

Redesdale Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108599
Local Authority	North Tyneside
Inspection number	309737
Inspection dates	11–12 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Moira Fitzpatrick

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	287
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Peter Thorp
Headteacher	Mrs Alison Nicholson
Date of previous school inspection	1 June 2005
School address	Wiltshire Drive Wallsend Tyne and Wear NE28 8TS
Telephone number	0191 2007326
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a slightly larger than average size school. The majority of pupils are White British with about ten percent of pupils from a Chinese heritage. There is a lower than average proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language and very few are at an early stage of speaking English. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is slightly below average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well below average although the proportion with a statement of special educational need is average. The school holds a number of national awards including Healthy School, Activemark, Basic Skills Award and the Artsmark. There has been a change of leadership in the school since the last inspection. A new headteacher was appointed in 2006 and a new deputy headteacher took up post in 2007.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school's effectiveness is satisfactory. There are good features in some aspects of its work. Standards are above average overall by the end of Year 6. Pupils' progress in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 is satisfactory. Pupils currently in Year 2 reach average standards. Pupils' overall achievement is satisfactory. The school has halted the recent gradual decline in Year 6 results and more pupils are now reaching the higher levels of attainment. However, variations in progress continue to detract from pupils' overall achievement. Generally, standards are not as high in writing as they are in reading and mathematics and fewer pupils reach the higher level in this subject. This is because pupils throughout the school are not given enough opportunities to write independently and at length.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. This is because the staff pay close attention to this area of development through a well planned personal, social and health education programme. Consequently pupils know how to stay healthy and fit, form good relationships and understand the importance of good behaviour in creating a calm and secure community. They enjoy coming to school, as their good attendance testifies, and work hard at all they do. Pupils are keen to contribute to the community through the school council, by volunteering for jobs around the school and by their involvement in performances for the school and wider communities. By the time they leave at the end of Year 6 pupils are well prepared for the future with good all round skills.

The school provides good care and pastoral support for all pupils and parents agree that their children are well cared for and secure in school. Guidance and support for learning are satisfactory and improving. New systems for assessing and tracking pupils' progress are having a positive impact on raising pupils' achievement. However, these are not yet accurate enough to set targets that are challenging for all pupils. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers generally give clear explanations and set interesting tasks that engage and interest pupils. Good learning occurs when teachers explain what pupils will learn in the lesson and then keep regular checks on this as the lesson progresses. This keeps the learning moving at a brisk pace. The satisfactory curriculum is well enriched by extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors and themed events such as the recent arts week.

Leadership, management and governance are satisfactory. The headteacher has given a good lead in raising pupils' achievement by introducing new systems to track their learning more rigorously. She is ambitious for all pupils to achieve the very best and her determination in this has overcome some obstacles. She has won the support of staff and governors to her vision for high achievement so that pupils are achieving better now than at this time last year. However, the targets that are set for staff to assist the school's improvement do not make them accountable enough for their pupils' progress. Governors give effective support to the school. While the school's evaluation of its effectiveness is satisfactory, this is mainly done by the headteacher; other leaders, managers and governors do not have the detailed knowledge they need to play a full part in the school's development. The school's capacity to improve is satisfactory.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children enter Nursery with skills and abilities that are typical for their age. Children make satisfactory progress so that by the end of Reception they have nearly all reached the goals set for their learning and each year some exceed these. The assessment and tracking of children's learning is improving and this information is being used well to plan activities to meet the needs of each child, including children with English as an additional language. An example of this is the national Letters and Sounds programme through which children of all abilities in Reception are confidently learning to read and write. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Where resources are used well, teaching is good and children are motivated and engaged in their learning. In less focused lessons learning slows and progress is only satisfactory. The curriculum is satisfactory. It is enriched by the Rising Sun Woodland Project which promotes environmental awareness and the creative arts and raises children's confidence in learning outdoors. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Parents say their children are happy and feel safe and that they are well informed of their children's progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards in writing and provide pupils with more opportunities for independent and extended writing throughout the school.
- Improve the accuracy of teachers' assessment and their use of assessment information to set challenging targets for all pupils.
- Increase the rigour and regularity of monitoring by senior managers, subject leaders and governors.
- Set targets for improvement which make teachers accountable for their pupils' standards and progress.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged to be satisfactory but have areas of under performance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Overall achievement is satisfactory. There are variations in rates of progress in different year groups and subjects. Standards are above average by Year 6, as seen in lessons and pupils' current work. Effective action is being taken to raise standards after recent decline.

Pupils join Year 1 with attainments that are broadly typical for their age; they make satisfactory progress to reach average standards by the end of Year 2. A slight dip in standards in writing is being successfully addressed with the introduction of the national Letters and Sounds programme in Year 1. Standards in writing here are above age related expectations. The school's overall Year 6 national tests results declined from 2004 but remained significantly above average. In 2007 they fell to broadly average although the mathematics results remained stronger. Progress is satisfactory for all groups of pupils. This is an improvement on the progress made by Year 6 last year when not enough of the more able pupils reached the higher levels in writing and science. Improved teaching and more regular tracking of pupils' progress has increased the proportion of pupils reaching the higher level in these subjects this year and pupils are on course to reach the challenging targets that have been set. Standards in writing are still not high enough however. New procedures are alerting the school to any underachievement so

that teachers can take early remedial action. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make the same progress as other pupils and the Chinese pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language, have made good progress this year.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being, including the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. Pupils are polite and friendly and they freely express their views about their work and school life. They say they enjoy school especially subjects such as art, history and physical education and appreciate the extra-curricular opportunities provided. This is reflected in their above average attendance. Pupils have a good awareness of how to stay healthy. They eat fruit and healthy meals and readily take part in the many sporting opportunities offered. Behaviour is good and pupils feel confident in approaching staff if they have concerns. Pupils contribute well to the school and local communities. They take their responsibilities as buddies, house captains and school council representatives very seriously and are aware of the impact these roles have within the school. The school council, for example, helped improve the lunchtime routines and are proud of their role in interviewing a new member of staff. By the time they leave in Year 6 pupils are mature, responsible young people who are well equipped for their future learning.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. During the inspection some good teaching was seen and many lessons contained good features. Teachers give clear explanations and ensure that pupils know what they are expected to learn in lessons. Where teaching is good, teachers share success criteria with pupils and this helps them to monitor their progress towards the targets that are set. This motivates pupils well and spurs them on to move at a brisk pace so that their learning is good. The teaching of the basic skills of reading, writing, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) ensures that pupils gain a secure knowledge and understanding of them. A relative weakness is that too few opportunities are provided for pupils to consolidate and develop these skills by writing independently and at length. Teachers' assessment of pupils' learning varies in its accuracy and impact. This year the school has introduced a new marking policy and more regular assessment of pupils' learning. As yet these have not embedded sufficiently to be consistent across the school although where teachers' marking gives advice for improvement this has a positive impact on progress. The accuracy of teachers' assessment is also variable so it cannot always be used effectively to set challenging targets for all pupils so that they always learn at a brisk rate.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and there are a number of good features. Provision for literacy and numeracy is satisfactory ensuring that pupils make satisfactory progress in the acquisition of basic skills. The needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are met by dedicated support staff. Their approach to supporting pupils to learn letters and sounds is particularly strong. A good programme of personal, social and health education ensures pupils

know the importance of staying safe and keeping healthy. The curriculum is being revised to give more relevance and interest to pupils' learning. A good example of this was the work done in a recent arts week. This project gave pupils many opportunities to use a range of skills. Art is a strength of the school and the focused week provided an opportunity for the whole school to work together. The curriculum is well enriched by visits and visitors and good links with other schools and providers. There is a wide range of very popular sporting and arts activities in and out of school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The care and support for pupils' personal development is good. Pupils feel safe in school because they know staff will listen to them if they have any concerns. Parents are justifiably confident that their children are well looked after in school. All procedures for safeguarding pupils are in place. Support for pupils with learning difficulties is satisfactory overall, and good where additional expertise and support are provided. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress due to the good support they receive in class and from expert visiting staff. Guidance to improve learning is satisfactory and developing. The relatively new assessment systems are beginning to have an impact on raising achievement. Increasing numbers of pupils know their targets in English and mathematics. Although marking is positive, it does not always indicate whether pupils have achieved their targets or advise them about how to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership, management and governance are satisfactory. Since taking up post at the start of the last school year, the headteacher has made a good analysis of what the school needs to do in order to improve pupils' progress and raise standards even further. Despite accurate identification of priorities for improvement, the rate of progress has only been satisfactory because of substantial staff changes and some staffing instability in that time. Nevertheless, the school is moving forward steadily on the important issues of pupils' progress and staff expertise. New systems are becoming embedded which are beginning to impact on the rate of learning and there are some examples of good practice in assessment and marking upon which the school can build. Monitoring and evaluating the school's work are satisfactory although the bulk of this is done by the headteacher with support from the senior leadership team. Staff and governors have limited involvement in monitoring activities. While performance management is well established teachers are not accountable enough for the standards and the progress that their pupils achieve. Governors are very supportive of the school's development but do not have enough first hand knowledge of teaching, learning and standards to hold the school effectively to account.

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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?	3
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	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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?	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?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
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.

Annex A

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
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

13 June 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Redesdale Primary School, North Tyneside, NE28 8TS

Many thanks for making our recent inspection so positive and enjoyable and for the help you gave us to find out about your school. Please pass on our thanks to your parents for sending us their views of the school. They are very pleased that you attend Redesdale because you are well looked after and cared for. We agree with them; your teachers take good care of you and can spot quickly if you have any concerns or need help.

Your school is satisfactory. This means that your teachers help you to make steady progress in your learning so that you nearly always reach the standard you are capable of. A few of you do not do as well in writing as you might, and your school is going to give you more time for writing so that you learn to do it by yourself more often. To help you learn more quickly your teachers are going to look at your work more closely and set you harder targets. Your school helps you to develop good personal qualities which will serve you well throughout your life. Your courtesy and consideration for others do you credit and makes your school a calm and happy place to learn. You have a good understanding of how to stay healthy and fit and are lucky to have so many sporting and other activities to choose from at lunchtime and after school. There are many interesting things happening in school, such as the lovely arts week you just had, and you certainly make the most of them. We were delighted with your wonderful displays all about pirates and adventure on the high seas. The standard of your art work is higher than we usually see – well done!

Your school has been through a few changes in recent years. This has meant that staff and new governors need to get a clearer picture of what is happening in your classrooms to help your school become even better. You might notice that you have more visits to your classroom as they come to look at how well you are getting on. You can help by working as hard as you do now and by trying harder when you write on your own.

We send you and your teachers our good wishes for the future and for a good summer holiday.

Yours sincerely

Moira Fitzpatrick

Lead inspector