

Dubmire Primary

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	133558
Local Authority	Sunderland
Inspection number	360531
Inspection dates	19–20 October 2010
Reporting inspector	Janet Bennett

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 of pupils on the school roll	421
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Steven Milburn
Headteacher	Mrs Joan Hobbs
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They visited 16 lessons observing 15 teachers; held meetings with pupils, governors and staff. They observed the school's work, and looked at documents related to the school's self-evaluation, safeguarding, tracking information, teachers' planning and assessment. They scrutinised pupils' work and analysed 126 parental questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- The extent to which progress varies between classes.
- How well teachers make use of assessment.
- The extent to which provision impacts on the development and well-being of

vulnerable pupils.

- How well leaders take action to help teachers to improve their practice.

Information about the school

The school is larger than average. Nearly all pupils are from White British backgrounds, with very few who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. So too is the percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school has been awarded the Quality in Study Support Mark, and has achieved the Green Flag Award in recognition of the contribution pupils make to sustainable development. Daycare is provided on the school site by 'Rainbow Rascals Childcare'. This provision is run by the Governing Body of the school.

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

This is a good school. The strong relationships that exist between staff, pupils and parents contribute well to its welcoming and caring ethos. The rich curriculum, which includes an extensive range of after-school clubs, promotes pupils' personal, social and emotional development well. Consequently behaviour is good. Pupils are polite and courteous to one another, they work diligently in lessons and are keen to do well. These positive personal qualities contribute well to their learning in lessons. The curriculum is tailored well to ensure that support is provided for those pupils who are vulnerable or at risk of under-achievement, and strong partnerships with other agencies ensure that pupils and their families receive specialist support when it is needed.

Pupils make good progress from their respective starting points and attain standards that are broadly average by the end of Key Stage 2. Outcomes in English are weaker than they are in mathematics. Action taken by leaders has led to improvements in writing, but raising standards further in this aspect of English continues to be a priority for the school. Children get off to a sound start in the Early Years Foundation Stage where they enjoy the good range of play opportunities both indoors and out side. Assessment is used well to plan activities that interest the children; however activities that are led by adults do not consistently build well on their prior learning. This is particularly the case in the Reception classes.

Teaching across the school is good but there are inconsistencies between classes which lead to variations in progress. Where teaching is most effective assessment is used well to match work to the needs of differing learners, and pupils understand how to evaluate and improve their work. This use of assessment works very effectively in most classes, but is not consistently embedded in teaching across the school.

The school has good capacity to build further upon its strengths. There are good systems in place to enable leaders to monitor and evaluate the work of the school. This information is used well to identify priorities for improvement and to ensure that under-performance is identified and acted upon. Leaders have a good understanding of strengths and weaknesses in teaching through a well-planned programme of observations. Teachers receive regular feedback from observations made by leaders, but this does not consistently provide precise guidance to help them to improve their practice or to identify the extent to which teaching contributes to learning. Governors involve themselves well in the work of the school and are supportive of it. Their role in evaluating the school's effectiveness is developing, but these processes are yet to be fully embedded.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Address inconsistencies in teaching by making greater use of monitoring by leaders to ensure that:
 - staff understand the impact of their teaching on pupils' learning
 - teachers receive precise guidance to help them to improve their practice
 - adult-led activities consistently build well on prior learning, for children in the Reception classes.
- Improve the use of assessment in lessons so that:
 - work is consistently matched to pupils' prior learning
 - all pupils understand their next steps in learning and teachers consistently
- encourage them to evaluate and improve their work in lessons
- Develop the skills of governors so that they are able to accurately evaluate the work of the school.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils enter nursery with a broad range of skills, but generally they are below those typical for their age. They are often low in speech and language acquisition. From their respective starting points all groups of pupils make good progress, enjoy their learning and achieve well by the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils work productively in lessons, they are eager to learn with and from others, and when given precise guidance they are keen to evaluate and improve their work. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive well-planned support which promotes good progress in both their academic and personal development.

Attainment by Year 6 is broadly average, but it is weaker in English than in mathematics because fewer pupils reach the level expected for their age in writing. Improved opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of sounds and letters in Key Stage 1 and to improve spelling in Key Stage 2 are impacting positively on their learning. These improvements, together with well-planned support for individual pupils are beginning to raise standards in this aspect of English.

Pupils feel safe in school because the site is secure and they have trusted adults who will provide support when it is needed. Pupils make a strong contribution to the work of the school through the many opportunities they have to take responsibility, for example by promoting energy efficiency as 'eco-warriors', or by being 'reading partners' to younger pupils. They develop their enterprise skills by organising fund-raising activities and are eager to take part in artistic and cultural activities such as visits to the theatre and attending the schools very popular 'performing arts' club. Pupils are particularly proud of the eco-garden that they have created and enjoy eating the produce as part of their healthy diet.

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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	3
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	2
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	3
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?

The organisation and management of lessons are good and contribute well to pupils' good behaviour. Strong relationships between staff and pupils promote confidence and independence and the interesting activities that teachers plan engage pupils well in their learning. Where teaching is most effective lessons proceed at a brisk pace, explanations are clear and regular checks are made to ensure pupils' understanding. In these lessons teachers provide activities that build well on the prior learning of all pupils and provide clear guidance so that pupils understand their next steps in learning and are encouraged to evaluate and improve their work. Although these approaches are used well by most teachers they are not consistently embedded across the school.

The curriculum is tailored well to meet the needs of all learners. Small group and individual support is well planned and makes a good contribution to the progress that pupils make. Well-managed transition arrangements promote good continuity for pupils as they move between classes and aid smooth transfer to secondary school.

There is a strong sense of community across the school because adults know pupils well and take responsibility for their well-being. Consequently pupils feel well supported. Parents and carers comment positively about the welcoming climate that exists in school and the openness of staff. These are viewed as strengths of the school.

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 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 provides a strong role model for staff and pupils alike. She promotes a climate in school which is welcoming and where every child is valued, respected and included. The school promotes equality of opportunity well and leaders are swift to tackle any form of discrimination.

There are good systems to track pupil progress and to ensure that those who are vulnerable or at risk of underachievement receive the support that they need. Leaders set challenging targets and are increasingly holding teachers to account for the progress that pupils make. Outcomes from teacher assessment and statutory tests are used to identify priorities for improvement and action taken to improve standards in writing is resulting in improved attainment in this aspect of English.

Processes are in place to regularly monitor and evaluate teaching. Leaders beyond the headteacher are involved in these activities. Outcomes have led to professional development opportunities which have improved the accuracy of assessment across the school, and to tailored support for individual teachers. Although teachers receive individual feedback on their performance, this does not always identify the precise action required to bring about improvement to their practice; therefore, some inconsistencies in teaching remain.

Governors involve themselves well in the work of the school. They have actively promoted a wide range of opportunities and services which secure the place of the school at the centre of the community it serves. This has ensured that the school makes a strong contribution to community cohesion within the immediate locality. Links are becoming established with schools further afield in order to further extend this aspect of the school's work. Governors understand their statutory responsibilities and are developing their role in evaluating the effectiveness of provision.

Promoting pupils' safety is given high priority by leaders. Safeguarding arrangements are well established and rigorously implemented. Staff have the necessary skills to identify those pupils who may be at risk, and swift action is taken to secure their safety and well-being.

The clear vision articulated by the headteacher, the well planned systems for monitoring the work of the school and the commitment to whole-school professional development, ensure that the school has good capacity to further improve.

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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	3
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Staff provide a good range of interesting activities which engage children purposefully in play. Activities provided in the secure outdoor area promote children's physical skills and exploration of the world around them particularly well. There is an appropriate balance between activities led by adults and those children initiate themselves. However activities led by adults do not consistently build well on children's prior learning, particularly in the Reception classes.

The good relationships that exist between staff and children, and the well-established routines ensure that children quickly grow in confidence and independence. Good induction arrangements ensure that children settle quickly into Nursery and the positive role models provided by adults ensure that children learn to be respectful to one another and to play productively together. Staff make careful observations of children which inform their planning and parents are increasingly involved in being part of this process. Consequently, children's interests and home experiences are built upon well in school. Good partnerships with the staff from 'Rainbow Rascals' promote good continuity for those children who attend the daycare setting.

Daily opportunities for children to learn about sounds and letters and to apply these skills in reading and writing are improving children's development in communication, language and literacy. As a result, the gap between outcomes for children in school when they enter Year 1 and those seen nationally, is narrowing.

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

More than a quarter of parents and carers made comment about the school's performance by completing questionnaires. Those who did were very positive about the work of the school, in particular the support that pupils receive, the induction arrangements that help pupils settle quickly into school or new classes, and the good progress that their children make. The inspection supports these positive views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Dubmire Primary 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 126 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 421 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	86	68	40	32	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	93	74	32	25	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	69	55	57	45	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	76	60	46	37	4	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	81	64	44	35	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	76	60	48	38	2	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	68	54	57	45	0	0	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)	63	50	55	44	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	74	59	48	38	3	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	70	56	49	39	5	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	61	48	58	46	1	1	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	79	63	46	37	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	87	69	36	29	2	2	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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	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.



21 October 2010

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Dubmire Primary, Houghton le Spring, DH4 6HL

Thank you very much for the warm welcome you gave to me and my colleagues when we inspected your school.

We think your school is good. You told us you feel safe in school and we could see that staff care for you well and ensure that you receive the support you need to be successful in your learning.

We were impressed with how hard you work in lessons and how well you get along with one another. You also told us that you enjoy school and we can understand why. Teachers plan an interesting range of activities and there are a wide range of clubs which you are keen to attend. We know that the 'performing arts' club is particularly popular and we were told that tickets for the shows you produce are much sought after. Teachers plan lessons that help you to learn new skills. In some lessons we saw that activities were matched well to your differing abilities and this helped everyone to make good progress. We found that this did not happen in all lessons. We thought it was particularly helpful to you when teachers tell you precisely what your next steps in learning are, and encourage you to evaluate and improve your work in lessons. Therefore, we have asked your teachers to do this more often and we have asked your headteacher and other people involved in your school to check that this happens. You can play your part by listening carefully to the advice you receive and using this to make your work even better. The youngest children in school enjoy their learning both indoors and outside. They quickly learn to be independent and to get along well with others. We thought that adults could do more to ensure that all activities help them to make good progress in other aspects of their development, particularly in the Reception classes.

You have much to be proud of, not least the contribution you make to the community through your work on sustainable development. Keep up the good work. We wish you great success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Janet Bennett

Lead Inspector

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