



Yohden Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 114197
Local Authority Durham
Inspection number 289831
Inspection dates 21–22 November 2006
Reporting inspector Arthur Allison

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Windsor Terrace
School category	Community		Hornden, Peterlee
Age range of pupils	4–11		County Durham, SR8 4HP
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0191 5863096
Number on roll (school)	227	Fax number	0191 5863096
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs Gina Robinson
		Headteacher	Mrs Lindsay Gray
Date of previous school inspection	1 September 2001		

Age group 4–11	Inspection dates 21–22 November 2006	Inspection number 289831
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average sized school, but the number of pupils on roll has been falling for several years. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage and very few have English as an additional language. Social deprivation is higher than that found in most areas. The percentage of children who have learning difficulties and disabilities is higher than in most schools as is the percentage of children entitled to free school meals. Attainment on entry fluctuates but children's language skills are usually well below those expected for children of their age. The school is emerging from a period of staffing difficulties beyond its control.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Yohden is a satisfactory, but improving school that has a good capacity for further improvement. It gives satisfactory value for money. The good leadership of the headteacher, with support from the senior management team, is enabling the school to make progress in raising standards. The school makes good use of funding and support from initiatives such as Excellence in Cities, the Personal Digital Assistant (PDA) project and through links with other schools. The vast majority of parents have every confidence in the school. One wrote at length about the good example set by the headteacher, the school as a caring community and the support provided for parents.

Teaching is satisfactory and enables pupils to achieve satisfactorily by the time they leave the school. There is good teaching; in these classes, pupils make good progress, but this is not a consistent feature across the school. Teachers do not always make the best use of assessment when planning lessons. As a result, work is not always matched accurately to pupils' varying needs. The curriculum is good and meets all requirements. It is enriched by visits and visitors and makes a good contribution to pupils' enjoyment and achievement. The school provides a good level of pastoral care and support for pupils' personal development, but the quality of the guidance and support for their academic development is not consistent across the school.

In Reception, children make good progress from their different starting points. Children who entered Reception in 2005 attained their expected goals in personal development and were close to their expected goals overall. Pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through Years 1 to 6, but progress in Year 2 and Year 6 is good. Standards in 2005 were broadly average in Year 2, reflecting good progress, and well below average in Year 6 indicating inadequate progress. The school's results in the national tests in 2006 were better in Key Stage 1, continuing the upward trend. Results were significantly better in Key Stage 2. English standards are lower than those in mathematics and science because of weaknesses in pupils' writing caused by their limited vocabulary. There are good plans in place to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills in order to develop the range of their vocabulary.

Personal development is satisfactory because, while several aspects are good, attendance is below average and pupils' basic skills of literacy and numeracy are satisfactory. This means that pupils are satisfactorily prepared for the next stage of their education and beyond. Pupils are polite and well-behaved. They know how to stay safe. They are well aware of the need for a balanced diet and exercise for a healthy lifestyle. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and wider communities, supporting charities such as the Tsunami disaster. Older pupils confidently take on responsibilities, which promote their personal development.

Leadership and management, including governance, are satisfactory overall. The evaluation by the school of its work is largely accurate. Teaching and learning are monitored effectively and the school knows where improvements are needed in order

to raise standards. The school has made a number of important improvements since the previous inspection.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the range of pupils' vocabulary to help raise standards in writing.
- Improve consistency in the quality of teaching.
- Improve pupils' attendance.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils attain broadly average standards. Pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities and the very few for whom English is not the language of the home, make satisfactory progress overall. Their achievement is satisfactory. Pupils make fastest progress in Reception, Year 2 and Year 6.

Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress, particularly in their personal development. They attain or are close to attaining all the goals for learning for their age by the end of the Foundation Stage. The results of national tests show an upward trend in Key Stage 1. In the 2005 national tests the attainment of pupils in Year 2 was broadly average with pupils having made good progress. In the 2006 tests, Year 2 pupils did better because more pupils attained at least the nationally expected level for their age.

Results in Key Stage 2 fluctuate widely as the last three years' results show. For example, in 2005, Year 6 pupils made inadequate progress during Key Stage 2 and results were well below average. In 2006, results for pupils in Year 6 were significantly better because many more pupils attained at least the nationally expected Level 4. This is because they made good progress during Year 6. English standards are not as high as mathematics and science because of weaknesses in the quality of pupils' writing.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' personal development and well-being are satisfactory. Most pupils say they enjoy school. Despite this, attendance is unsatisfactory. The school's strategies to improve attendance have not been effective and attendance remains below average. Spiritual, moral and social development are good. As a result, pupils grow in self-confidence, get along well and have an increasing understanding of how to take responsibility for their own behaviour. Behaviour in lessons is good, with only isolated incidents of low level disruptive behaviour. Pupils are rightly proud of their part in the reorganisation of break and lunchtimes. They say that this has improved behaviour through the provision of a range of interesting activities. Pupils are well informed about how to keep themselves safe and value the many opportunities provided for them to discuss problems or concerns with a member of staff. They understand the importance of healthy lifestyles and are successfully encouraged to keep fit and eat

healthy foods. Pupils' development of the skills needed for their future economic well-being is satisfactory. They have good social skills and their basic skills of literacy and numeracy are improving. However, they do not fully understand the importance of regular attendance. While cultural development is satisfactory, their understanding of the cultural diversity of British society is less well developed.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. There are examples of good practice especially in Reception, Years 2 and 6. This is one of the reasons why standards at the end of Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and 2 are improving. In these in these year groups, lessons move at a good pace and pupils are motivated to learn. Through good explanations and effective questioning, teachers ensure that pupils know what it is they are required to learn and how the skills and knowledge gained will be built upon in future lessons. In other classes, the pace of lessons is sometimes too slow and, although pupils know what the teacher requires them to do, they do not always understand what they are learning or why. Consequently, the rate of progress slows. The management of pupils is mainly good and results in good behaviour. Teachers make good use of well-informed teaching assistants to support and extend learning; this is particularly successful for those pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. While teachers have accurate knowledge of what pupils already know, they do not always make the best use of this information when planning lessons. Marking of pupils' work is satisfactory with some that is good. In the best, pupils are given clear guidance of how to improve their work. This is not a consistent feature in all classes.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and meets all requirements. It is founded on personal and social education that, from Reception class, helps to provide children with the skills and attributes to become competent learners. An exciting new project, providing all Year 6 pupils with a PDA, is enhancing information and communication technology skills, extending learning opportunities in other subjects and adding to their enthusiasm for learning. A specialist art teacher also benefits pupils and has led to improved standards and increased enjoyment of the subject. The enrichment that comes from a wide range of after school activities, visits and visitors and opportunities to perform for others, helps pupils to enjoy school and achieve satisfactorily. Arrangements within the school and with other schools provide good opportunities for pupils who are gifted and talented in a range of subjects to increase their expertise. The school is linking work in different subjects more closely to provide increased opportunities for speaking and listening. There are also more planned opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills in subjects other than English. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is good.

There is a good balance between teacher-directed activities and independent learning. Good use is made of the outdoor facilities to extend children's learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Provision for the care, guidance and support of pupils is satisfactory. The school's pastoral care for its pupils is good. Through good links with other agencies and a number of effective strategies, pupils, especially those who are most vulnerable, feel safe and well cared for. Pupils are safeguarded well because the school makes essential checks on staff, has well established procedures for child protection, ensures security and eliminates possible risks. The good support and guidance pupils receive for their personal development means that they readily take on responsibility for themselves and willingly provide help for others. This creates a good platform for learning. Where teachers effectively build upon this by ensuring that pupils know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve, standards are rising. However, this is not consistent in all classes and as a result too many pupils are not given the chance to take responsibility for their own learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher provides good leadership. She is very committed and has a very clear vision of what needs to be done to raise standards, while managing a school with falling rolls and fewer staff. The deployment of teachers and teaching assistants to best meet the needs of pupils is a strong feature of her leadership. For example, the deployment of a teacher with strengths in art is raising standards in art through imaginative and high quality teaching, as seen in a Year 3 class. The school has a largely accurate view of how well it is doing. Good plans are being enacted to raise standards. This is reflected in the good strategies to raise standards in writing and to improve the quality of teaching across the school. This gives the school good capacity to improve.

The school has made many improvements since the previous inspection. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage has improved so children make good progress. Links with parents have been strengthened by having the Family Centre on site. The views of parents and pupils are valued and acted on as appropriate, such as parents' suggestions about the timing of the gymnastics club for pupils in Key Stage 1. The governors, several of them recent appointments, fulfil their responsibilities satisfactorily and are becoming more confident about supporting yet challenging the school.

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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?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	4
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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

Leadership and management

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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Yohden Primary School

Windsor Terrace

Horden

Peterlee

County Durham

SR8 4HP

23 November 2006

Dear Children

We enjoyed our visit to your school. We enjoyed talking to you and were impressed by your friendliness, politeness and your confidence, especially when Year 6 used their PDAs in a speaking and listening session in the hall.

We realise why you are proud of your school and enjoy coming because:

- you are keen to answer questions in lessons and behave well
- you are proud to take on responsibilities such as being members of your class council
- you appreciate the help you get from your headteacher and other staff to help you to make satisfactory progress
- you enjoy the learning opportunities, including the visitors who come to school and the visits you make, such as the museum visit by Year 5 during the inspection
- the school knows what needs to be done to help you to do better, for example through the regular speaking and listening opportunities to help give you a wider vocabulary which you can then draw on to improve your writing .

As a result of what we saw and what you said to us, we have asked the school to become better by:

- helping you to reach higher standards in your writing
- ensuring that teaching is as good in every class as it is already in some classes
- taking steps to ensure that more of you attend regularly. You can help by making sure you are in school much more regularly.

Yours sincerely

Mr Allison and Mrs Buller

The Inspection team