessed what needs to be done to raise standards further. For example, in mathematics and science the school is raising standards through ensuring that problem solving and investigation skills are an integral part of teachers' planning. In support of this, there is a whole school project focused on thinking and investigation skills. Parents attended an evening to participate in similar activities. The school promotes equal opportunities well and deploys teachers and teaching assistants well to help raise achievement.

Successfully tackling the shortcomings identified by the previous inspection and the current building work to improve provision, particularly for children in the Foundation Stage, illustrate a capacity to improve further.

Systems for self-evaluation are extremely well established and take account of the views of parents and pupils. Governors manage the school's finances well. They are strongly committed to enabling the school to help all children to do their very best by the way they support, yet challenge, the school.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
--	-----------------------	--------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	1	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Alexandra House

33 Kingsway

London

WC2B 6SE

T 0207 421 6800

F 0207 421 6707

Ofsted helpline

08456 404045

To the pupils of

Whitley Lodge First School

Woodburn Drive

Whitley Bay

Tyne and Wear

NE26 3HW

22 June 2006

Dear pupils

What a delightful school you attend! We thoroughly enjoyed our visit to your school. We enjoyed talking to you and were very impressed by your friendliness, politeness and the way you tackled your work.

We realise you are proud of your school and enjoy attending because:

you showed that you enjoy learning by settling to your work quickly and behaving well in class as well as in the playground

you are very keen and proud to take on responsibilities such as being monitors and, through the school council, put forward suggestions that make the school better

you really appreciate the opportunity to take part in a wide range of extra activities

your teachers and other adults in the school work hard to help you

your headteacher knows what the school should do to help you to do better and the other staff fully support her in this.

As a result of what we saw and what you said to us we have asked the school to make it even better by:

making sure that when teachers mark the work you do in mathematics, what they say or write helps you to know what to do to improve just as they do when marking your work in literacy.

Thank you again for making us welcome. Keep trying to do your very best.

Yours faithfully

Mr Allison, Mrs Dodd and Mrs Manning

The inspection team