

Crookhill Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108366
Local Authority	Gateshead
Inspection number	309665
Inspection dates	28–29 November 2007
Reporting inspector	Mr Derek Sleightholme

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	143
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Brian Kelly
Headteacher	Mrs Louise Claire Easton
Date of previous school inspection	June 2004
School address	Hexham Old Road Ryton Tyne and Wear NE40 3ES
Telephone number	0191 433 4066
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a below average size school. It serves an area where the socio-economic circumstances are below average. Most pupils are from a White British background. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is above average. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. Provision includes a support base for pupils with moderate learning difficulties. Consequently the percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is significantly high. There are few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds or at an early stage of learning English.

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. Several aspects of its work are outstanding. 'My little girl skips to school, she is that happy', is a typical comment that reflects parents' high regard for the school. The headteacher has worked with staff and governors to set clear priorities for the school's development. An early outcome of this new direction is the way the standards have improved, assessment and tracking of pupils' progress are more thorough and monitoring more rigorous. Attendance has improved and is now satisfactory. Parents rate highly the way staff care for their children and the good progress they make.

Pupils are a credit to the school; their behaviour is exemplary. They form good relationships, enjoy taking responsibility, and are polite and helpful. They enjoy lessons and say learning is fun. They like collaborating with others during lessons and in playtime games. Pupils know why it is important to keep safe and be healthy. Contributions to the community are good, for example, their bulb-planting in Addison Woods and their considerable efforts that made the centenary celebrations such a success. Pupils serving as playground buddies are devoted to this task. The inclusion of pupils in a support base helps pupils to reflect on each other's different personal qualities and needs. Pupils' preparation for their future lives is good, for example, through enterprise programmes.

Standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 are broadly average. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 have improved and are currently above average. English standards are slightly below those in mathematics and science. Writing is weaker than other subjects throughout the school because pupils do not have a full range of skills. All pupils achieve well overall, because teaching is good in all year groups. Pupils make good progress because teachers ensure pupils understand clearly what is expected of them and how their gains will be assessed. Teachers use information and communication technology (ICT) facilities to capture pupils' interest; and motivate them. Teachers are very skilled in the assessment of pupils' progress and providing them with feedback.

Pupils love taking part in creative weeks, an innovative feature of the school's outstanding curriculum. For example, pupils used a 'passport' to experience different cultures and in doing so travelled around the world in just five school days! The curriculum is enriched through the teaching of a modern foreign language, visits, visitors and extra-curricular clubs. The care, guidance and support provided to pupils are outstanding. Skilled teaching assistants provide pupils with good advice in lessons. Pupils attending the support base are sensitively supported. Comprehensive target-setting ensures pupils know precisely what they need to do to improve.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides good leadership and works hard to promote the school's aim, 'Children today, citizens tomorrow'. Monitoring is purposeful and helps leaders form an accurate picture of the school's strengths and informs the identification of priorities. Governance is good. The school provides good value for money.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision is good. In recent years, children have entered the Foundation Stage with starting points below those typical for their age, particularly in language and literacy. Progress is good in all areas of learning and, by the end of Reception, most reach the levels of development expected for children of their age. Good partnerships with the nearby early years provision have helped to raise the starting points of the current Reception children, who had skills and knowledge typical for their age.

Teaching is good and the children's needs are well met. The curriculum incorporates a good mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Good leadership has ensured the classroom is well organised and resourced, and has a variety of stimulating learning experiences. For example, children used fishing rods to catch letter 'sounds' on the backs of floating crabs. The outdoor areas are not readily accessible from the Reception classroom, so outdoor learning is a daily planned event.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards in writing at Key Stage 1 and English at Key Stage 2.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement is good. Most children in the Foundation Stage reach the levels expected for children of their age by the end of Reception. Pupils continue to make good progress by Year 2 and reach broadly average standards. Good progress continues in Years 3 to 6. Standards by Year 6 are currently above average.

The 2007 results show improved standards at both key stages. At Key Stage 1, results in writing were lower than those in reading and mathematics. Prior to 2007, Key Stage 2 results had been regularly below average. The 2007 results were much better and confirmed average standards in English, mathematics and science. English results were lower than those in science and mathematics, especially in writing. Although these pupils had achieved well, their test results reflected the impact of support base pupils. This inspection has found that there is no significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those at an early stage of learning English.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Pupils are happy and settled in school. They value friendship and understand responsibility. They behave exceptionally well in lessons and around school. They know the difference between right and wrong, are well mannered and eager to help visitors. Pupils are concerned for others. Their regular sponsorship of an African child typifies their thinking about those less fortunate than themselves. Pupils' enjoyment of school is outstanding. They describe lessons as 'fun' and particularly enjoy those that incorporate practical tasks. They also love school clubs.

Those attending the ICT club relished the opportunity to draft contributions for the forthcoming newsletter. Attendance has improved and is now satisfactory.

Pupils recognise the value of a good diet and regular exercise. Most use the appealing playground resources enthusiastically. Pupils feel safe at school; they handle equipment responsibly and realise there are potential dangers when accessing the Internet. School councillors are fully committed to helping the day-to-day running of the school, for example, by suggesting how playground resources could be improved. Pupils take advantage of opportunities to acquire skills that help them prepare for their future lives; several helped run stalls at the recent school fayre where they took responsibility for handling money.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good. Lessons start promptly because pupils are very well behaved and eager to participate. Teachers convey explicit learning intentions for lessons so pupils know exactly what is expected of them. Pupils are told clearly how success will be judged. Teachers do this effectively because they possess good subject knowledge. They plan lessons well, giving particular attention to tasks that appropriately reflect pupils' different starting points.

Teachers use the new ICT interactive facilities in their classrooms confidently and efficiently. Pupils' good progress can often be traced to high levels of their interest and engagement arising from skilled use of classroom technology. Lessons are regularly conducted at a brisk pace. Pupils are encouraged to contribute not only through responses to questions but in focussed discussions with other pupils known as their 'talking partners'. As lessons draw to a close, teachers encourage pupils to help in the assessment of progress. Reception pupils signal 'thumbs up' to indicate success. Older pupils are encouraged to record positive outcomes and suggest a point for improvement when reading the work of their peers.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding and extended in innovative ways. Planning ensures pupils have daily opportunities to make good progress in key literacy and numeracy skills such as phonics and calculations. Good progress has been made in promoting learning across subjects. For example, a Year 6 literacy lesson gave pupils the chance to learn about genetics. They then practised their ICT skills to analyse text and highlight writing techniques such as headings and use of tense. However, it is a school priority to extend opportunities for writing across the curriculum. Creative weeks are promoted highly and used extremely well to enhance pupils' learning. During the school centenary week, pupils' understanding of the history of their school was enriched when discussed the past with many visiting former pupils.

Pupils can access an excellent range of extra-curricular activities including many promoting sport and the arts. Visiting specialists and an array of clubs add to the

richness of the curriculum and pupils' opportunities. Pupils who attend the dance club, for example, perform in assemblies and at an annual dance festival.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. Staff implement health and safety measures very rigorously. School records confirm regular checks cover the safety of equipment, risk assessments for school visits and premises evacuation. Child protection and safeguarding procedures for the recruitment of staff are robust and meet government requirements. Parents describe the care of their children as excellent, many citing it as a significant strength of this school.

Academic guidance contributes significantly to pupils' achievement. Pupils confirmed all knew their personal targets for reading, writing, mathematics and why these had been set. They find the colour-coded system that clearly recognises their success and shows where improvement is needed helpful. The school has made good progress in developing the system for setting targets and has ambitious plans for further development.

Pupils benefit from the high level of personal support provided to them. Those with learning difficulties and disabilities receive sensitive support from teaching assistants. Pupils taught in the support base benefit from considerable individual attention. Some more able pupils access more advanced work through deployment to other year groups for specific lessons. This is helping them to make good progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The good, purposeful leadership of the headteacher is helping the school to deliver its main aim, 'Children today, citizens tomorrow'. Working with key staff and a recently appointed deputy headteacher, much has been achieved since she was appointed four terms ago, including improvements in standards, progress, monitoring practices and attendance. She leads an enthusiastic leadership team with responsibilities appropriately distributed. The flexibility in organising classes to meet pupils' specific needs demonstrates the determination by the school's leaders to promote inclusive practices.

Improvement since the previous inspection has been good. The headteacher has skilfully promoted everyone's involvement in the self-evaluation process that gives an accurate picture of the school. Data analysis is rigorous, the quality of teaching has been judged accurately and the views of pupils and parents regularly sought. The school's priorities match closely the outcomes of self-review. The governors fulfil well their role as 'critical friends'. They work closely with school leaders to deliver an ambitious programme within a framework of challenging targets. The track record of success and complementary skills of the leadership team provide the school with a good capacity to improve.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate.	School Overall
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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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of boarding provision	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

30 November 2007



Dear Pupils

Inspection of Crookhill Community Primary School, Gateshead, NE40 3ES

Thank you for the help you gave me when I inspected your school. I enjoyed meeting you and I was impressed by your friendliness, good manners and outstanding behaviour. I enjoyed visiting your classrooms, looking at your work and talking to you about your school. I know that everyone in your school wants you to have a say in how your school develops and your school councillors told us how you have helped to improve it.

These are the things I found out about your school. You attend a good school. Some aspects of it are outstanding. I know that you make good progress as you move through each school year and, by the time most of you leave at age 11, your knowledge, skills and understanding are above what is expected for pupils at that age. The curriculum and the care you receive are outstanding. I know that the teachers give you clear information on how you can improve. You told me you understand how important it is to work towards targets.

I was impressed by your excellent behaviour and attitudes to learning. You told me you enjoy school, feel safe and know how to get help quickly when you need it. You also reminded me how important you think it is to be fit and healthy. I know you like helping at school by taking on responsibilities and you have been successful at raising funds both for the school and good causes.

There is one particular thing the school could do better. This is:

- Improve standards in English, especially writing.

I wish you and all the staff the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Derek Sleightholme
Lead inspector