

Consett Infant School and Nursery Unit

Inspection report

| | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 114052 |
| Local Authority | Durham |
| Inspection number | 357473 |
| Inspection dates | 15–16 November 2010 |
| Reporting inspector | David Scott |

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 | 3–7 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 162 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mrs Judith Davison |
| Headteacher | Mrs Lucy Wallace |
| Date of previous school inspection | Not previously inspected |
| School address | Teasdale Street Consett County Durham DH8 6AF |
| Telephone number | 01207 504464 |
| Fax number | 01207 504464 |
| Email address | consettinfant@durhamlearning.net |

| | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|
| Age group | 3–7 |
| Inspection dates | 15–16 November 2010 |
| Inspection number | 357473 |

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 1234 234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 1234 234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2010

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They visited 10 part lessons, observing all six class teachers, had meetings with a governor, staff and a group of children. They observed the school's work, and looked at self-evaluation documentation, monitoring and assessment information, lesson plans and school policies. They analysed questionnaires from 54 parents and carers and 10 from staff. The school's safeguarding procedures were also evaluated.

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

- Are children's learning and progress in lessons good enough to raise their attainment at Key Stage 1?
- Have the school's leaders taken the necessary actions to sustain improvements in the quality of provision since the last inspection?
- How well the school is using assessment data to secure improvement for all groups of children?
- How well does the school provide for more-able children and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities?

Information about the school

Consett Infant school and Nursery Unit is smaller in size than most infant schools. Very few children speak English as an additional language. The largest group of children are of White British heritage. The proportion of children known to be eligible for free school meals is half that found nationally. One in five children, a proportion that is average, has special educational needs and/or disabilities. These are mainly moderate learning difficulties and speech, language and communication difficulties. The school has gained the prestigious Full International Schools Award and the silver Artsmark.

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. It has improved under the very positive leadership of the headteacher. Her staff and sound governing body support her enthusiastically. The school has good links with the local community, particularly with a special school, its partner primary school, teacher training universities and sports service providers. The school instils in its children a clear sense of values, self-belief and above all, a joy of learning. As one pupil said, 'I love this school because the teachers are friendly and nice and they help you to learn'.

The school's aim to enable every child 'to reach their full potential' is seen in all of its work and helps them to gain good levels of spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. By the end of Year 2, children achieve well in their learning because the school has very high expectations of them and as a result, they behave well. Staff work effectively to eradicate any differences in the achievement of groups of children. Information on children's progress is accurately captured and tracked. However, analysis by staff is not always robust enough to ensure that all children make accelerated progress.

Senior staff have been successful in driving up children's academic performance and sustaining effective practice in supporting their personal development. Children feel safe and secure and have a well-developed understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. The partnership with parents and carers, and other agencies is good and underpins and supports the school's exceptionally good levels of care, guidance and support. As one parent commented, echoing the views of many, 'This school is a friendly and happy place where children really enjoy learning.'

Leaders have brought about many improvements through honest and constructive school self-evaluation. Concerted action, by all staff, has developed teachers' skills, and as a result, teaching and learning are good. Nevertheless, teachers are not routinely taking opportunities to promote children's literacy and numeracy skills in their subjects. Leaders also know that there are examples of good assessment practice, although the quality across the school is variable. Monitoring information is used regularly and with increasing accuracy to identify what the school does well and to plan for improvement. Criteria against which to judge the impact of any changes are not always measurable. The governing body meets its statutory responsibilities and supports the school's work soundly, but has not systematically sought the views of stakeholders. Since the last inspection, the school has improved behaviour. It has begun to raise attainment in reading and has improved attendance significantly. These actions demonstrate that it has a good capacity to make further improvements.

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

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve progress and learning in lessons to raise attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy, by:
 - ensuring that all teaching provides challenging activities that match the needs of all children and supports the development of their literacy and numeracy skills
 - ensuring teachers use day-to-day assessments to provide activities that are challenging and are carefully matched to the varied needs of all children
 - asking more effective enquiring questions in lessons which give children opportunities to develop and explain their ideas fully especially for more- able children
 - reviewing targets more systematically with children so they clearly understand how to improve.
- Sharpen the impact of leaders and managers at all levels on school
- improvement by:
 - ensuring that tracking and monitoring information is analysed robustly by setting quantifiable measures against which to evaluate success
 - intensifying the programme for spreading good practice in assessment throughout the school, by coaching and mentoring
 - distributing the leadership of the school even more widely by extending the capacity of leaders at all levels to manage their areas of responsibility even more effectively
 - ensuring that the governing body seeks the views of stakeholders more systematically.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

The quality of children's learning and progress in lessons is good. They behave well, and mature into polite, thoughtful and considerate young people. The overwhelming majority of children are enthusiastic about their tasks and respond appropriately to teachers' requests. In a mixed Year 1 & 2 class, for example, children worked collaboratively in groups to explore and discuss their own ideas for a science investigation. They thoroughly enjoyed themselves by making their own 'spinners' for the investigation which enabled them to apply their measuring skills that had previously been taught in a recent numeracy lesson, and as a result, they made good progress.

Attainment is average by the end of Year 2. In 2010, girls outperformed boys in reading and writing. Despite this success, leaders are anything but complacent, being ever vigilant to continue to help boys to improve their writing skills and girls to improve their numeracy skills. Overall, from below average starting points children make good progress and their achievement is good. Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities do as well as their peers because of the exceptional levels of care and support they receive.

Children get on extremely well together and willingly take on responsibilities around the school. They are proud to be members of 'kids council' as they were elected following 'real-life' election procedures. Children are aware of the world of work and are well

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

prepared for their futures. The school has worked hard with children, parents and carers to emphasise the importance of good attendance, which has improved markedly over the last year. Children have a good understanding of current conservation issues, by first-hand experience of growing flowers as well as of recycling.

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 | 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?

Classrooms are delightful, both indoors and out, with imaginative displays to capture and respond to children's interests and enthusiasms. As a result of these approaches and effective monitoring, teaching is good overall. Relationships between staff and children are excellent and subject knowledge is strong so explanations are well structured and confident. New technology is increasingly well used to make lessons interesting. Within this positive picture, occasionally teachers' explanations are too long, which reduces the opportunity for children, particularly the more-able, to explain their ideas, and target-setting does not always 'signpost' clearly how children can improve their work.

Through the work associated with the national awards the recently redesigned creative and international curriculum meets the needs and interests of all learners well. It is further enriched by visiting theatre productions, guest speakers, international dance and music extravaganzas and clubs ranging from tag rugby to sewing. A wide range of trips and visits, provide excellent opportunities for children to broaden their personal and academic skills.

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

The school is rightly proud of its highly effective care, guidance and support. The most vulnerable children benefit greatly from excellent work the school carries out with external agencies. Staff can point to real successes in helping children overcome difficult histories and challenging episodes in their lives to again enjoy learning and make good progress. 'The school has helped me feel happier', commented one child. The inclusion team provides a wide range of support to enable children whose circumstances have made them vulnerable to play a full part in school life and is increasingly successful at engaging hard-to-reach 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 | 1 |

How effective are leadership and management?

The vision and clarity of purpose of the headteacher have created a welcoming and harmonious ethos which permeates throughout the school. As a result of this high degree of care and trust, staff support each other well. Weaker teaching has been tackled well and there is a clear ambition to make sure that all lessons are good and that children achieve well. Consequently, teaching is improving and progress and learning are beginning to accelerate.

The headteacher and deputy headteacher work well together to guide and support staff. They know the strengths of the school well and their vision to improve achievement for all children has created confidence and a real sense of purpose throughout the school and among parents and carers. Nevertheless, staff are insufficiently focused on evaluating the impact of teaching on learning in order to accelerate progress and raise attainment.

The school ensures that every pupil has an equal chance to learn. They rigorously tackle any discrimination. Senior and middle leaders guide staff so that equality of opportunity and inclusion are effective. Members of the governing body are supportive of the school and fulfil all their statutory duties. They have a good understanding of the needs of the community the school serves. The level of challenge they provide has had an impact on some areas of the school's work, for example, in the areas of buildings and financial management and they are becoming increasingly more confident at holding the school to account with regard to children's performance in national tests. The school has good procedures for safeguarding and risk assessment. These meet all government guidelines and include high quality checks on adults and a carefully planned approach to managing the safety of children. Community cohesion is good because leaders have an effective understanding of their own community and the different faiths, ethnicities and cultures that exist within it. The school's international links promote good awareness of global

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

issues, for example, through the establishment of a number of partnerships with schools in Bangladesh and the United States of America.

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

Children get off to a good start in the Nursery classes. They settle in quickly and are keen and happy to learn as a result of high expectations. Children play together and are well behaved. They enjoy learning in this busy environment. Overall, children start school mostly with skill levels that are well below those expected for their age. By the end of Reception, they attain levels that are just below those expected for their age and make good progress. They make most gains in their personal, social development and reading because of the greater focus on linking letters and sounds and the use of role play. For example, this was demonstrated to great effect when the children asked their Rastafarian glove puppet 'Henry' to go shopping at a well-known supermarket. Here, they identified and counted the many different fruits at the checkout which helped them to recall apt vocabulary to describe whether they enjoyed eating them or not!

Children enjoy a range of stimulating activities, indoors and out, carefully chosen to meet their needs and enthusiasms. They are given the opportunity to select and choose their own learning activities and respond well to encouragement and praise to explore and widen their choices. Teaching is good overall, with stimulating activities moving at a good pace in a friendly and safe atmosphere. Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. High levels of care and welfare are provided for the children to ensure their well-being. Support for vulnerable children is of a high standard. Partnerships with parents, carers and external agencies are strong so that specialist help is sought and provided when needed. Teachers and helpers are perceptive and note down significant moments of each child's progress, but opportunities are missed to bring together these observations,

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

including those made by parents and carers, in order to inform 'next steps'. These records are used well to ensure that each child's learning is moved forward.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

| | |
|--|----------|
| Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |
| The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |

Views of parents and carers

The school enjoys the support of the overwhelming majority of parents who returned questionnaires. Almost all respondents were very positive about the school and felt that it keeps their children safe and helps them maintain a healthy lifestyle. They praised the exciting range of activities that staff provide.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Consett Infant School and Nursery Unit 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 54 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 162 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|---|-------------------|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 42 | 78 | 12 | 22 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 45 | 83 | 9 | 17 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| My school informs me about my child's progress | 40 | 74 | 14 | 26 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 42 | 78 | 12 | 22 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 45 | 83 | 9 | 17 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 40 | 74 | 14 | 26 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 39 | 72 | 15 | 28 | 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) | 35 | 65 | 17 | 31 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 38 | 70 | 16 | 30 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 39 | 72 | 13 | 24 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 36 | 67 | 17 | 31 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 43 | 80 | 11 | 20 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 45 | 83 | 9 | 17 | 0 | 0 | 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.



17 November 2010

Dear Children

Inspection of Consett Infant School and Nursery Unit, Consett, DH8 6AF

This letter is to thank you for welcoming us so warmly to your school and for taking the time from your breaks to talk to the inspectors. We really enjoyed meeting you and seeing you at work and play. Many of your parents and carers wrote to say how pleased they were with the school; as one parent said, 'My daughter loves going to this school, she is really happy.'

We came to find out as much as we could about your school and now I would like to tell you what I said in the report I have written. You go to a good school. Your headteacher and teachers make your school a very special and welcoming place. You, your parents and carers told us that you like school and that it is a very caring and happy place where you feel really safe. You are respectful, polite and considerate towards each other. We especially enjoyed your enthusiastic and tuneful singing in assembly. Your headteacher and teachers are determined to help you succeed, as are your parents and carers. Staff and governors know what they want to improve. So I have suggested to them that they:

- make your lessons even more interesting by planning work that will challenge and engage you, by asking more searching questions, especially for the more-able among you
- look at the information about your performance more carefully so that they can help you to progress even faster by giving clearer advice on how to improve your work.

You, too, can all play your part in improving the school by asking for help when you are having difficulties with your learning. It was very good to meet you all. May I wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

David Scott

Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 1234 234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.