

# Byker Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	108458
<b>Local Authority</b>	Newcastle Upon Tyne
<b>Inspection number</b>	337080
<b>Inspection dates</b>	27–28 January 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Janet Bennett

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	259
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Mary Briggs
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Linda Bradley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Commercial Road Byker Newcastle-upon-Tyne NE6 2AT
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 15 lessons and observed 11 teachers. In addition they scrutinised pupils' work. The majority of the time was spent looking at learning. Inspectors also held meetings with governors, staff, and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at its policies, teachers' plans and school improvement planning. The team analysed 51 questionnaires from parents and carers.

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

- the rate of progress that pupils make throughout the school
- the way in which teachers plan activities to match pupils' abilities
- the effect of systems to monitor the progress of pupils and to improve attendance
- how effectively continuity is promoted for the youngest children.

## Information about the school

Byker Primary School is average in size. The proportion of pupils who are entitled to free school meals is well above the national average, as is the proportion who enter or leave the school mid-year. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those speaking English as an additional language are also well above average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above average. The Early Years Foundation Stage provision comprises a Nursery and Reception classes. The school provides part-time childcare during term time for children from the age of two. This provision was included in the inspection. The school also provides a daily breakfast and after-school club for school aged pupils.

The school has gained a number of awards, including Investors in Children, Gold Achievement Award for PE, and Leading School Status for Eco Schools.

**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

Byker Primary is a satisfactory and improving school where the Headteacher has created a team of staff who are committed to providing care of the highest quality.

The school is a harmonious community where pupils' rich and diverse cultures are recognised and celebrated. Pupils say 'If people are a bit different no-one makes fun of them. Everyone is your friend'. Every child feels safe, valued and included because of the excellent support they receive. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. The care provided for children in the pre-school centre is good.

Pupils make satisfactory gains in their learning from low starting points. Improved teaching in the upper school is leading to good progress in Key Stage 2 and as a result, standards are rising. Standards in mathematics are now broadly average, but standards in writing remain low at the end of Year 6. The achievement of all pupils, irrespective of their starting points, is satisfactory.

The school's recent systems for tracking pupils' progress and setting academic targets are being used to good effect in Key Stage 2. However, these systems have yet to be fully used across the school to ensure that all teachers have high expectations for pupils' learning.

Pupils experience a wide range of interesting activities which contributes well to their enjoyment of school. They understand the benefits of healthy food and exercise and are keen to take part in after-school sports and to contribute to the life of the school and local community. Although attendance is well below national average, it is improving. Good partnerships with other professionals and agencies ensure that pupils and their families receive the support they need. The personal skills that pupils acquire and their respect for others, prepare them well for their next stage of learning and their future as citizens in a multi-cultural society.

Standards have risen since the last inspection and pupils' current work indicates that this trend is continuing, particularly in mathematics. The school's self-evaluation is satisfactory. Recent action taken by leaders has resulted in improved progress in Key Stage 2, which is contributing to higher standards at the end of Year 6. However, systems for monitoring and evaluating learning in order to promote consistency in the quality of teaching across the school are not yet fully embedded. The school has satisfactory capacity to further improve.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in writing by extending the good use of assessment and

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demonstration evident in lessons in upper Key Stage 2 to all classes.

- Improve pupils' learning and progress, by:
  - refining the systems for tracking pupils' progress
  - giving teachers specific guidance to help them to match work to pupils' needs
  - setting academic targets to raise teachers' expectations of progress in all year groups
- Improve attendance by engaging further with parents.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****3**

Pupils make satisfactory progress from their respective starting points. In recent years, the standards reached at the end of Year 6 have improved and in mathematics outcomes are now close to those seen nationally. Pupils' attainment in English is improving but remains low, particularly in writing which the school has rightly identified as an area for further improvement. Current progress in Key Stage 2 is good. This is because teaching consistently builds well on pupils' prior learning. Assessment information is used effectively to ensure that all pupils receive the support and guidance they need. Teachers plan interesting lessons and use demonstrations to good effect, which are contributing directly to improving standards.

Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1. However, standards remain well below average by the end of Year 2. Nevertheless, outcomes in reading and mathematics have been improving steadily in recent years and the recent introduction of more regular opportunities for pupils to learn and apply their knowledge of phonics is beginning to impact on their writing skills. As a result, pupils' current work confirms that attainment in writing is improving. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those pupils who are vulnerable, make satisfactory progress because they receive the support and guidance they need to take an active part in lessons. The outstanding care they receive from staff ensures that they contribute fully to the life of the school.

Pupils are courteous and polite to visitors and highly respectful of each other. They recognise and value cultural differences, listen attentively to the views of others, and are keen to both give and receive advice in order to improve their own learning and to contribute to that of their classmates. This results in a very positive school ethos where pupils say they feel safe, where they take full advantage of the many opportunities available to contribute to the life of the school and the community, and where they enjoy the wide range of interesting activities that staff plan for them.

Attendance is low but improving. The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent has reduced significantly, however, not all pupils attend school regularly. The understanding that pupils gain of different cultures, their ability to work with others and their keenness to succeed ensure that they are appropriately prepared for their next

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stage of learning and future citizenship.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	4
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

The relationships between staff and pupils are a strength of teaching across the school. As a result, pupils are confident to contribute in lessons, understand what is expected of them and have positive attitudes to school.

Recent changes to the ways in which teachers are deployed and in tracking pupils' progress, have led to improved teaching, particularly in Key Stage 2. In these classes, teaching is good and sometimes outstanding. Assessment is used well to match work to the needs of every learner and questions are used very effectively to encourage pupils to explain their ideas. This extends their thinking. Teachers make good use of demonstrations so that pupils are effectively supported. They lead them sensitively towards correct answers, giving them the confidence to apply their new skills independently. As a result, pupils are now making good progress in this key stage. Where teaching is otherwise satisfactory, work is not consistently matched to the needs of different learners and pupils do not always understand what they need to do to

<sup>1</sup> 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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improve. When this occurs, the pace of learning slows.

A wide range of experiences are planned for pupils beyond the classroom. Trips to local points of interest, as well as residential trips and visitors to school give pupils first hand experiences upon which they draw in lessons. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the things they do, such as 'climbing a mountain' and 'working with drummers'. Activities such as these contribute significantly to pupils' enjoyment of school and their learning. The use that is now being made of individual tuition and additional teaching for groups of pupils, particularly in upper Key Stage 2, are contributing well to pupils' improving progress.

The care pupils receive is outstanding. It is a significant strength of the school and is greatly appreciated by parents, who comment very favourable about the warm relationships that exist in school, and the extent to which staff know every pupil as an individual. Staff are successful in establishing trusting relationships with pupils and their families, and work very effectively with a range of agencies and partners to ensure that support is available when it is needed. The care provided before and after school is well organised and led by staff who pupils know well. This contributes well to pupils' feelings of safety and their well-being.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The Headteacher knows every child well and contributes significantly to the outstanding care and support that every pupil receives. She has the trust of parents who are confident to seek her advice should the need arise. She provides a strong role model for staff and is central to the harmonious relationships that exist in school. As a result, every child is respected and valued and all groups of pupils benefit equally from the opportunities provided by the school. The rich diversity of cultures that exist in the school are embraced and celebrated, which contributes well to community cohesion.

Recently introduced systems for tracking pupils' progress and setting academic targets are beginning to impact positively on progress, particularly in Key Stage 2. However, these systems are not yet fully embedded across the school and, therefore, expectations of pupils' progress in some classes are not high enough. Senior and middle leaders are appropriately involved in monitoring the work of the school and as a result, appropriate priorities for improvement have been identified. The resulting action is leading to improved standards by Year 6. However, findings from monitoring teaching and the

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school's work are not yet evaluated sufficiently to identify the most successful practice so that this can be extended across the school, and some teachers do not receive the specific guidance they need to help them to improve pupils' learning.

Governors are appropriately involved in the life of the school and, therefore, understand its main priorities for improvement. However, their role in monitoring its work and holding leaders to account is not yet fully developed. Safeguarding arrangements are secure and staff have the necessary skills and expertise to identify those pupils who may be at risk, in order to take the action required to secure their welfare.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

**Early Years Foundation Stage**

The pre-school playgroup makes good provision for children. Relationships are strong and adults provide good role models. Adults use their observations of children well to ensure that every child receives the support they need. This is particularly effective for children who have limited language skills because sensitive support and encouragement ensure that they are fully involved in all activities. The space indoors is used well to provide interesting and appropriate opportunities for play. However, the organisation of the external space currently limits opportunities for play but plans are in place to improve this area. The manager provides effective leadership, ensuring that provision complies fully with the requirements of registration. The productive relationship with middle and senior school leaders contributes well to continuity in provision for children aged two to five.

Children join the Nursery with skills that are well below those typical for children of this



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age. They make good progress in the Nursery and Reception because activities interest and engage them well, and adults provide strong role models which help children to get along with one another and to become independent learners.

Learning is most effective when staff use their good subject knowledge to match work precisely to the needs of children. This was observed to particularly good effect in a phonics session in the Reception class. Learning slows when the organisation of space and resources limits opportunities for children to extend their play, and also when teaching groups are large and, therefore, interactions between adults and children diminish.

There is a strong team approach which ensures that every member of staff contributes well to children's learning and development. Recent professional development has increased staff confidence in assessment and planning, however, the use of progress data to identify the most important priorities for further improvement is not yet fully embedded.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

**Views of parents and carers**

Parents are extremely positive about the work of the school and in particular the welcoming ethos. They hold the staff in high regard and are particularly appreciative of the care given to pupils. This includes the provision offered for pre-school children through the playgroup which some parents would like to see offering longer sessions.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Byker 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 51 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 229 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	42	82	9	18	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	42	82	8	16	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	39	76	10	20	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	37	73	14	27	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	40	78	11	22	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	30	59	20	39	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	31	61	19	37	0	0	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)	32	63	15	29	2	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	30	59	19	37	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	32	63	16	31	2	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	32	63	15	29	2	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	37	73	10	20	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	41	80	8	16	0	0	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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.**



29 January 2009

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Byker Primary School, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE6 2AT

Thank you very much for the welcome you gave me and my colleagues when we came to inspect your school. A special thank you goes to the children in the pre-school playgroup who served me 'tea and pizza'. It was delicious!

Your school is satisfactory and improving. Teachers plan lessons that interest you but the activities do not always help you to learn new things as well as they might. This is particularly true in your writing. Although older pupils in school are making good progress because teachers support them well, this is not always the case in other classes. You have many things to be proud of. You told us that you feel safe in school and we can understand why. Adults care for you extremely well, and you take good care of each other. We thought that your behaviour was excellent in lessons and around the school and we were very impressed by the respect that you show to others. You told us you enjoyed school, particularly the trips and visitors to school that help you to learn new things, so we were disappointed to find that some of you do not attend regularly. The children in the Nursery and Reception enjoy the interesting activities that are planned for them and which help them to learn well, but we think the outdoor areas could be improved so that their play could be even more exciting.

We have asked your headteacher, the staff and governors to do three things to make your school better. These are to:

- help you to improve your writing so that it gets better each day
- ensure that all teachers know how well you should progress and identify the things that help your learning best so that they can be used by everyone
- encourage you to come to school more regularly.

Carry on looking after each other, enjoying your learning and attending school regularly.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Janet Bennett

Lead Inspector

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