

Easington CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114231
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	378817
Inspection dates	8–9 February 2012
Lead inspector	Frank Cain

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	113
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lorraine Dodds
Headteacher	Carol Simpson
Date of previous school inspection	17 October 2006
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Introduction

Inspection team

Frank Cain

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days notice. The inspector visited eight lessons or parts of lessons taught by four different teachers and he also looked at pupils' work. He listened to pupils read and talked to them about how much reading they do. Discussions took place with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. The inspector took account of the responses to the on line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. He observed the school's work and looked at documents, including those relating to safeguarding, the school's improvement plan and self-evaluation records, minutes of governing body meetings and the school's own assessment data. The inspector analysed questionnaires from pupils and staff, as well as those from 54 parents and carers.

Information about the school

Easington Church of England Primary is smaller than the average-sized school, with a slightly higher proportion of girls than found nationally. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well-below average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average. Most pupils are of White British heritage. A small percentage are from minority ethnic groups. There is much lower than average pupil mobility in and out of the school. Government floor standards have been met, even though the number of pupils in each year group is small. The school has been awarded Enhanced Healthy Food Status and Quality Mark.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall Effectiveness	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- Easington Primary is a good school. Children's skills on entry to Reception are generally at those levels expected for their age. The very small numbers in each year group mean that overall statistics can vary greatly from year to year. For this reason, the progress made by individual pupils and school's tracking data was carefully scrutinised by the inspector. There is clear evidence that pupils make good progress throughout the school and their attainment by the time they leave is generally above the national average so that their achievement is good.
- The majority of teaching in the school is good and leads to good progress. This was confirmed when the inspector spoke to pupils and looked at their work to see what they had been doing in previous years. In the majority of lessons work is well matched to pupils' abilities, but in a few lessons the wide range of ability was not always fully challenged. In a minority of lessons too much teacher talk cut down the time available for the pupils to show what they could achieve. Marking in books was frequent and detailed, though not all comments told pupils how they could improve their work further.
- Pupils behave well in lessons. This contributes to their good progress. Staff have high expectations and pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. Pupils are polite and friendly towards one another and to adults.
- Leadership at all levels in the school is good, fostering a friendly but industrious atmosphere, which allows pupils to flourish. There are strengths in the commitment and ambition that staff at all levels have for pupils. The school has been extremely rigorous in following up areas identified for improvement in its last inspection and monitoring visit.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the effectiveness of teaching and accelerate progress by:
 - giving pupils more time to develop their understanding by reducing the

- amount of time teachers spend talking to the whole class
- making sure that marking consistently gives well-defined steps for further improvement
- ensuring that in all lessons pupils are fully challenged by teachers setting work that matches their different abilities.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils make good progress from their starting points across all key stages. The school's effective actions have generally maintained this trend over several years, even though there have been some variations between different year groups. Pupils who show signs that they might be falling behind get speedy access to tuition, which helps them to improve. As a result, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, make good progress overall. Although in some lessons the more-able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged, there is no overall trend of these pupils not making enough progress.

Attainment is above average. Pupils' reading in Year 2 is average and in Year 6 is above average. This reflects the high priority the school places on developing good literacy skills. Younger pupils are encouraged to keep a reading log so that staff are able to monitor whether books were suitable for pupils' level of ability. Older pupils read confidently and were well able to explain and interpret what they were reading. Attainment in writing is above average and the school has introduced new initiatives to enhance the comparatively weaker skills of handwriting and spelling. In mathematics, pupils show confidence in applying their skills to solve problems.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage children quickly develop confidence and progress well. Children confidently name shapes such as circle, oval, square and rectangle. Children get a firm foundation to their learning because of the stimulating environment both indoors and outdoors and good teaching.

Pupils' learning in lessons is good because they are keen and enthusiastic to be involved. Most apply themselves very well and generate good quality work. They extend their communication skills by readily involving themselves in question and answer sessions. Pupils are enthusiastic to show what they know and understand. Support staff were seen in a number of lessons across the school to be making an exceptional contribution to pupils' progress.

An overwhelming number of parents and carers in the questionnaire felt that the school met their children's needs, that they were making good progress and that the school helps them to support their children's learning. Inspection evidence confirmed this, but recognised the concern of a very small number regarding the amount of progress being made in some classes, some of the time. The school seeks ways to address any parental concerns over children's progress.

Quality of teaching

Teaching is good and in most lessons teachers show enthusiasm and pupils respond

by producing work of a high standard. In the very best lessons teachers explained very clearly the objectives and tasks so pupils understand what is expected of them. Occasionally, the imbalance between times when the teacher talked to the whole class and when pupils engaged in independent activities limited the available time for pupils to develop their ideas. Effective teaching and planning in the Early Years Foundation Stage have improved provision and use of the outdoors. Staff encourage children to investigate for themselves successfully and to develop their independence by, for example, growing their own fruit and vegetables. Throughout the school, assessment is generally used successfully to target work accurately at the different abilities of most pupils, although there were times when it was less successfully done for the more-able pupils. Marking often praises achievement without giving enough advice on how to improve.

Teachers use the curriculum effectively to add interest to lessons. For example, in a good numeracy lesson links were made to the current topic on the Titanic to stimulate and make mathematical problems more meaningful to pupils. Teachers extend skills across all subjects as was observed when pupils used computers to help develop their literacy and numeracy by creating their own geographical database on Australia. Teaching assistants are well trained and used effectively to support pupils as individuals or in group work. They were skilful at getting pupils to explain and do things for themselves when undertaking practical tasks, which helped their understanding. A Year 1 group was weighing and estimating using scales and the teaching assistant was saying 'what would happen if ...' making the pupils imagine the possible outcome of adding another block to the scales. In Reception, children helped one another when subtracting one number from another.

All staff encouraged the social, moral, spiritual and cultural development of pupils when working because of the high standards of personal development they expect from pupils. They act as good role models celebrating success so pupils feel valued and behave well. Imaginative tasks are devised to stimulate pupils' interest and develop a desire to learn more.

Most parents and pupils think that the teaching in the school is good and this was confirmed during the inspection.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Behaviour is good and pupils are polite, friendly and considerate towards other pupils and adults. The vast majority behave well in lessons, and when moving around the school or at play. A small number of parents and carers did raise concerns about the way in which the school deals with bullying. In addition, some pupils felt that some bullying did take place, but said that instances were infrequent, and that they were sure that any that did occur would be dealt with effectively. Most parents and carers are of the opinion that behaviour is good in the school. A few expressed concern about lower-level disruption in the classroom but most felt that the behaviour of a very small minority does not disrupt the learning of the majority routinely. During the inspection teachers used firm, non-confrontational strategies to deal well with any issues that arose. School records indicate behaviour has been good over time with very few incidents of bullying and there have been no racist incidents at all recorded and no exclusions for many years. When pupils were fully engaged in lessons behaviour, including attitudes to learning was at its best. When the pace of learning

slowed then pupils were more restless in class.

The vast majority of pupils feel safe in school and children know what constitutes a safe or an unsafe situation. Parents and carers were happy that their children were safe. In Reception, children understood why only five at one time could be in the small play area, 'because we might bump into each other and hurt ourselves'. Pupils knew of different forms of bullying that might happen and were aware of the dangers of communicating with others on the internet. The attendance of pupils has consistently been well-above national averages for many years. Their high attendance is a testimony to their enjoyment of school and several parents and carers expressed this sentiment in the questionnaire.

Leadership and management

The headteacher is a very good leader who makes sure that the talents of all staff are recognised and developed for the benefit of pupils. There are effective systems for monitoring the school's work, including teaching and learning, and professional development is targeted to make further improvements. As a result, teaching is effective with only moderate weaknesses to improve. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and priorities receive prompt attention to ensure all make good progress. Improvement since the last inspection is evident, showing good capacity to make further improvements.

The school works well with parents and carers and almost all of them felt that they were well informed, making the school a very popular choice for children in the local area. The school has many social occasions to meet parents and carers. These include a well-attended 'bacon buttie' morning, which brings parents and carers, pupils and their siblings together. This not only fosters excellent opportunities for parents to meet school staff, but helps develop the pupils' social, moral, spiritual, and cultural development. Pupils proudly take roles of responsibility as 'mini buddies' to look after younger children as they arrive at school in the morning.

The curriculum is good and is planned effectively to ensure that all the compulsory subject matter and skills are covered thoroughly with a strong focus on improving literacy. Pupils enjoy many imaginative experiences that improve both their personal and academic achievement. Whole-school visits to Alnwick Castle, for example, as part of work on mediaeval times, are extremely successful in enhancing their knowledge of this era. Links with the Sporting School Partnership have extended pupils' skills in a variety of sports such as swimming, tennis, hockey and gymnastics, which could not have been met by the school alone. This variety of experience combines effectively with good academic progress to ensure pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

The school's leadership and management are successful in promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination, including for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. It has robust systems for identifying and helping groups and individuals making Easington an inclusive school.

The governing body is rightly proud of the school and it has an accurate picture of the strengths and areas for development within school. It is effective in ensuring that the needs of the school are met. Safeguarding is threaded through the curriculum, so

that pupils have a good understanding of what constitutes safe and unsafe situations. Safeguarding arrangements meet current statutory requirements.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



10 February 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Easington CofE Primary School, Peterlee SR8 3BP

I want to thank all of you for the extremely friendly welcome that you gave me when I inspected your school. I found the time I spent talking to you, your teachers and other adults extremely enjoyable and rewarding. Here are the main things I found.

- You go to a good school.
- You make good progress and reach high standards because you work hard and receive good teaching.
- Your school is well led and managed and all staff, including the governors, do all they can to help your learning.
- Most of you feel very safe and secure and think the teachers and other adults care about you. Only a very small number of you said you had problems at school.

In order to help you to do even better and to improve the school further, I have asked the school's leaders, teachers and governors to:

- make sure that the tasks you are given are matched to what you can do
- improve your work by cutting down on the time teachers take to explain things to the whole class and giving you more time to do your own work.

I am sure you will all want to help make your school even better by continuing to work hard and playing together well.

Yours sincerely

Frank Cain
Lead inspector

