

Etherley Lane Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114097
Local Authority	Durham
Inspection number	357479
Inspection dates	10–11 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Georgiana Sale

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 of pupils on the school roll	267
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Wilson
Headteacher	Steve Copeland
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 16 lessons and saw 10 staff teach. They held meetings with the Chair of the Governing Body, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at documentation, including records of pupils' progress, the school improvement plan, assessment information, policies and samples of pupils' work. Information about safeguarding was evaluated. Inspectors also took into account the views of staff and pupils expressed in questionnaires. They received and analysed 110 questionnaires from parents and carers.

- What pupils' attainment and the rate of progress are, currently, throughout the school, especially in writing and mathematics.
- How the school monitors the performance of all pupils and how data are used to plan lessons so that they make good progress, especially in the mixed- age classes.

Information about the school

Etherley Lane is of average size for a primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is much lower than average. There is a much lower proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities than in most schools. Nearly all the pupils come from White British backgrounds. The school has Healthy School and Eco School status, as well as an Artsmark, Activemark and International Schools Award.

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: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Etherley Lane is a good school. Thanks to good pastoral care, the school provides a safe environment for the pupils. Its warm and positive atmosphere creates a sense of family and belonging. Pupils show great care and support for each other and their excellent behaviour contributes to them making good progress in class. The school has the overwhelming support of the parents and carers. One commented that if they won the lottery, they would still send their children there. Pupils also have positive attitudes to the school. Etherley Lane is a strong, cohesive school community with strong links locally. However, despite an increasing awareness of global issues, pupils have a limited understanding of ethnic diversity in the United Kingdom.

Children make a smooth transition into the Early Years Foundation Stage where they make good progress in their social skills and behaviour. However, their progress in other aspects of their learning is slower. After this satisfactory start, progress accelerates and pupils do well academically and have very positive attitudes to learning. These positive attributes give the pupils a good start to their secondary schooling and for their future well-being. Pupils enjoy learning because teaching is good and lessons are fun. The progress of some of the more-able pupils has not been as fast, although the latest Year 6 national test results indicate that this is beginning to be tackled successfully.

The school has an accurate knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses. It recognises where more needs to be done, for example, that achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage needs to improve. Improvements have been made in pupils' performance, for example, in writing and mathematics at Key Stage 1. The headteacher and all the teachers form a strong team who work well together. There is a strong governing body which shares with other leaders the same philosophy and vision for school improvement. Staff are dedicated and always willing to learn through effective professional development. These strengths give the school a good capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase rates of children's progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - providing greater opportunities for children to develop their writing and numeracy skills.
- Increase the rates of progress for all the most-able pupils by:
 - ensuring that all staff use assessment data for these pupils effectively in order to provide them with consistently challenging tasks
 - allowing them to get on more quickly with different tasks to their classmates.

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- Enable the pupils to experience more cultural experiences from outside their immediate community by continuing to implement the school's community cohesion plan.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils enjoy their lessons and work well independently, in pairs or in teams. They enjoy being challenged and the variety of work that they are given. Pupils have very positive attitudes to work and are mature and confident learners. They enter the school with broadly average skills. The work seen in lessons and in pupils' books confirms that, by the end of Year 6, attainment is above average and the progress of nearly all the pupils is good. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive highly individualised and robust support, which enables them to make good progress. However, a few of the more-able pupils do not always make the progress of which they are capable.

All pupils feel safe and secure, and this contributes to their positive attitudes and enthusiasm to learn when they enter Year 1. Pupils make good progress as they move through the school. Progress is promoted particularly well by the good curriculum and effective teaching. Social and moral development is a particular strength, leading to pupils' excellent behaviour in and out of the classroom. Despite pupils' attendance being no better than average overall, these personal qualities, together with their well-developed basic skills, good information and communication technology skills and self-confidence, ensure they leave school with the qualities they need to succeed at secondary school.

Pupils show their good understanding of healthy lifestyles by eating a healthy lunch and the vast majority participate in out-of-school physical activity clubs. Pupils take strong ownership of the school community. The school council enthusiastically reported that they had not only designed play areas, but also created a school allotment, where every class grows fruit and vegetables that are sold or form part of school lunches. Many pupils contribute to the school as buddies to the younger children, members of the Eco council or by ensuring the smooth running of the school as prefects.

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

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Teachers have good subject knowledge and set out clear lesson objectives so that pupils know what is expected of them. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good and teachers set high standards for their behaviour. Teachers make good use of accurate data about pupils' prior knowledge to set work which is enjoyable and challenging for most pupils. However, sometimes teachers are not effective in providing work which stretches all of the most-able pupils and, consequently, they do not always make the progress of which they are capable. Marking and verbal feedback are used to guide pupils to how they can improve their performance, especially in English and mathematics.

Teachers build pupils' confidence well so that they are always ready to tackle even the most challenging work. For example, pupils happily worked independently to choose and price up a special meal from 'Pizza Shack', and they worked well as a team to act out, for the class, the witches' chant scene in 'Macbeth'.

All pupils benefit from the well-planned curriculum that includes lots of outside trips or visitors that enrich their experiences. For example, following a visit to a prisoner of war camp, Year 5 pupils sang wartime songs, as they acted out their research to their friends and family, ending movingly with the sale of poppies for Remembrance Day. Their experiences are further enhanced by a good range of out-of-school clubs that are well attended.

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Pastoral care is good and much appreciated by parents and carers. Arrangements for joining the school, and to ensure a smooth transition to the next school, are strong. The school has an extensive range of information about pupils who have learning or personal difficulties, and provides effective support to remove any barriers to learning, so that all these pupils make good progress. Partnerships with outside support agencies are used well to enhance the help provided for pupils or their families.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher's strong ambition for pupils to achieve well and to develop into well-rounded individuals is supported by the staff and the governing body, all of whom work well together as a team. The school's effective promotion of equality is seen in the high quality of its care and the actions it is taking to make sure some groups of pupils do not underperform. The governing body is well informed, knowledgeable and plays an active role in school life.

The headteacher has been successful in developing a cohesive school community, based on a love of learning and the utmost respect for individuals, and with everyone playing an active part. The school successfully promotes pupils' positive attitudes and effective skills that will enable them to play an active role in any future community of which they are a member. As a result pupils enjoy experiencing new cultures and different ways of life, although the opportunities for them to do so have been limited.

The school has an accurate picture of its strengths and areas for development. This includes being aware of the need to improve community cohesion by helping pupils to engage more with people from other backgrounds and cultures in Britain. The regular use of a range of data to evaluate and analyse the school's performance, enables the headteacher to take focused actions to bring about effective change. This has resulted in pupils' improved performance, particularly in writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1, where attainment is now above average.

There is a strong emphasis on child protection and all staff and most of the governing body have received relevant training. At the time of the inspection, safeguarding procedures were good. The school works well with parents and carers and makes good use of external agencies to make sure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well, in and out of class. Consequently, these pupils make good progress.

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

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Reception class with a range of skills, knowledge and understanding that are close to expectations for their age, except in communication, language and literacy and in their physical development, in which their skills are lower. They make satisfactory progress. Throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage, the strong emphasis on children's personal, social and emotional development is particularly effective in establishing firm foundations for good outcomes in these areas.

The effective relationships that staff develop with families from the start encourage parents and carers to quickly become involved in their children's learning. The staff work together effectively as a team and develop children's speaking and listening skills well. They make learning fun and, as a result, children thoroughly enjoy the activities on offer. However, fewer opportunities exist to promote children's better writing and numeracy skills.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. All activities are purposeful, although some do not always provide enough challenge for the more able. There are adequate opportunities for children to work both indoors and outside, but the layout of the building places some restrictions on this area of learning. The Early Years Foundation Stage is led satisfactorily and enthusiastically by a coordinator who, through careful monitoring, has correctly identified areas requiring improvement. Careful plans are being implemented but have not yet made a positive impact on improving children's overall progress beyond satisfactory.

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

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers found the school helpful and supportive of their child's needs and many spoke positively of the dedication of the staff, the pastoral care the school provides, and how much progress their child had made. The inspectors endorse this. A very small minority of parents and carers had some concerns about bullying. However, pupils said they could go to any adult who would quickly sort out any bullying and that they felt safe in school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Etherley Lane Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 110 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 267 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	55	50	54	49	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	60	55	49	45	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	45	41	59	54	6	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	47	43	55	50	7	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	51	46	56	51	3	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	47	43	59	54	4	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	41	37	68	62	1	1	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	43	39	58	53	1	1	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	42	38	65	59	3	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	30	27	59	54	15	14	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	28	25	65	59	12	11	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	30	27	61	55	13	12	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	47	43	58	53	5	5	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

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.



11 November 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Etherley Lane Primary School, Bishop Auckland DL14 7RB

We really enjoyed inspecting your school and I am writing to thank you for two very interesting days. Your thoughts and views helped us to make our judgements during the inspection. You go to a good school that is giving you a good start to your life.

We judged that:

- your behaviour is excellent and you told us that if there are problems they quickly get sorted out
- you get on well with each other and the grown ups who teach and look after you
- you are taught well and you think your lessons are fun and interesting.

I have asked your school to make some improvements to help make things even better. These are the most important things.

- For the teachers in the Early Years Foundation Stage to do more writing and mathematics with the younger children.
- For teachers to plan the right work for each of you , especially for those who find learning easier than most, and give you harder work to do in class as soon as they think you can manage it.
- For the school to give you more opportunities to understand and appreciate how culturally diverse our society is.

You have a very important part to play in helping your school to be better and improving your chances of achieving well. You can do this by having a go at any more difficult work your teachers give you and by more of you attending school every day.

I wish you every success in your time at school.

Yours sincerely

Georgiana Sale, Lead inspector

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