

Lemington Riverside Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108456
Local Authority	Newcastle upon Tyne
Inspection number	324773
Inspection dates	4–5 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Dean Jackson

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	155
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Margaret Shipley
Headteacher	Mrs Susan Hall
Date of previous school inspection	2 February 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Rokeby Street Lemington Newcastle upon Tyne Tyne and Wear NE15 8RR

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	4–5 June 2009
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average school situated in an area of high social and economic disadvantage. The proportion of pupils entitled to a free school meal is significantly higher than the national average. A small proportion of pupils are from a minority ethnic background for whom English is not the first language. The proportion of pupils who experience learning difficulties and/or disabilities is higher than the national average. The school provides for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. It has achieved a number of external awards including the Basic Skills Award, Healthy Schools Award and the Gold Eco Schools 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 which has made good improvement since it was last inspected. Standards are broadly average and pupils' achievement is good after starting school from a position well below what is typical. Strong, shared leadership and management give the school a real sense of purpose and a determination to make the school as good as possible. Pupils are keen to do well and they talk about their work knowledgeably and confidently. The school makes an excellent contribution to the local community but its contribution is weaker in developing pupils' understanding of the cultural diversity of modern Britain and the wider world. The staff work hard to engage pupils and their families in all that the school has to offer. Parents are positive about the school, with one expressing a typical comment, 'I have watched both my children make excellent progress at school. They enjoy it. Nice staff, nice atmosphere.' Pupils enjoy school enormously; one Year 5 pupil stated that, 'This school is the best. It prepares you for life. The teachers are really kind and will do anything to help when you're stuck with something.'

After starting school with standards that are well below what is typical for their age, pupils make good progress during their time in school. They leave Year 6 with standards in English, mathematics and science that are broadly average. This represents good achievement when their starting points are considered. Inspection findings show that pupils in the current Year 6 are working at a higher level than in previous years, with the quality of writing in particular being much improved. The high numbers of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in school and the pupils with English as an additional language make good progress because they are well supported in class and their progress is carefully monitored.

The quality of teaching is good and at times outstanding. Interesting tasks are usually provided that engage and motivate pupils. There are particular strengths in the teaching of writing with pupils benefiting from frequent opportunities to write for a wide range of reasons and in many different styles. One Year 6 child wrote in their description of the Angel of the North, 'Its body towering above me, the colossal statue stood on top of the great hill, almost guarding the north-east of England'. Teachers develop pupils' understanding of how to improve their work through good use of discussions. The quality of marking in pupils' books, however, varies. It does not consistently give guidance to pupils about how they can improve and meet their targets. Pupils benefit from a good curriculum. Good opportunities are provided to develop the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology using topics that appeal to, and meet the needs of all groups of pupils.

Pupils make good progress in their personal development. Relationships between pupils and teachers are very positive. Behaviour is excellent; pupils listen carefully to their teachers and try hard with their work. They have a good understanding of how to stay safe. Attendance is below the national average but is inline with similar schools. The school has introduced a range of strategies to boost attendance and these are starting to have a positive impact. The quality of care that the school provides is good. Staff are diligent in making sure that pupils are well cared for and that safeguarding procedures meet current requirements.

The school is managed well and this is recognised and appreciated by parents. The senior management team, led well by the headteacher, provides strong leadership and has steadily moved the school forward since the last inspection. The school's development plans are comprehensive and provide a secure platform for any future improvements. The governing

body has made great efforts to offer better support and challenge to the school and the quality of their work is much improved since the last inspection.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

The school is highly effective in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Excellent leadership and management has created a caring and welcoming environment in which children flourish. This results in all children making exceptional progress with most achieving their learning targets, and many exceeding them.

Children's attainment on entry is well below what is typical for their age especially in language development and social skills. An excellent personal, social and health education programme provides effectively for children's well-being. Children settle quickly into routines benefiting from the excellent support they receive in class and the strong links made with parents and carers. Children form very good relationships with each other and with adults and are keen to learn. There is a good balance between adult-directed and child-initiated activities. Many exciting opportunities are planned for children to learn through first-hand experiences which are closely matched to their needs and interests. For example, Nursery children enjoyed planting butternut squash in their garden while children in Reception have sown a whole array of flowers and vegetables and are now watching them grow. The outdoor play area caters well for all areas of learning and provides many and varied opportunities for children to develop independence. As a result, they soon develop high levels of confidence. The outstanding progress in all areas of learning prepares the children very well for their next stage of their education.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the quality of marking is consistently good across the school in order to support pupils' progress targets and to make clear to pupils what they have done well and what they need to do to improve.
- Develop the pupils' understanding of the cultural diversity of modern Britain and the wider world.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good. Pupils enter Key Stage 1 with a majority reaching standards that are average in each area of learning. They make good progress in Years 1 and 2 because of the good and, at times, outstanding teaching. By the end of Year 2, they have attained average standards in each of the last three years and this is despite an above average proportion having learning disabilities and difficulties. A slight decline in standards in 2008 and similar performance in the current year are the result of the improved accuracy of the school's new assessment procedures.

In Key Stage 2, results in the national tests have been broadly average. However, inspection evidence shows that the current Year 6 are making particularly good progress in both writing and mathematics. Standards are rising and are currently higher than in 2008. This is because the school has made the literacy and numeracy curriculum more interesting and challenging for the pupils. It has also refined the systems for monitoring and assessing pupils' work so that they know what they need to do to improve. Across the school, pupils with learning difficulties

and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language, make good progress towards their targets.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. From an early age, they begin to understand the difference between right and wrong and are increasingly able to take turns, share and get along with their friends. They thoroughly enjoy learning and they grow in confidence as they move through school because they experience success. They develop positive attitudes to learning and are able to reflect on the quality of their work. They feel safe and secure, and they understand that rules exist for the benefit of everyone. Pupils' behaviour is excellent and their respect for others is exemplary. Even the youngest children say 'thank you' as a matter of course when given something. A range of visits and visitors, such as African drummers, enables pupils to develop a satisfactory awareness of other cultures in the wider world, although their depth of understanding does not match their very good understanding of their local culture. Pupils know the importance of diet and exercise to their health and well-being. They make healthy choices in their eating and take part in a range of physical activities such as the Football in the Community scheme. They know what it is to be a good citizen and are involved in making decisions for the good of the school and the local community. Pupils confidently use technology to aid learning and are developing essential qualities such as teamwork and problem solving, all of which will stand them in good stead for the future. While attendance is below the national average, it is in line with that of similar schools and an increasing number of pupils have very good attendance each year.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good and, at times, outstanding. Lessons are planned well and provide pupils with interesting and exciting opportunities to learn. As a result, pupils' behaviour is excellent and there is a calm and busy working atmosphere in classrooms. The teaching of writing is improving and pupils enjoy using the new interesting and well structured methods to make their writing even better. The teaching of mathematics benefits from the numerous opportunities for pupils to use appropriate resources including information and communication technology (ICT) to solve problems and to discuss their work with each other to clarify their understanding of concepts. The work provided in lessons is planned well to reflect pupils differing abilities and gives appropriate challenge for all pupils, including the more able. Teachers make their expectations very clear and pupils respond well by concentrating hard and trying their best to meet the targets they have been set. However, although teachers know their pupils well and provide good verbal feedback to children, the quality of teachers' marking in pupils' books varies considerably and does not always offer pupils advice on how they can further improve their work. Most lessons move along at a good rate and, where the teaching is outstanding, the high expectations and imaginative activities generate a swift pace of learning that pupils thoroughly enjoy. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported by skilled classroom assistants who ensure that good progress is made in lessons.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. Recent improvements have been well managed and appropriately targeted to ensure that the curriculum more closely matches pupils' needs. Good attention is paid to the development of pupils' literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills. The curriculum is monitored carefully to ensure that all pupils are benefiting equally. For example, after careful analysis, teaching staff have identified specific areas of the curriculum where challenging writing tasks can be introduced that will make pupils' writing more meaningful to them, such as reports on key historical events of the last 100 years as part of the school's centenary celebrations. As a consequence, pupils say that they enjoy writing more than they used to and are producing written work of a higher quality than at the time of the last inspection.

Pupils benefit from a good range of extra-curricular activities, residential visits and regular trips to places of educational interest to enrich their experiences. Such first hand experiences and specialist visitors promote pupils' personal development and give them an increasing awareness of how to be responsible citizens, particularly in their local community. The curriculum does not, however, provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to develop a sufficient understanding of the cultural diversity of modern Britain and other communities both in Europe and globally.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The quality of care, guidance and support for pupils is good. The school provides a safe and secure environment and ensure that arrangements for safeguarding pupils and maintaining their health and safety meet current requirements. Throughout the school, the effective use of praise and rewards leads to positive attitudes, excellent behaviour and an enjoyment of learning. Displays are attractive and give a clear message to pupils that their work is valued. Pupils' progress is monitored well and learners who are at risk of underachieving are identified and provided with additional support which ensures that they generally make good progress. Feedback to pupils on how to improve their work is used effectively by some teachers but this is inconsistent. Pupils know their individual learning targets and are increasingly involved in reviewing them on a regular basis. The school works well with parents and other agencies and does all in its power to involve them in improving attendance and punctuality, and to support learning at home.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher and other senior staff, provides the school with the drive that has brought about good improvement since the last inspection. A rigorously implemented programme of development has resulted in higher quality teaching and improved pupil learning. In addition, the more comprehensive assessments of pupils' work that now take place, particularly in Key Stage 1, provide the leadership and management with a far more accurate picture of how well pupils are progressing. These improvements demonstrate that the school has a good capacity to improve in future.

The management team work enthusiastically to sustain the current improvement in the school. School self evaluation is accurate although it is over cautious in the judgements it makes of itself. Most importantly, the school identifies the most pressing priorities for the school and sets challenging and clear targets for its improvement. Governance of the school is much improved since the last inspection. The governing body, led by a dedicated and dynamic chair of governors, provides good support and challenge to the headteacher, takes its role extremely seriously and is fully involved in the development of the school.

Through the inclusive atmosphere it promotes and its strong local links, the school acts as a clear focal point for its pupils and the community. Although the school's contribution to community cohesion is satisfactory the pupils' understanding of the multicultural nature of Britain and the global community is less well developed. The parents and carers who returned questionnaires were unanimous in their support for the school and clearly believe that behaviour in school, an issue at the last inspection, has improved.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	1
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 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

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	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

8 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Lemington Riverside Primary School, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE15 8RR

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you, looking at your work and finding out about what you enjoy doing in school. We know that you think Lemington Riverside is a good school and, having spent two days at your school, we agree with you. Your behaviour is excellent, you enjoy your work and you try hard to look after each other. We just wish we had managed to meet Year 6 pupils as we would like to have talked to you about the very good writing we saw in your books; however, we hope you enjoyed your field trip.

We think that your school is well led and managed so that everyone at Lemington Riverside works hard to make sure that you are safe and well cared for in school. Good teaching helps you to improve at a good rate in your time in school and reach average standards in your work and develop good attitudes and relationships with others. This will help you to enjoy secondary school when you finally leave Lemington Riverside.

We have identified two things your school should do to be even better:

- ensure that the marking of work has comments that tell you what you need to do next to improve your work and reach your targets
- provide more opportunities for you to learn more about different communities in the rest of the UK and in the wider world.

You can help by continuing to work hard and by helping your teachers in any way you can.

We wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Dean Jackson

Lead inspector