



Hotspur Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 108491
LEA Newcastle upon Tyne
Inspection number 277984
Inspection dates 8 June 2006 to 9 June 2006
Reporting inspector Mrs Mary Sewell

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

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|------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Type of school | Primary | School address | Mowbray Street |
| School category | Community | | Newcastle upon Tyne |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 11 | | Tyne and Wear, NE6 5PA |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed | Telephone number | 0191 2762762 |
| Number on roll | 368 | Fax number | 0191 2242476 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body | Chair of governors | Ms Helen Linforth |
| Date of previous inspection | 1 March 2000 | Headteacher | Mr Miles Clarke |

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|-----------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Hotspur is a modern purpose-built primary school in inner city Newcastle. The school serves a diverse community with many pupils living in one of the most socially deprived areas of the country. More than a third of pupils receive free school meals which is double the national average. A tenth of the pupils have a first language other than English and several are from families who are seeking asylum in this country. Approximately a quarter of the pupils are from families who do not stay long in Newcastle. Attainment on entry to the school is below average.

Key for inspection grades

| | |
|---------|--------------|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding |
| Grade 2 | Good |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate |

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Hotspur is an effective and popular school, a shining oasis of creativity in inner city Newcastle. It is a good school and well placed to become an outstanding one. This confirms the school's own judgement. The school is very well led and managed. The headteacher, senior staff and governors are relentless in their drive to raise expectations and aspirations. Governance is of high quality and provides challenge and support. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection and provides good value for money.

The Foundation Stage is good and provides a very solid basis for the children's education. Pupils make good progress. By the time pupils leave the school, they achieve well and standards are average. Standards are rising and are much improved on than in 2005 when they were below average. As part of the good teaching and learning, the newly implemented assessment and tracking systems are playing a significant part in raising standards. Target-setting in Year 6 is particularly effective and has helped pupils make rapid progress in lessons. However, this practice is not as effective with younger pupils who do not always know what they need to do to improve their work and assessment does not always inform teachers' planning.

Personal development is good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding overall. This is because of the school's strong emphasis on, and sometimes excellent provision for pupils' personal development. As a result, pupils' behaviour is good and they thoroughly enjoy their learning. The well planned curriculum contributes significantly to pupils' very real enjoyment of learning.

Care, guidance and support are good with some excellent features related to care. This helps make Hotspur a fully inclusive school where the needs of every child really matter. The school is exceptionally good at working with parents and outside agencies to remove barriers to learning. Parents who were interviewed and those who responded to the questionnaire were overwhelmingly supportive of the work that the school does. This support is reflected in pupils' satisfactory but improving attendance.

What the school should do to improve further

- Embed the assessment and target-setting strategies so that they become part of the daily teaching and learning culture.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well and standards are average. There is a very wide range of ability when they start school, but overall standards on entry are below average. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards are in line with those expected. Following the results of the 2005 tests for 11 year olds, which showed a decline in standards and achievement, leaders made improvements to both the quality of teaching and the tracking of individual pupil's progress. As a result, pupils are now achieving well throughout the

school because work is matched more accurately to pupils' varying needs. Pupils who joined the school in Years 5 or 6 did not progress as quickly as those who joined the school as infants. As a result, the school did not meet its targets. However, the school is on course to achieve this year's challenging targets.

Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage and most reach the expected level by the end of the Reception year. They build on this in the infant and junior years because the teaching is good and pupils are keen to learn.

Pupils are particularly confident with investigative science and some good work was seen on 'melting'. As a direct result of the school's focus on writing, standards are rising rapidly. In Year 6, pupils wrote a diary as if they were Macbeth, and showed confident imaginative interpretation of the play. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those whose first language is not English make good progress. The school has introduced extra provision and 'master classes' for more able pupils who also make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development is good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding overall and is well represented in the pupils' work on display. This is because of the school's strong emphasis, and sometimes excellent provision, on pupils' personal development. For example, the quality of music and art are exceptional and ensures the outstanding development of pupils' spirituality.

Parents and their children say that the school provides a safe and comfortable environment which adds to their enjoyment of school. Behaviour has improved rapidly in the last year, as children and their parents now know what is expected of them. Staff and pupils say there is now a calmer, more positive learning atmosphere. Parents are delighted about this and say their children love coming to school. Attendance is satisfactory and it is improving. Pupils have a good understanding of what is a healthy lifestyle and about keeping safe because these aspects are taught well.

Pupils develop basic skills well because there is a strong focus on developing literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT). They learn to work independently because there is good provision for pupils to exercise independence in lessons. Pupils learn the financial implications of running small businesses from their involvement in community mini-enterprise schemes. Thus, they are very well prepared for the next stage of their education and for later working life.

Grade: 2

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. Teachers expect pupils to work hard, and make lessons as interesting and exciting as they can. As a result, pupils behave very well, listen carefully and want to learn. Teachers generally plan their lessons carefully to ensure that pupils build on what they already know and make good progress. They make sure that pupils of all abilities, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, have chances to succeed or to respond to a fresh challenge. The very good team of teaching assistants makes a valuable contribution to this. Teachers constantly try to raise pupils' self-esteem, which encourages them to persevere. For example, one group who had been struggling with mathematics announced that 'we are making really good progress now'.

Where the new whole-school system for tracking pupils' progress is used well to plan lessons, teachers know how their pupils are doing and make sure no-one is left behind or standing still. This is not consistent across all groups, leaving some of the younger pupils unsure about how to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good; it meets the needs of all learners. The strong focus on developing literacy, numeracy and ICT helps develop these skills across the full range of subjects. Parents appreciate this holistic approach. The pupils love the range of cross-curricular opportunities to practise these skills as in their work entitled: 'The Great Fire of Newcastle'. The school makes excellent use of the exceptional range of opportunities offered by local community organisations, for example in art, music and sport. There is a well-established tradition of creativity and community involvement in this school. The leadership team is determined to build upon this alongside their focus on raising standards in literacy and numeracy. Pupils who are vulnerable, gifted or talented or who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities have extra projects tailored to their individual needs. Hotspur is innovative and constantly reviews the curriculum searching for new ways to learn; for example, 'arts week', 'young enterprise day', and 'science week'. Pupils thoroughly enjoy these and other experiences, especially the residential visit to Keilder Forest.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. The school takes exceptional care of its pupils and certainly makes a significant difference to their lives. The well-being of pupils is central to the philosophy of Hotspur. The headteacher liaises closely with a range of service providers to ensure that the care and support provided for vulnerable pupils and their families is good. Very good efforts are made to remove all risks and eliminate

dangers in all aspects of learning. The school offers a very good playgroup and facilities for the care of pupils both before and after school. This provides the school with excellent links to parents and carers which bring enormous benefits through the early identification of their children's specific needs. Pupils say they feel safe and are well supported by teachers. Pupils whose first language is not English have excellent support and quickly become fully integrated in school life. All pupils have their progress tracked and those thought to be at risk are closely monitored. Although pupils are set targets, younger ones are not always sure of what they need to do in order to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good overall with some outstanding features. The headteacher provides determined and dynamic leadership; his clear vision has ensured rigour and purpose in the school's work and a sharp focus on raising standards. The enthusiasm of the senior leadership group, led by an energetic deputy headteacher, has contributed well to the establishment of a clear vision and a calm working atmosphere for learning. Consequently, pupils can give their best, live in harmony with each other and enjoy the care that is provided for them. The diversity of the school's population is a cause for celebration and pupils from a range of different backgrounds are fully integrated into school life.

The school has rigorous and thorough methods of self-evaluation. It values the views of pupils, parents, staff and governors who all contribute to the formation of an accurate view of key aspects of its work, and the areas in need of improvement. Good quality monitoring and evaluation have already identified weaknesses and led to the implementation of new planning and teaching strategies. The quality of governance is good. The governors know the school's strengths and provide intelligent, informed support and challenge for all staff.

The headteacher has the confidence of the whole staff, who are keen to work together to improve the school. The school has good capacity for improvement.

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Inspection judgements

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|--|-----------------------|--------------|
| <i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i> | School Overall | 16-19 |
|--|-----------------------|--------------|

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 | NA |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being? | 1 | NA |
| The quality and standards in foundation stage | 2 | NA |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 2 | NA |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | Yes | NA |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection | Yes | NA |

Achievement and standards

| | | |
|--|---|----|
| How well do learners achieve? | 2 | NA |
| The standards ¹ reached by learners | 3 | NA |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 2 | NA |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress | 2 | NA |

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

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

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

| | | |
|--|-----|----|
| How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners? | 2 | NA |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 2 | NA |
| How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review | 2 | NA |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can | 1 | NA |
| How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money | 2 | NA |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities | 2 | NA |
| The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected | Yes | NA |

| | |
|---|-----|
| The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy | |
| Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily | Yes |
| Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise | Yes |
| Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse | Yes |
| Learners are educated about sexual health | Yes |
| The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe | |
| Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements | Yes |
| Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place | Yes |
| Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism | Yes |
| Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them | Yes |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution | |
| Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships | Yes |
| Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them | Yes |
| Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community | Yes |
| The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being | |
| There is provision to promote learners' basic skills | Yes |
| Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams | Yes |
| Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form | NA |
| Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy | NA |

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

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The Pupils

Hotspur Primary School

Mowbray Street

Newcastle upon Tyne

Tyne and Wear

NE6 5PA

8 June 2006

Dear Pupils,

Thank you for making us so welcome in your school this week for the inspection. We were so grateful for your help which assisted us in understanding what happens in your school. Although you were all really helpful, we would particularly like to thank the group who spoke to us, telling us how you felt about your school.

We agree with you and your parents that you go to a good school which has some exceptional things going on. You made it clear to us that you all love school and thoroughly enjoy not just the lessons, but also the huge range of other things you do. You were especially keen to tell us about your musical performances for grown-ups.

We were very pleased with how well you all work and play together, particularly the way in which you make the newcomers to your school very welcome. We were also impressed by the way in which your teachers made certain you are all happy and cared for. Your singing was excellent. It brought harmony and a lovely relaxed and positive atmosphere which carried on through into your lessons.

The lessons you receive are good and are helping you to read and write well and get much better at numeracy. We have asked Mr Clarke and the governors to do just one thing. This is to help all your teachers give each of you a special target. You will then understand what you are able to do and what you need to do in order to improve, and will be able to explain this to your parents or carers.

Thank you all again for helping us; we wish you all well in the future.

Yours faithfully

Mary Sewell [Lead inspector], June Tracey and Keith Oglesby