

Parkhead Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131466
Local Authority	Gateshead
Inspection number	360277
Inspection dates	9–10 December 2010
Reporting inspector	Kate Pringle

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	360
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Tony Stevens
Headteacher	Mrs Paula Bailey
Date of previous school inspection	7 May 2008
School address	Park Lane Winlaton Blaydon-on-Tyne NE21 6LT
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Nineteen lessons and fourteen teachers were observed. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at pupils' books, assessment information, policies and procedures, school development plans and updates of pupils' progress. Views of stakeholders were also considered through questionnaire responses from 51 parents and carers, 13 staff and 83 pupils.

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

- How effectively self-evaluation and identified actions for improvement to the Early Years Foundation Stage drive good and improving outcomes for children.
- How effectively teaching and learning challenge the needs of all pupils in order to secure good progress particularly for those of higher ability.
- How well the curriculum provides for pupils to become independent learning and to use their basic skills, including information and communication technology (ICT), to support learning across other subjects.
- How successfully all leaders identify and influence actions for school improvement and the effect of recent changes to the senior leadership team on the capacity to improve.

Information about the school

This is a larger than average size primary school and is housed in three separate buildings on one site. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is higher than the national average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language are lower than national levels. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is lower than average, as is the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs. The present headteacher took up post in November 2010 and is supported by an acting deputy headteacher. The school holds the award for the Financial Management Standards in Schools (FMSiS). A Children's Centre is housed on the same site as the school. It will be inspected separately and the report published on the Ofsted website.

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 school. It has many good features providing a positive climate for pupils to learn, which is well demonstrated in the good quality of care, guidance and support. Good relationships with parents and carers and with other partners support pupils well and this means that they are well placed to learn. Personal development is largely good. The strengths of the school are well reflected in the way that pupils feel safe and understand how to live a healthy lifestyle. Pupils contribute well to the school and to the local community. They reflect upon situations well, for example, one pupil in assembly asked, 'How can you put a price on a gift from the heart?' Pupils' good understanding of right and wrong has a positive impact upon their good behaviour around the school.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is a significant strength of the school and outcomes are good. Children progress well from entry points, which for many are below those expected nationally, to largely average by the time they enter Year 1. Progress slows over Key Stage 1 before accelerating in Key Stage 2 and pupils leave Year 6 with broadly average attainment. The inconsistent progress pupils make across the school is reflected in the range of progress observed in lessons. The assessment and tracking of pupils' learning is well established and teachers have a sound understanding of pupils' strengths and weaknesses. However, not all teachers use this information effectively on a daily basis to challenge pupils, especially those of higher ability, through individually focused activities, or to inform them clearly of their next steps in learning. Good relationships between staff and pupils support positive attitudes to school and pupils are well motivated to learn. However, opportunities for pupils to learn basic skills through engaging in practical activities are at an early stage of development. Pupils with special education needs and /or disabilities make good progress because staff plan thoroughly to support their particular needs well.

The new headteacher is motivating staff and the governing body to share her vision of improvement. The evaluation of the school is accurate and areas for development have been identified and shared with leaders and managers. The emphasis is clearly upon raising attainment by increasing the pace and consistency of pupils' progress. Past improvements to the quality of assessment and tracking of progress demonstrate some impact upon signs of improving attainment but the rigour with which change is implemented is not yet strong enough. Leaders and managers are at different points in developing their monitoring and evaluation roles and this, together with recent changes to the senior leadership team, mean that the school is in a state of change. However, the heightened motivation and increased understanding of the way ahead combine well with staff professional development to ensure satisfactory capacity to improve.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment by ensuring that all pupils, especially those of higher ability, make consistently good progress across the school by:
 - sharpening the use of assessment data to plan challenging activities well-matched to pupils' individual abilities
 - embed and assure the consistency of marking and feedback to indicate pupils' success against targets and what they need to do to improve
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to work together to investigate and learn using practical and creative opportunities.
- Increase the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that all leaders and managers contribute effectively to self- evaluation and implement actions which will drive future improvement
 - increasing the rigour of monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning to quicken the pace of improving outcomes for pupils.
- Up to 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' achievement and their enjoyment of learning are satisfactory overall. Good behaviour contributes greatly to pupils' involvement in their learning. In lessons with opportunities to access first-hand experiences, pupils participate particularly well and their rate of progress quickens. However, where there are fewer engaging opportunities learning is less successful. Most pupils make satisfactory progress, although it is inconsistent between classes and is stronger in Key Stage 2. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make largely good progress. However, pupils of higher ability are not challenged sufficiently and progress for this group is slower. Attainment by the end of Year 6 is broadly average and progress over the intervening years does not build as well as it might upon the good progress made in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Pupils talk confidently about feeling safe and recognising unsafe situations. They are particularly good at recognising bullying and speak effectively about their role should they witness such a situation. Pupils are particularly secure about how well adults help them overcome their concerns. Most eat a sensible diet at lunchtime and many take up the additional opportunities after school to engage in physical activities. Pupils enjoy school. They engage cooperatively with each other; they behave well and want to take part in the activities the school offers. Many attend regularly and attendance is satisfactory and improving. Pupils contribute well to the school through the school council and as playground buddies. They work well within the local and wider community through mini-projects and support charities. Whilst opportunities exist for pupils to reflect and be mindful of rights and responsibilities in society, there are fewer

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activities for pupils to engage with others from different cultures and backgrounds.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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	2
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?

Positive relationships support pupils' attitudes to learning. Pupils are eager to please their teachers and engage well. However, inconsistencies in practice across the school mean that pupils' learning varies from class to class and progress is only satisfactory. In better lessons, there is good pace and high expectations of pupils with activities well-matched to pupils' individual needs. Pupils have time to consider and to practise and consolidate their learning through opportunities which engage them in practical enquiry. In such lessons, the rate of progress quickens. Where lessons are satisfactory, progress slows because teachers dominate the lessons with explanations and there are fewer practical activities to excite pupils and increase learning. The level of challenge for pupils is variable. Although assessment is rigorous and feeds tracking systems, not enough use is made of this information by teachers on a daily basis to plan activities which match the individual needs of pupils. Recent developments in marking are beginning to inform pupils of their successes and next steps in learning but, again, this

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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is variable and is not yet firmly embedded.

The broad curriculum provides pupils with many opportunities to develop their personal skills and interests. New approaches to the curriculum are increasing links between subjects and make learning more purposeful. Pupils' skills in ICT are developing well and are used effectively to enhance other areas of the curriculum. However, in some lessons there is an overdependence upon worksheets, which do not reflect the differing needs of pupils. They also restrict pupils' access to practical work and opportunities to write from first-hand experiences. A good choice of enrichment activities enables pupils to extend their skills in sporting and creative activities. Visitors and visits, including a residential experience, help to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of the world outside of their immediate locality.

Staff know pupils very well, enabling them to provide good quality care and pastoral support. The needs of pupils, who are vulnerable due to their circumstance and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are quickly identified and support is provided. This often includes the effective use of a range of outside agencies. Strategies to improve attendance have effectively addressed pupils who are persistent absentees. Pupils of all ages settle quickly and there is a proactive approach to involve parents and carers where concerns are identified. Induction and transition arrangements across the school are well developed, providing security for children and pupils as they move between their different stages of learning.

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?

The headteacher has worked rapidly with staff and the governing body to identify the strengths and priorities for the school. There is a strong commitment by all leaders and managers towards driving improvement and embedding ambition. However, some leaders are further along the path of bringing about change than others. This is because some are new to their responsibilities or have had their expectations raised more recently. The school's recent evaluation has raised awareness as to the need to increase the depth and quality of monitoring and evaluation of change. Currently, self-evaluation by all leaders and managers can be rather too positive. However, under the direction of the headteacher the way ahead is clearer and actions are starting to increase the rate of progress.

The governing body provides satisfactory leadership. Governors are supportive and

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understand their responsibilities. They ensure that safeguarding meets statutory requirements. The governing body are presently working with the headteacher to increase their role from being supportive, to that of being more involved in deciding the strategic direction of the school. The promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory overall, and within the school and local community it is well established. However, there are fewer actions identified to develop sustainable links with pupils from different backgrounds and cultures. The school promotes equality of opportunity satisfactorily and there is little racism or bullying. Most pupils make satisfactory progress, although with the current inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, this is not always the case especially for the more able pupils. Links with parents and carers, and with other partners are good and contribute considerably to the very effective rapid support for pupils and their families. Overall, outcomes for pupils are satisfactory and the school provides satisfactory value for money.

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	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
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

From starting points which, for many, are below those expected for their age, particularly in communication, language in literacy, children make good progress reaching standards which are broadly in line with those expected for their age by the end of reception. Standards in mathematics and in personal and social education are higher than those found nationally but those in communication, language and literacy remain lower. Children who are vulnerable due to their circumstances or have special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified early and effective intervention means their needs are met well. Good relationships and care mean that children settle

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very quickly into this warm environment. Behaviour is good and children learn to share and take turns as they interact with adults and other children.

Children demonstrate increasing levels of independence as they are encouraged to make choices through a range of learning experiences, which motivate them to explore and investigate. They learn simple rules of hygiene and safety which they begin to use independently. Teamwork is good and staff work with a purpose to meet children's needs. Accurate assessment, through observations of children's progress, feed into planning the next steps in learning. Links with parents and carers are good. They think highly of the setting and recognise the qualities of the staff who care for their children and who seek to actively involve parents and carers in their children's learning. Good quality self-evaluation means an accurate understanding of where further actions to improve are needed. Strategies to promote the welfare of children are very effective and all statutory requirements are met.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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

Of the relatively small return, the vast majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were highly positive about the school. They greatly appreciate the care give to their children and are confident that their children are happy and safe and that teachers meet their children's needs. Issues raised by a very few parents and carers were followed up by the inspection team. Inspectors discussed with the headteacher parental requests for more information about their children's progress and how parents and carers could be helped to support their children's learning. Inspectors observed no unacceptable behaviour and found pupils to be polite and well-mannered. There was no obvious pattern to the very few other concerns raised by parents and carers. All were fully investigated by the inspection team and form part of the evidence base used to arrive at the inspection judgements.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Parkhead Community 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 360 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	36	71	14	27	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	30	59	20	39	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	18	35	27	53	3	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	27	53	23	45	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	29	57	19	37	2	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	24	47	21	41	3	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	25	49	25	49	1	2	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)	26	51	24	47	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	28	55	22	43	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	23	45	20	39	2	4	2	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	16	31	31	61	4	8	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	21	41	24	47	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	33	65	18	35	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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 December 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Parkhead Community Primary School, Blaydon-on-Tyne, NE21 6LT

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave to inspectors when we visited your school recently. It was lovely to talk to so many of you and thank you to those who filled in the questionnaires. They helped us to understand how you feel about your school and the people who work with you. We found that you go to a satisfactory school and you make satisfactory progress in your learning. Adults look after you very well and because of this you feel safe and confident. We know that you particularly enjoy additional activities, such as film club and all of the sporting activities provided. You are happy at school and your parents and carers know, and appreciate this.

To help your school become better, we have asked your headteacher, teachers and the governing body to concentrate on improving a few things which we feel will help you to achieve even higher levels. We want them to raise your attainment by making sure that everyone makes good progress, especially those of you of higher ability. Teachers are going to check that activities are set at just the correct level of difficulty for you and their marking will tell you how to improve. We have asked that you have more opportunities to work together on practical tasks and use your skills to investigate and be creative. Teachers and the governors are also going to check the work of the school rigorously so that they can identify actions which will help you to improve.

I feel sure that you will help your teachers by continuing to work hard.

Best wishes for the future

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Kate Pringle

Lead Inspector

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