



# Junction Farm Primary School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 111561  
**LEA** Stockton-on-Tees  
**Inspection number** 278717  
**Inspection dates** 29 March 2006 to 30 March 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mr Keith Oglesby

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Butterfield Drive Eaglescliffe Stockton-on-Tees TS16 0EU
<b>School category</b>	Community	<b>Telephone number</b>	01642 781586
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11	<b>Fax number</b>	01642 391819
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr Jonathan Broughton
<b>Number on roll</b>	175	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Stuart Jones
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body		
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	1 November 2000		

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a small primary school that serves a community of mostly private housing on the outskirts of the market town of Yarm. The children's attainment, when they join the school, is just above average. Private pre-school facilities are available on the site. The percentage of children identified with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is similar to the national average. About 6% of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Three children are at an early stage of learning English. The headteacher has been in post since September 2005.

## 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 and rapidly improving school. Its own view is that its overall effectiveness is satisfactory. The school feels that it has not yet reached all of its ambitious targets, for example in raising standards after some underachievement in the last two years. However, the inspectors believe that since the new headteacher arrived, a great deal has already been achieved. Parents recognise this and are very happy about the education that the school provides. Pupils enjoy school. They feel they are learning well in a place where people look after each other. They are proud of themselves and of the school. The curriculum is good and the good provision for personal development and care is helping children to grow into self-assured and mature individuals. They behave well and work hard.

Provision is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage and children make satisfactory progress in all the areas of learning. In Years 1 to 6 they make good progress in all classes because of consistently good teaching. By the end of Year 6, pupils are reaching the standards expected for their age. The school rightly believes that these should be higher and is well on the way to achieving this. Standards in mathematics and English have been priorities and are rising more quickly than those in science, where children are given too little responsibility in investigative work. Learning has been affected in recent years by an unusually high number of staff changes. However there is now a stable and enthusiastic teaching team in place. This team is working effectively to make sure that all children catch up and achieve as well as they should.

Leadership by the headteacher and deputy headteacher is good. They expect a great deal from teachers, but morale and commitment are very high. The school has clear priorities, based on a rigorous analysis of strengths and weaknesses. Governors have always been supportive, but they are now becoming much more involved in the drive to raise standards. The school provides good value for money. It has dealt with all the points made in the last inspection and has a good capacity to continue to improve.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Give children more responsibility for planning and carrying out investigations in science
- Maintain the momentum of actions to raise standards and achievement in English and mathematics

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Standards by Year 6 were high at the last inspection. However, a steady three-year decline left the school's results below average in the 2004 national tests. This decline was halted last year. Standards in English and mathematics are now average and rising and children's achievement is satisfactory. The improvement has come from a sharper focus on how well children are learning and the use of effective systems to track their

progress. Standards are average in science but rising more slowly, because the teaching does not make the most of the pupils' strengths in reasoning, explaining, and working responsibly in investigations. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are above average.

When children start school in the nursery, their attainment is above that which is typical for their ages. They make steady progress overall and attain the goals set for the learning by the end of the reception year. In Years 1 and 2, because the teaching is consistently good, they make good progress and achieve well. By the end of Year 2, they attain standards that are above average in reading and well above in writing.

Children also make good progress in the junior classes, where teaching is now good in all year groups. The school's assessment data shows that, for the older pupils, learning has been inconsistent in some previous years. These pupils are now working very well and making up lost ground.

The new leadership team has put a strong emphasis on making sure that all pupils achieve well. Those with learning difficulties, higher attaining pupils, and those learning English as an additional language, are all making good progress.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development is good. They like coming to school, enjoy lessons, behave very well and want to learn. They take a lead from the staff's teamwork and enthusiasm in learning to work together. Racial harmony is very good. Spiritual, moral and cultural development is also promoted well. As a result, pupils become thoughtful and responsible members of the school community, good listeners and sensitive to the feelings of others.

Attendance is above average, reflecting how well the school is valued by both pupils and parents. Children feel that their opinions matter. They like having a say in the way the school is run and having responsibilities. Members of the new school council are working very seriously to collect views from every class, for example on the fairest way to organise playground monitors. The children have clear views on how to live a safe and healthy life. Lunchtime is a pleasant event with time to talk about choices and children take plenty of opportunities for physical exercise, both in lessons and clubs. Children are well equipped for the next stage in their education because of their good social skills and positive attitudes; they use technology confidently and their standards in literacy and numeracy are rising.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching is good. It promotes good learning and progress for children of all abilities. The school judges that teaching is satisfactory, a cautious view because

this is a new team with some inexperienced teachers. However, it is a great credit to the leadership that the teaching is already consistently good in all classes. Teamwork is very good and teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to learning.

Teachers have good subject knowledge. They plan lessons thoroughly and make sure there is a good balance of direct teaching, practical activity and individual or group tasks. They make very good use of technology, particularly the electronic whiteboards. Lessons are interesting and move along at a good pace. Teachers make sure that everyone is involved. Good use is made of the school's tracking system to check children's attainment, to set them targets and share with them the progress they are making. For example, gaps identified in mathematics are being tackled successfully by a closer focus on mental work and speedy recall of basic number facts. Pupils' very good behaviour and the positive relationships they have with adults promote good attitudes to learning and strong work habits.

Teaching in science is satisfactory, but some opportunities are missed in experimental work to give children chance to exercise independence and extend their thinking.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is well organised and meets all requirements. Some changes and improvements are comparatively new and more time is needed to evaluate how well they are working. There is a good focus on basic skills, and the new leadership team has been successful in ensuring that the curriculum caters for individual needs. For example, there are good systems to support those with learning difficulties and challenging targets to stretch the most able pupils. Another example is the programme to interest and motivate the high proportion of boys, particularly in writing.

The provision for ICT is good. Pupils are confident users and teachers are increasingly using these skills across the curriculum. There is a reasonable range of after-school clubs. The curriculum is enriched by regular visits and visitors, for example classes go to the theatre and older pupils have an exciting residential trip.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils enjoy good care, guidance and support. Parents appreciate this. Pupils feel secure and know that any concerns will be dealt with promptly. The effective provision in the Foundation Stage helps children to settle well into school routines. The strong partnerships between teachers, support staff, parents and outside agencies make an effective contribution to children's good progress and well-being. Academic and personal achievements are carefully tracked as children move through the school. Pupils are being brought into this process, so they are motivated and know what they need to do to improve. Child protection and health and safety procedures are secure. Arrangements for joining the school, and transferring to secondary education, are good. Pupils in Year 6 said they had no worries about moving on.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The school grades overall leadership as satisfactory, but inspectors judge it as good. The headteacher has been in post only two terms and the long period of frequent staff changes only ended one term ago. In that short time, the energy, vision and humour of the headteacher and deputy headteacher have helped to build an effective and united team. Teachers feel valued; they are open to new ideas and ways to improve. A strong programme of monitoring and support has helped to ensure effective teaching and a rise in standards. Leaders have introduced very good systems to track pupils' progress. This information is being used well in teachers' planning, and to deploy extra help, and motivate pupils. Teachers are also using the assessment data to judge the effectiveness of their teaching.

The school's self-evaluation is rigorous. Parents' and pupils' views are part of this. If leaders sometimes err on the side of caution in their judgements, this reflects how rapidly things are improving. Governors are beginning to take a stronger role. This is because they now have much better information on the school's achievements and weaknesses than previously. The teachers who are subject leaders for English, mathematics and science have a good knowledge of standards throughout the school and good plans to improve them.

This is a happy, but purposeful and ambitious school that knows where it is going. It has come a long way in a short time. Its capacity to improve is therefore good.

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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>	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	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

<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	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	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	2	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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	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>	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	2	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	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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29 March 2006

Dear Children

Thank you for helping us when we visited your school. We both had a really enjoyable two days, meeting adults and children and seeing you and your teachers in action in lessons. Lots of you (and your parents) told us that Junction Farm is a good school. We agree.

These are just some of the things we most liked.

The way you behave, listen, work hard and get on well together.

All the lessons, which were enjoyable, busy and fun, even when the work was really hard.

The respect you have for your teachers, and, of course, the other way round.

The confidence and common sense you show on computers.

The way teachers help you to understand what you have to do to improve.

There were lots of other things of course, but those were some that have stayed in our minds.

What we have asked your school to do now.

Things are moving at Junction Farm, so we only made one suggestion, and that was to improve your standards in science. We had a good look at the work in your books. There are some good things in there and you know quite a lot. We would like to see a bit more of going into unknown territory in science investigations, thinking for yourselves and making decisions. We know you can do it. When we first said this to Mr Jones, he nearly jumped off his chair and shouted, 'That's exactly what I've been saying!' So look out.

Best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Keith Oglesby & Iain Rodger, the Inspection Team.