



# Simonside Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 108698  
**LEA** South Tyneside  
**Inspection number** 278027  
**Inspection dates** 10 May 2006 to 11 May 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mr Tom Grieveson HMI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Glasgow Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Jarrow
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		Tyne and Wear, NE32 4AU
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 4898315
<b>Number on roll</b>	240	<b>Fax number</b>	0191 4838500
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs Leila Hassan
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	27 June 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Jim Purvis

<b>Age group</b> 4 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 10 May 2006 - 11 May 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 278027
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Simonside Primary is an average-sized school situated in the Jarrow area of South Tyneside. The number of pupils attending the school has declined in recent years, reflecting the lower number of school aged pupils living in the immediate area. Almost three quarters of the pupils reside locally. Nine pupils in the school's hearing impaired units travel from other parts of the local authority. A very high number of pupils at the school are entitled to free school meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is almost twice the national average. A small percentage of pupils come from minority ethnic families but none from homes where English is not the first language.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Simonside Primary provides a satisfactory education with good provision for the personal development, well-being and care of its pupils. The school's own evaluation accords closely with inspection findings. Most parents are pleased with the education provided by the school but a minority feel their views are not sufficiently considered. Overall, most pupils do well at this school. However, the rate of progress which pupils make varies between key stages. Most children enter the Reception class with low basic skills but through effective teaching the majority make good progress. At Key Stage 1 progress is satisfactory, but more able pupils do not perform as well as they should, mainly because expectations of what they can achieve are not always high enough. Progress at Key Stage 2 is now good and most 11 year olds achieve expected standards. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress and pupils in the hearing impaired units make good progress. Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes and most enjoy their work and behave well. Pupils are not yet routinely involved in setting future learning targets or in assessing their progress, and this limits their understanding of how they can improve. However, the school is developing strategies to tackle this. The curriculum is satisfactory with a broad range of additional activities provided to enrich pupils' experiences. Leadership and management are also satisfactory. The senior team have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and where improvement is required. Some essential areas requiring improvement have not yet been tackled with enough rigour. Nonetheless, the issues identified in the 2000 inspection report have been tackled effectively. The school has secure capacity for further improvement and provides satisfactory value for money.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards further at Key Stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Improve assessment and target-setting arrangements to fully involve pupils in the setting of targets and in reviewing their progress.
- Ensure that important issues are tackled with greater speed and consistency.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

When children start school their literacy, numeracy and social skills are particularly underdeveloped. By the time pupils are 11 years of age they have made good progress and the majority have reached expected standards. Whilst the overall rate of progress is good, it varies between key stages. Children do well in the Foundation Stage. Regular and effective assessment ensures that staff know children's learning needs in great detail and make effective provision for them. Consequently, the majority of children make good progress but most do not securely reach expected standards by the time they transfer to Year 1. Standards at Key Stage 1, although improving, remain below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils make satisfactory progress but as yet, not enough account is taken of the wide range of pupils' needs when learning

is planned. In particular, some more able pupils are not doing as well as they could because expectations of what they can achieve are not high enough. Standards at Key Stage 2 have improved because effective action has been taken to improve teaching and learning in previously weak areas such as English. Expectations about what pupils can achieve are now appropriate and are securely reflected in teachers' planning, their interaction with pupils in classrooms and in the work which they set. Pupils with learning difficulties/disabilities make satisfactory progress. Those pupils with hearing impairments make good progress because of the guidance and high quality support which they receive.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils say they enjoy coming to school and feel safe and secure. Older pupils appreciate the responsibilities which they have to demonstrate care for younger pupils and newcomers. All pupils feel valued and consider their views are respected by the staff. Pupils are proud of their school and talk enthusiastically about it to visitors. Pupils exercise healthy eating choices and significant numbers engage in sporting opportunities. Pupils contribute well to the community and give generously to charity fundraising events. School council members take their roles seriously and recognise their contributions are acted upon. Attendance is satisfactory and continues to improve despite the minority of families who take holidays during term time. Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good. Their caring qualities are reflected in their attitudes towards others. Pupils demonstrate maturity when discussing moral issues in assemblies and during lessons and show consideration for the views of others. For example, when considering the effects of bombings on British and German cities during their study of the Second World War, pupils were able to give considered views about the impact on the lives of those affected. Their positive behaviour reflects a clear understanding of right and wrong.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The quality of teaching and learning is mainly satisfactory but good in the Foundation Stage and parts of Key Stage 2. However, good teaching is not a regular enough feature of lessons to ensure that pupils' progress is good throughout the school. The best lessons are characterised by effective planning from teachers who understand what pupils already know and can do and takes account of the varying range of abilities in the class. New tasks are carefully planned to challenge pupils and meet their needs. Teachers and other adults target their time effectively and support pupils well. A variety of teaching styles maintains pupils' motivation and generates an excitement for learning. In these lessons pupils make good progress, enjoy their learning and demonstrate positive attitudes to their work. Teaching is less effective when teachers

do not use assessment information well enough as the basis for planning new learning. When this occurs, there is a tendency to underestimate what pupils are capable of and consequently, some tasks lack appropriate challenge.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory and meets all statutory requirements. Emphasis is given to the development of literacy and numeracy but the breadth of study is appropriate for all learners, including pupils from the hearing impaired units. These pupils work effectively alongside other pupils in mainstream classrooms because they are supported well by dedicated staff. A range of enrichment activities, including residential fieldwork and extensive musical opportunities, widens pupils' experiences and impacts positively on their achievements and particularly their personal development. The school also makes effective use of outside agencies and external expertise in preparing pupils for life beyond school, such as the work with the Education and Business Partnership. Provision in the Foundation Stage is particularly well organised and contributes to the good progress which pupils make. Whilst individual subjects are delivered appropriately there is further scope to improve links between subjects at Key Stages 1 and 2.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

The care which pupils receive is good. All pupils, including the most vulnerable, are looked after by a dedicated staff team who exhibit a high degree of care and concern for their safety. Procedures for child protection are in place and appropriate safety checks are conducted on staff new to the school. Risk assessment is effectively managed. The guidance and support for learning which pupils receive are satisfactory. While the school has tracking procedures in place to monitor pupils' progress, this information is not always used well by staff to plan future learning. Pupils are aware of their improvement targets but too many are unsure about what is required to achieve them. This occurs because pupils receive insufficient feedback about how to improve through marking or discussion with staff. Recent initiatives to develop procedures in this area are appropriate but are yet to have a measurable effect.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher provides firm direction and has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and where it must improve. The recently appointed deputy headteacher's previous experience effectively complements the headteacher's expertise and she is well placed to lead on specific initiatives such as assessment and target-setting. Together with the senior team, the school has effective capacity to secure further improvement.

The school development plan accurately identifies priorities for improvement and acknowledges the progress made against some previously under-performing areas.

However, the degree of urgency targeted towards securing improvements is variable. There have been notable successes; for example, in achieving higher standards at Key Stage 2 and providing better information and communication technology (ICT) provision for pupils, but more urgency is required if Key Stage 1 standards are to be improved further and target-setting procedures are to be fully effective throughout the school.

Long serving governors demonstrate a high degree of commitment and loyalty to the school. They are increasingly involved in monitoring school activities and provide timely reports for the governing body to consider. This work is valuable and strengthens their evaluative role but collectively governors are yet to fully demonstrate that they hold the school sufficiently to account for its performance. Financial management is efficient and key spending decisions are based securely on a thorough appraisal of need.

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## Inspection judgements

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

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	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	3	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3	NA

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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

Simonside Primary School

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10 May 2006

Dear Pupils

As you know Mr Shearsmith, Mrs Buller and I spent two days inspecting your school on 10 and 11 May 2006. The report has now been completed and I would like to tell you about what it contains.

We were very impressed by the welcome which you gave us to your school. Thank you for that. Your school is a very welcoming place. You were very helpful in providing information which showed how pleased you are to attend Simonside Primary School and how much you enjoy your education. Your behaviour, and the hard work which you showed in lessons, was good. Well done, you are a credit to your school.

Simonside Primary School provides you with a satisfactory education, but does particularly well in helping you develop your personal skills and takes great care to make sure you are safe and looked after. Your headteacher, Mr Purvis, and his staff work extremely hard on your behalf. I know you appreciate their efforts. You know a great deal about keeping safe and being healthy. The fundraising you take part in to support worthy causes shows you are caring people who want to help others. You showed us how responsible you are through your good behaviour. Your school council does a very good job and the headteacher values what pupils have to say on your behalf.

I should be grateful if you would thank your parents for all the very useful information which they provided. They clearly like your school and are happy with the education which it provides but some say they would like to be consulted more about changes which the school intends to make.

We have asked the headteacher, governors and staff to concentrate on making three things even better and you might want to think about how you can help them.

First, we think that some of you could achieve even higher standards.

Second, we have asked the staff to involve you more in setting learning targets and helping you to understand better what you need to do to improve your learning further.

Third, whilst many good things have been done to help your school improve, some things that need to be improved have not been tackled yet. We have asked the staff to concentrate on these areas much more.

Thank you for making our visit to Simonside so enjoyable. Please accept my very best wishes for the future.

Yours faithfully

Tom Grieveson

Her Majesty's Inspector