

Neville's Cross Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114130
Local Authority	Durham
Inspection number	311496
Inspection date	14 July 2008
Reporting inspector	David Earley

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	187
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr Nigel Martin
Headteacher	Mrs Hazel Bullock
Date of previous school inspection	1 July 2005
School address	Relly Path Neville's Cross Durham County Durham DH1 4JG
Telephone number	0191 384 2249
Fax number	0191 383 0550

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: pupil progress, the quality of teaching and learning, personal development and well-being. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in the report.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average size school on the edge of Durham. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is below average. Most pupils are of White British backgrounds with a small number from minority ethnic groups. A small proportion of pupils learn English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. There is a very small number of pupils looked after by the local authority. The school has achieved the Healthy Schools Status, Artsmark Silver Award, Activemark and the intermediate International School Award.

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 school that gives good value for money. There are some outstanding features. Important elements in this are the very strong leadership of the headteacher and the shared commitment of staff and governors to raise standards and improve provision. This is enhanced by outstanding personal development and the excellent curriculum.

Achievement is good and standards are above average. Pupils make good progress from Foundation Stage to Year 6. In 2007, the results of the teacher assessments in Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics were average, as were the Year 6 results in the national tests in mathematics and science. In English they were significantly above average. Overall results in 2007 in both key stages dipped from previous years, when they were significantly above average. This is because these pupils had a different range of abilities from those of previous years. However, their achievement was good. Pupils in the current Year 2 achieve well but assessments show that overall standards are below average because there is a higher than usual proportion of pupils who need extra support with their learning in this group. Achievement in the current Year 6 is good and pupils are on track to reach above average standards.

Personal development and well-being, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are outstanding. Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and this is a significant factor in their good progress. They enjoy coming to school, know how to keep safe and their behaviour is excellent. Attendance is above average. Pupils have an extremely clear understanding of how to lead healthy lifestyles. They make a very good contribution to the school and wider community. Pupils act as peer mediators, playtime guardians and some are trained in first aid. Their understanding of cultural diversity is excellent. The traditions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds are celebrated and there are very strong links with schools in other countries. There is a very close focus on literacy, numeracy and information and communication and technology (ICT), and many opportunities for pupils to understand the world of work. They are confident, have high self-esteem and are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

Teaching and learning are good. This leads to good progress. Teachers make good use of assessment to provide tasks which challenge pupils to extend their learning. Their good subject knowledge is usually used well to provide clear explanations and ask challenging questions. Occasionally, when teaching is satisfactory, the rate of learning slows as pupils are less attentive and insufficient time is taken to give clear explanations of what is expected of them. Lessons are usually lively and interesting so that pupils enjoy learning. For example, when children in the Reception class discussed shells found on their visit to the beach, their vocabularies were increased. Good use is made of teaching assistants, particularly in support of pupils who find learning difficult, those who learn English as an additional language and children looked after by the council. This enables them to progress at the same rate as their peers.

The curriculum is excellent. A very wide range of visits and visitors and after school clubs helps to make learning enjoyable and to extend skills. When pupils go on residential visits or are visited by local clergy or representatives of different cultures, their horizons are widened and learning is extended. This is enhanced by an excellent focus on the arts and by links with schools in India, China and France. French is taught and pupils have opportunities to learn Mandarin as part of an after school club. Excellent provision for personal, social and health education successfully supports pupils' ability to stay healthy and keep fit. Pupils have very good

opportunities to use their skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT in other subjects in order to extend learning and make it more relevant.

Care, guidance and support are good. This is a very close-knit school community where pupils and their families are well known. Most parents are very positive about the care and support provided by the school. Speaking for many, one parent commented that, 'The school has a wonderful, warm and friendly atmosphere.' The school does all that it can to ensure that pupils are safeguarded. It has received accreditation from the local authority for its anti-bullying work and pupils say that they feel safe and well cared for. Because relationships are very good, pupils are confident to approach an adult should they have a problem. Assessment and tracking systems to monitor pupils' academic progress are effective and give teachers and pupils a good understanding of what they need to do in order to improve.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides very strong leadership and is well supported by her deputy. Staff and governors work well together and share a clear vision for improvement. This leads to good progress and excellent personal development.

Self-evaluation is good and provides the foundation for a realistic and well focused development plan. For example, an analysis of performance data led to the implementation of strategies which have improved standards in mathematics in Key Stage 2. Governance is good. Governors know the school very well and are very supportive. They perform their duties conscientiously and rigorous monitoring enables them to hold the school to account for its performance. Good progress has been made since the previous inspection and this, together with very purposeful leadership and the commitment and vision of staff and governors, gives the school good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision in the Foundation Stage (Reception) is good and children get off to a good start. When children enter the Foundation Stage, their skills are typical for their age. By the end of the Reception year, most exceed the expected levels for their age. Excellent relationships and strong links with parents enable the children to feel happy and secure and grow in confidence and independence. The curriculum is good overall. The indoor curriculum is stimulating and exciting. The outdoor curriculum, where the range and quality of activities is more limited, is satisfactory. The school is aware of the need to improve this. The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of visits and visitors. These help to extend skills and make learning fun. There are lots of practical activities which are well linked to the development of language and mathematical skills so that pupils make good progress. Teaching is good and planning is carefully linked to assessment so that tasks are appropriately challenging. Leadership and management are good and good links with Key Stage 1 help to ensure continuity of learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better.
- Improve the range and quality of provision in the Foundation Stage outdoor area.

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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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
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?	1
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

15 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Neville's Cross Primary School, Durham, DH1 4JG

Thank you for your warm welcome when I inspected your school. Your school is good and there are some parts that are excellent. I was really impressed by the way everyone was friendly and helped each other. I was also impressed by your understanding of how to eat sensibly, keep fit and stay healthy. Playtime guardians and mediators do an excellent job in helping others, as do those of you who are trained in first aid. You are also helpful to those less fortunate than yourselves when you raise funds for charities. You told me that you enjoy coming to school and feel well looked after. You are very polite and courteous and your attendance is good.

These are some of the things your school does well:

- lessons are interesting and fun and this helps you to learn well
- you know a lot about the way people live in our own and other countries
- a careful check is kept on how well you are doing
- you have lots of interesting visits and visitors and after school clubs so there is lots to do
- your behaviour is excellent.

These are some of the things the school is going to do to get even better:

- check that all lessons are exciting and you are clear about what you are going to learn
- make the outside area for younger children more exciting.

Thank you again for your politeness and courtesy.

Yours sincerely

David Earley

Lead inspector