

Wardley Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108371
Local Authority	Gateshead
Inspection number	324756
Inspection dates	23–24 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Andrew Johnson HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 under pilot arrangements; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	301
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Ian Punton
Headteacher	Mr Mustafaa Malik
Date of previous school inspection	February 2006

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Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 18 lessons or part lessons and two assemblies, held meetings with governors, staff, and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' books. They examined the school's self-evaluation process, looked at development plans and analysed the 62 parental questionnaires that were returned.

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

- pupils' progress, particularly in mathematics and that of more able girls
- the behaviour of pupils in lessons, particularly in Key Stage 2
- the effectiveness of progress tracking and how this is used to set challenging targets
- the impact of changes made to leadership and management since the previous inspection.

Information about the school

The school draws pupils from a wide range of backgrounds. There is a mixed catchment area, although most pupils live in the surrounding housing estates. The number of pupils has declined slightly since the last inspection, however, the school is still larger than average. It has more boys than girls overall and, in Years 3 and 4, there is a very marked difference in the gender balance. The proportion of pupils entitled to a free school meal is above the national average. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is low, but the proportion with a learning difficulty and/or disability is higher than average. A growing, but relatively small proportion of pupils come from a minority ethnic background.

The school provides for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage in its Nursery and Reception classes. There are 47 children in the Nursery who attend part-time, either mornings or afternoons, and 44 Reception children. In Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils are sometimes taught in mixed-age classes. The school has close links with the on-site Children's Centre; this is not managed by the school and is, therefore, subject to separate inspection arrangements. There is a privately run morning and after-school activity club attended by a small number of children; this was not inspected.

The school holds National Healthy Schools status and has gained the Artsmark, Activemark and Eco-schools award.

Inspection judgements

Grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness

2

Capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Wardley Primary School is a good and improving school. It has some outstanding features, such as the mature behaviour of its pupils, the way in which pupils contribute to the community, and the excellent levels of care guidance and support it provides. All groups of pupils make good progress in their learning and many make outstanding gains in their personal development. From a low starting point, the vast majority of pupils reach the standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6 that are expected for their age. An increasing proportion of pupils are reaching even higher standards.

The quality of teaching and learning is usually good and occasionally outstanding. There has been a very successful focus on improving the teaching of mathematics. The school's curriculum meets the needs and interests of learners well and personalised programmes are effectively devised for pupils that need them. However, more work should be done to monitor the depth of understanding pupils develop when completing project work. Pupils get off to a good start in the well-managed Early Years Foundation Stage. The parents who responded to the inspection questionnaire were extremely positive about the work of the school. Pupils' contribution to the school and the community is outstanding; they are proud to come to Wardley school and thoroughly enjoy their work. They show a high level of respect for each other and their teachers.

The school has improved significantly since it was last inspected. For example, the tracking of pupils' progress and target setting in the core subjects is very effective and the behaviour of older pupils is exemplary. Pupils told inspectors they feel extremely safe in school. Serious bullying and incidents of racial harassment are practically non-existent, but when they do occur they are dealt with very effectively. The headteacher's evaluation of the quality of its work is very accurate and focused on improvement. Governors are very supportive of the school, but recognise they could do more to develop their ability to evaluate its success. The school promotes equal opportunities well, but recognises that there are still some areas that require more work. For example, the level of challenge for more able children is not always as high as it should be in a minority of lessons. There is a shared determination amongst staff that standards will rise even further. Current evidence from lesson observations shows that this ambition is being achieved. Based on this track record of improvement and the inspiring leadership of the headteacher, it is clear that the school has a good capacity to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the standards pupils reach in English, mathematics and science by
 - ensuring there are always sufficiently challenging targets for more able pupils
 - ensuring that at the end of each lesson pupils have a clear idea of what they have learnt, whether they fulfilled their personal objectives and what they need to do to improve further.
- Improve the monitoring of project work to
 - ensure there is a good balance and depth of understanding developed across all curriculum areas.
- Improve the way in which governors evaluate the work of the school by
 - ensuring they have a sufficiently robust approach to monitoring the impact of school policies on its work.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils excellent attitudes in lessons show how much they enjoy learning and like school. They listen carefully, behave very well and work hard, so that they achieve well. Pupils make good progress in developing literacy and numeracy skills and in their understanding of science. When they start in Nursery, many children have skills and knowledge that are below those typical of children of their age. By the time they leave Reception, most groups of children have made good progress, although some are still not quite at the level expected for their age. They continue to progress well in Key Stage 1 and 2 and, by the time they leave school in Year 6, the vast majority reach the standards expected for their age. A growing number are now exceeding those levels. This means that pupils are in a good position to make the transition to secondary school. Standards have varied between year groups and subjects, for example, in 2008 there was a dip in attainment in mathematics, but the school is now in a position to recognise underachievement quickly and put in place effective action for improvement. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress in their learning and many make outstanding progress in aspects of their personal development.

Behaviour has improved since the last inspection and is outstanding. In the last three years, no pupils have been excluded from school. Pupils told inspectors they felt extremely safe in the school and that bullying and name calling was very rare. Pupils' develop outstanding levels of moral, spiritual and social understanding and this shines through in their mature and sensible attitudes to each other and their community.

Pupils are well-informed about how to keep healthy and participation rates in physical activities are high. The school has tried hard to encourage pupils to eat healthily at lunchtimes and, for most pupils, this has had a significant effect.

The overall rate of attendance is in line with the national average, however, there

are very few pupils who are persistently absent from school as a result of its excellent work and the partnership with the educational welfare service. Pupils develop a good work ethic which prepares them well for their future career in secondary school; they are punctual and polite and work very well in teams.

Pupils with a wide range of backgrounds and abilities are very proud of their school and keen to make a contribution to it. They frequently put forward their ideas about how the school should develop and what they would like to contribute to the local and wider community. An impressive example of this is the way in which they initiated and organised a charity appeal for victims of the tsunami. Pupils understand and care about the issues facing their local community and make very positive and sensible suggestions about how it could improve.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their progress	2
How well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning?	2
To what extent do pupils feel safe?	1
How well do pupils behave?	1
To what extent do pupils adopt healthy lifestyles?	2
To what extent do pupils contribute to the school and wider community?	1
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
How well do pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2
What is the extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development?	1

How effective is the provision?

Pupils told inspectors that lessons were very enjoyable and interesting. Inspectors observed pupils making consistently good progress in lessons. New technologies are used very well to stimulate interest and make sure that pupils have a clear understanding of the objectives of lessons. Systems that have been introduced since the last inspection ensure excellent support is given to any pupil who is falling behind. Lessons are well planned and activities are differentiated carefully to meet the needs of most groups. For the vast majority of pupils, targets are appropriate and challenging, however, in a few cases, teachers' expectation of the rate of progress more-able pupils could make is too low. Teachers check pupils' understanding by using focused questions, however, at the end of lessons they do

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

not always make sure that pupils know what progress they have made and what they need to do to improve. Marking is done frequently and effectively.

Extra-curricular activities are varied, very enjoyable and have a high rates of participation from all groups of pupils. In recent years, there has been considerable concentration on the development of literacy, numeracy and science within the school and this has had beneficial effects in improving progress. Projects are carefully designed to integrate many subjects into one coherent piece of work, however, the depth of understanding children develop across subjects is not always consistent. Well-designed and effective personalised learning programmes are set up for pupils with specific needs.

The school works extremely well to provide support and care to pupils needing additional support and these pupils are carefully nurtured. This has resulted in them making excellent progress, not only in their learning, but also in attitudes, behaviour, confidence and relationships. Effective guidance is given to ensure that children make a smooth transition to secondary school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher's inspiring leadership has improved many aspects of the school's work. The development of a system to evaluate its work and impact on the community is at the heart of the school's success. The hard-working and ambitious staff team support him very well. Morale is very high and there is a real belief that the school is going in the right direction.

Governors are very supportive of the school and know its main strengths and weaknesses, but need to take a more rigorous approach when evaluating the effectiveness of some policies and procedures. The school has a very positive relationship with most groups of parents and carers. Partnerships with the local schools, community groups and the Children's Centre have a substantial impact on the school's ability to support pupils and their parents. The school's response to community cohesion is outstanding, because it has given this aspect of its work a significant priority. It has a clear strategy and evaluates its success in terms of the impact on pupils and the community. Its work to promote equality is good and the gap in performance between groups of pupils is closing. Communication with parents is good, although the school continues to work hard to engage with more of them, for example, through the well-used school website. The school has excellent safeguarding procedures in place and the importance of safeguarding children permeates all aspects of the school's life. Resources are used effectively to provide

good value for money. The building is well maintained and decorated to provide an attractive environment that is conducive to learning.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in communicating ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
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	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Provision for children in this stage is good. When children start in the Nursery many of them have a limited range of skills and abilities. The new manager has, correctly, focused on planning learning to take into account children’s prior development.

Parents appreciate the good level of care and support provided that helps children settle in to the Nursery and enjoy their time there. Behaviour is excellent and children play happily with each other in the friendly, welcoming environment.

There is a good balance of activities, with much teaching focused on developing children’s weaker communication, language and literacy skills. Children make good progress and are well prepared for learning by the time they leave Reception. They take part in an extremely good range of purposeful activities both indoors and outdoors.

Adults carefully guide children to take part in particular activities and, at other times, children select activities independently. Although the assessment of children’s abilities has improved significantly since the last inspection, occasionally, it is not clear how assessment is used to plan activities for specific groups or individual children.

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 in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Parents expressed overwhelming support for the school, in the parental questionnaires. They were particularly pleased with how happy their children are at Wardley school and the safe environment. They felt that the school provides a very good preparation for their children’s future education.

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Wardley Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. If a parent has more than one child at the school, we ask them to record an answer against all the questions, for each of their children.

The inspection team received 63 completed questionnaires. In total, there are 238 parents and carers registered at the school.

	Always	Most of the time	Occasionally	Never
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	51	12	0	0

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. In 2007-8, 15% of schools were judged to be outstanding.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well. In 2007-8, 49% of schools were judged good.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils. In 2007-8, 32% of schools were judged satisfactory.
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. In 2007-8, 5% of schools were judged inadequate.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
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.
Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, training or development. This may refer to the acquisition of skills, knowledge, understanding or desired attributes. Attributes include qualities or personal competencies which are important to the development of the pupil; for example personal, social, cultural, emotional or health.
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.



26 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Wardley Primary School, Gateshead, NE10 8TX

Thank you for welcoming the inspection team to your school. We enjoyed talking to you and visiting your classes. It was nice to see that you try so hard in lessons and enjoy them so much. You told us you were proud of your school and we agree it is a good school with many excellent parts. We were very impressed by the way Mr Malik leads the school and how hard all the staff work. The governors are very supportive of the school and keen that everyone does well. As a result, you make good progress in your learning and excellent progress in many aspects of your personal development. You get off to a flying start in the Nursery and, by the time you reach Year 6, you develop a good understanding of many subjects including English, mathematics and science. This is good preparation for your future.

We thought your behaviour and mature attitudes were excellent. You and your parents told us how much you enjoy coming to school. This means that you make an outstanding contribution to your school and the wider community. You know what you need to do to keep safe and stay healthy. Most of you take part in very enjoyable lunchtime or after school activities.

The school is very ambitious to improve even more and we try to help them with this. Here are a few things that they will be working on in the future.

- Raise the standards you reach at the end of Year 6 to even higher levels.
- Make sure that governors are in a good position to monitor the impact of school policies.
- Make sure that you develop an equally good understanding of all subjects, particularly when you are doing project work.

We are sure that you will continue to work hard and help the school go from strength to strength.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Johnson
Her Majesty's Inspector
(on behalf of the inspection team)

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