

Front Street Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108350
Local Authority	Gateshead
Inspection number	309655
Inspection dates	3–4 March 2008
Reporting inspector	Michael Sheridan

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 on roll	
School	438
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Cllr Mrs Mary Wallace
Headteacher	Mr Paul Sergison
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2003
School address	Front Street Whickham Newcastle upon Tyne Gateshead NE16 4AD
Telephone number	0191 4335677
Fax number	0191 4335676

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Front Street Primary School is a larger than average primary school with a Nursery. It is situated in the Whickham ward of Gateshead and takes most of its pupils from the immediate area. The school is situated on a split site. The number of pupils in the school with a learning difficulty and/or disability is below the national average although the number of pupils with a statement of special educational need is about average. The number of pupils who receive free school meals is about average. The school has achieved the Healthy School Award, Basic Skills Award and Artsmark Silver.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Front Street Primary School is a good school. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the leadership, staff and ethos of the school. Parents say the school listens to any concerns and works hard to deal with any issues that are within their control. A parent's comment that was typical of many said that, 'We feel that Front Street Primary is a very good school that nurtures its pupils and prepares them for their transition to secondary school.'

Teaching is good and pupils make good progress as they move through the school. When pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6, they have reached standards in English, mathematics and science that are above average.

Pupils are very well supported in school. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are quickly identified and good quality support is provided so that they make good progress. Academic guidance is good overall. Most pupils know their targets. They understand what they are learning about and what they need to do to be successful. In the classes where this is best developed, pupils are able to talk confidently about the progress they are making in a particular lesson and reflect accurately on what they could do to improve further. In these classes, academic guidance is effective in ensuring pupils make very good progress in their learning.

Care, guidance and support are good. Pupils have to cross a public street to move between some classrooms, the school hall and the dining room. Despite the clear difficulties that this presents, the comprehensive procedures in place to manage the movement of pupils mean that this is done in a safe and ordered way. Several parents commented on the frustration felt at the limitations of the site and, rightly, recognised the efforts made by the school to make the best of these facilities.

The good curriculum means that most pupils enjoy their education. There is a strong focus on basic skills within a rich curriculum which includes a good mix of sporting and artistic experiences. However, opportunities for pupils to learn about other cultures and communities in this country and in the wider world are superficial. These opportunities do not sufficiently prepare pupils for living and working in a diverse, multicultural society.

Despite pupils' limited knowledge of other cultures, their personal development and well-being are good. Pupils behave well and understand the importance of conducting themselves sensibly around the school. They take care of themselves and understand the importance of healthy eating.

Leadership is good. Senior leaders have a good understanding of the school's strengths and are determined in their efforts to improve the school further. They are ambitious for the school and committed to the best for every child. The headteacher is ably supported by his deputy who ensures that the school continues to run effectively when he is off-site.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children get off to a good start in the Nursery and make good progress. Exciting activities give them many opportunities to learn to work and play together. Children develop an understanding of the needs of others. There have been significant improvements in the Reception classes. Now, children of both classes work as a unit and at times they are grouped so that the needs of children of similar abilities can be more readily and accurately met. Planning is good and

takes account of what has gone before so that progress is also good. Leadership and management are good. Teachers constantly assess children's progress and use the information effectively. Support for children individually and in groups is good. The provision of an outdoor curriculum with continuous access by children in the Nursery is good. However, Reception classes do not have such access. Although Reception staff work hard to plan daily outdoor activity, children have insufficient opportunities to learn outdoors across the curriculum.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding, appreciation and empathy with other cultures within our multicultural society and in the wider world.
- Extend opportunities for Reception children to learn outdoors.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress throughout the school. Generally, pupils enter Key Stage 1 with skills and experiences typical for their age. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1. Standards at the end of Year 2 have improved since the last inspection and are now above average.

Pupils continue to make good progress in Key Stage 2. In 2007, in end of Key stage 2 national tests, pupils reached standards in English, mathematics and science that were above average. This was from a starting point of broadly average standards at the end of Key Stage 1.

Pupils with learning disabilities and/or difficulties make good progress because of the good additional support and guidance that is tailored to their needs. The most able pupils in the school make very good progress and reach standards that are well above the national average.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being are good. Pupils behave well and show good attitudes to learning. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good. However, pupils have limited knowledge and understanding of other cultures and their traditions. Pupils enjoy coming to school and settle into their class community. Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of a healthy diet. They develop a good knowledge of food types and understand how these contribute to a healthy lifestyle. Pupils understand the need to take care in a range of situations and are aware of the dangers that some substances present. Good contributions to the school and the greater community are shown in pupils' readiness to take on responsibility. They give their time and efforts to the benefit of others, such as their work in support of local gardening and floral competitions. Attendance is good. The school tracks absence and involves other agencies when support is necessary. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Events such as the young enterprise initiative and the organisation of fund raising, alongside the standards they achieve, contribute effectively to the pupils' future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching overall is good. Pupils learn consistently well. Teachers make good use of a variety of resources to actively engage learners in their work. Information and communication

technology is used effectively to motivate pupils and make learning more interesting. Teachers assess pupils' progress accurately and usually provide good advice on how they can improve. Most teachers are skilled at ensuring that work remains demanding. Correct subject vocabulary is used whilst explaining concepts in pupil-friendly language. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good. The school sets appropriately demanding targets for all pupils. Most work set in lessons provides good challenge on an individual basis. When it does not, some pupils lose concentration, their attention drifts and learning is satisfactory. Some teaching is outstanding. In these lessons, pupils are engrossed in learning. They fully understand what they are learning about, what they need to do to be successful and what they can do to improve further. In these lessons the mutual trust between the teacher and pupils is very strong.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and provides the opportunity for all pupils to achieve well. The school makes good use of external agencies to enhance the curriculum such as a visiting author to tell stories to all classes. Basic skills are promoted well across the curriculum and within literacy and numeracy lessons. Opportunities for pupils to develop and practise literacy skills in other subjects are effectively mapped out.

Enrichment is a strength within the curriculum. There are good opportunities to take part in sport with links to other agencies and organisations including the local Sports College. Music tuition is offered to pupils for a wide variety of instruments on a regular basis. There are a good range of extra-curricular activities including a very popular and successful gardening club. Visits are used well to offer pupils the chance to relate the work they do to the world outside school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Support for pupils is good with some very good features. The school makes particularly good use of external agencies in caring for the most vulnerable pupils. Systems to support and guide pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are very effective and promote good achievement. The monitoring of progress made by pupils receiving extra support is rigorous and is used well to ensure their needs continue to be met. Safeguarding systems meet existing government guidelines.

Academic guidance is good. Teachers give pupils clear information in relation to what they need to do in order to improve their work. The practice of pupils' assessment of their own work is well embedded. The older pupils are frequently given the opportunity to assess each other's work which also serves to promote personal development. In this and other aspects of the school's work, teachers demonstrate a determination to promote the personal development and well-being of the pupils.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The senior management team have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and areas that it needs to develop. They work well together and develop strong links with other agencies to achieve their aims. The headteacher has built a team that works effectively together towards common goals. Middle leaders

effectively drive school improvement through good quality professional development, managing teacher performance and setting high standards and expectations. Governance is good. Individual governors support the school using their own areas of expertise and offer appropriate challenge to the head when evaluating school improvement. Governors annually review their statutory duties and ensure that these are met. Improvement since the last inspection is good and the capacity to improve further is good.

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Annex A

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

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
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?	2

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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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

8 March 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Front Street Community Primary School, Gateshead,
NE16 4AD

As you will know, I visited your school recently, along with Peter Bannon and Geoff Watson to conduct an inspection. Thank you very much for making us so welcome and talking to us so honestly and freely. This letter is to let you know what we found out.

You and your parents were keen to tell us that your school is good. We agree. Your school is a good school. We found that it looks after you well and it gives you interesting and challenging activities to help you learn. We think that your teachers work hard to make your school a bright and exciting place to be. You get along with staff and other children well. We found that your school is difficult to get around because of slopes outside and the road that you have to cross for some classrooms and the dining hall. However, because you behave sensibly and your school has thought of good systems to help you move safely, you overcome these problems well.

We have asked your school to improve a couple of things to make your school even better:

- Find a way to give Reception children better outdoor learning. Children in the Nursery classes have a very good space right next to the building with a door that leads straight out. This allows teachers in the Nursery to plan lots of activities outside. Reception classes don't have the same space connected to their classrooms and we found that this means they don't learn and play outdoors as often.
- Help you learn about other cultures and communities. Britain is a multi-cultural society. This means that lots of different people from different places live together. These groups of people may have different experiences and beliefs. Sometimes when people with different cultures don't understand each other, problems arise. We want you to have more opportunities to learn about and from different cultures and communities.

I wish you the all the very best.

Michael Sheridan

Lead inspector