

West Denton Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108449
Local Authority	Newcastle Upon Tyne
Inspection number	356363
Inspection dates	13–14 January 2011
Reporting inspector	Ann Wallis

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	309
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Joe Gallant
Headteacher	Mr Mick MingStones
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2007
School address	Hillhead Road West Denton, Newcastle-upon-Tyne Tyne and Wear NE5 1DN
Telephone number	0191 2674211
Fax number	0191 2674211
Email address	admin@westdenton.newcastle.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 4234

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed teaching and learning in 16 lessons and saw 14 teachers teach. They held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' books, safeguarding information, pupils' progress data and other documentation. They analysed 127 questionnaires from parents and carers and also those from pupils and staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The effectiveness of the school's attempts to ensure pupils' attainment and progress in writing, particularly at Key Stage 1, is as good as that in other areas of learning.
- Whether the care, guidance and support the school provides is a strength.
- Whether self-evaluation is sufficiently rigorous and accurate to enable new leaders and managers to bring about and sustain improvement

Information about the school

This is an above-average-sized primary school. A well-above-average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The percentage of pupils from minority-ethnic groups is below average as is that of pupils who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above average. The school has gained Healthy School status and has Artsmark and Activemark awards. The headteacher has been in post since September 2010.

The privately-run provision for childcare, Hedgehog, and the Denton Sure Start Children Centre, share the school's site. They are both subject to a separate inspection and will receive their own inspection report, which will be 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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. The newly-appointed headteacher has a very clear vision for school improvement which he communicates extremely well to all staff. At West Denton Primary all pupils and staff feel that their views are listened to and valued and, consequently, morale is high. School self-evaluation is rigorous and accurate. The headteacher is now ensuring that the roles of talented leaders and managers at all levels are being developed further. Opportunities for them to contribute to the monitoring and evaluation of the school's work and to be fully involved in determining its strategic direction were previously limited but are now increasing and beginning to make an impact on pupils' progress and attainment. The governing body, leaders and managers are well aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and have good capacity to improve this already good school further. For example, robust action has been taken to remedy a relative weakness in pupils' writing at Key Stage 1. Sharply-focused intervention in their learning is already resulting in rising attainment but is not yet fully developed.

Parents, carers and pupils are particularly appreciative of the good care, guidance and support which the school gives. This contributes well to pupils' good personal development, so they behave well, have a good understanding of how to stay safe and healthy and are kind and courteous both to each other and to visitors. Pupils have numerous opportunities to take on responsibilities in school and some are weighed down with badges such as 'prefect', 'school council', 'buddy', 'librarian' and 'eco-warrior' denoting the many responsibilities they have.

Pupils make good progress as they move through the school to reach average standards when they leave in Year 6. Pupils achieve well because teaching and learning are consistently good. Teachers plan lessons carefully, make good use of varied resources and manage their classes well. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because they receive carefully-targeted individual help from skilled teaching assistants as well as teachers. In a few lessons the pace of learning is slower when pupils spend too much time listening to the teacher and have fewer opportunities to be active learners in finding out things for themselves.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and accelerate progress, particularly in writing and at Key Stage 1, by:
 - ensuring all lessons proceed at a brisk pace
 - reducing the amount of time teachers spend talking to the whole class
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to become more active in their learning

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- extending and monitoring the successful programme of well-targeted extra help given to pupils in Year 2 to improve their writing.
- Further develop the skills of leaders and managers at all levels by:
 - extending their role in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning
 - extending the sharing of good practice across the school
 - increasing opportunities for them to be involved in determining the strategic direction of the school
 - developing their expertise in data analysis to identify more precisely where pupils need extra help, and monitoring the impact of this work.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

In lessons pupils behave well, concentrate on the task in hand and work hard. They enjoy learning and achieve well. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 were making good progress in developing their language skills as they made up very creative advertisements for their 'dreamy creamy' chocolate bars. The school's efficient tracking system, work in pupils' books and that on display all confirm the good progress that all pupils are making. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language achieve well because they are well supported, equipped with the necessary skills and given the confidence to succeed by both staff in school and by specialist agencies. Children enter the Nursery class with skills below those expected for their age. Pupils' attainment shows a steadily rising trend over the last three years. In tests and assessments they reach broadly average standards at the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science. The attainment of pupils in Year 2 has been lower in writing than in other areas of learning. However, the school has taken effective action to put this right by monitoring their progress very carefully and ensuring that they receive well-targeted, specialist, extra help, either individually or in small groups, when this is needed. This programme of support has yet to be fully developed and monitored.

Pupils say how safe they feel in school. They have a good knowledge of how to keep themselves safe and healthy and responded well to a lesson by a police officer about antisocial behaviour. Pupils are punctual and most attend school regularly. They work well together in pairs and groups and are developing good teamwork skills. These qualities, together with sound basic skills and a willingness to take responsibility, mean they are well equipped for the next stage of their education and for later life.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
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	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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

How effective is the provision?

Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are never less than satisfactory and in a few lessons teaching and learning are outstanding. Teachers know their pupils well and use a variety of resources and teaching methods to engage their interest so they enjoy learning. In most lessons the pace of learning is brisk and pupils move smoothly from one activity to the next. In a minority of lessons pupils learn more slowly and some become a little restless when they are asked to listen to the teacher for long periods rather than working independently and at their own pace. Clear explanations and good questioning are a feature of most lessons and extend pupils' skills and understanding well. Pupils' work is marked regularly. They understand the targets they have to reach and are given good guidance on how to achieve them.

The curriculum meets pupils' needs well. It is reviewed regularly and is increasingly centred on developing pupils' skills through investigations and enquiries. Pupils enjoy a good range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities. They speak enthusiastically of trips and visits they have enjoyed, particularly a recent trip to the pantomime.

The provision of good care, guidance and support for all pupils is a strength of the school. Strong links with local schools ensure that pupils move smoothly between the different stages of their education. Work with outside agencies, including the parent support worker, ensures that all pupils, particularly those that are vulnerable, receive the support

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they need. Although attendance remains average the school makes every effort to encourage pupils to attend school regularly.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: 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	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The governing body, leaders and managers and all staff share the headteacher's very clear vision for school improvement. This is firmly focused on raising standards and accelerating the progress of all pupils. Teaching and learning are monitored carefully and good practice is shared. Staff value the opportunities they have to undertake high-quality, relevant training to extend their skills further. The roles of senior leaders and managers are presently underdeveloped. However, they are now beginning to monitor the quality of teaching and learning, assess the impact of intervention strategies to accelerate pupils' learning and become more involved in making better use of data and determining the strategic direction of the school. The governing body provides support and challenge for the school and is fully involved in determining its priorities for improvement. The talents of all pupils are valued, and ensuring that they all have an equal opportunity to succeed is a school priority. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. All safeguarding procedures are robust. Staff are well trained in all aspects of child protection and understand the need for high-quality risk assessments. Community cohesion is developed well. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to interact with those from different cultures and communities, both in the local area and further afield. Through, for example, learning Spanish, pupils begin to develop a good understanding of another culture.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
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	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Nursery class with skills, especially in literacy, numeracy and personal development, which are below those expected for their age. As a result of well-planned activities and good teaching, they settle quickly into school, learning to work together and share their toys. They make good progress in almost all areas of learning so that when they leave the Reception class their attainment is broadly average. In areas of learning where progress is slower some opportunities are missed to allow children to learn through exploration, investigation and role play, particularly in the outdoor environment. The staff work well together as a team and provide good role models for the children in their care. The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led and managed. Staff pay good attention to children's safety and welfare, their progress is carefully monitored and lessons are well planned to meet individual needs. Good partnerships with parents and carers and outside agencies support children's learning well. Helpful assessment information is recorded in parents' and carers' booklets or made available on computers so parents and carers are kept well informed about how their children are doing.

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	2

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Stage	
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Views of parents and carers

Of the above-average proportion of parents and carers who filled in the questionnaire, most were entirely satisfied with the education their children receive. They are particularly appreciative of the good care, guidance and support the school gives, how well their children settle into the Nursery class and of the way in which the recently-appointed headteacher is leading the school. Inspection evidence confirmed these views. A very few parents and carers expressed concerns about the way the school communicates with them. Inspectors found the school's engagement with parents and carers to be good.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at West Denton 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 127 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 309 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	84	66	42	33	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	75	59	49	39	3	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	55	43	67	53	5	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	59	46	62	49	5	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	71	56	56	44	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	65	51	58	46	1	1	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	55	43	67	53	4	3	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)	50	39	67	53	4	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	59	46	61	48	4	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	51	40	67	53	5	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	42	33	75	59	4	3	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	60	47	64	50	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	78	61	44	35	3	2	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 all 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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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 pupils' 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.



17 January 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of West Denton Primary School, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE5 1DN

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we inspected your school. A particular 'thank you' to those of you who spent time with us telling us about your work in class and the things you enjoy doing at school. Please thank your parents and carers for speaking with us and for filling in our questionnaire.

This is what we have said about your school in our report.

- Yours is a good school where you achieve well and reach average standards.
- You behave well, are keen to take responsibilities and know how to stay safe and healthy.
- The teaching you receive, the curriculum you follow and especially the care, guidance and support you receive, are all good.
- Your school is well led by your headteacher and senior staff.

This is what we have asked your school to do to make it even better.

- The school will help you make even faster progress by: ensuring you work at a brisk pace in all lessons; giving you more time to work on your own and find out things for yourselves; and giving you even more help, particularly in writing, when you need it.
- The school will give your senior teachers more opportunities to check on your progress and the quality of your lessons and to decide how to keep improving your school.

You can help your school to improve by attending regularly, continuing to behave well and working with your teachers to achieve the very best you can.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Ann Wallis

Lead inspector

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