

# Castleside Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	114043
<b>Local Authority</b>	Durham
<b>Inspection number</b>	357471
<b>Inspection dates</b>	8–9 March 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Graeme Clarke

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	90
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Jannette Archer
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Anne Charlton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Moorland Crescent Castleside, Consett County Durham DH8 9RG
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed activities in the school including the work of six teachers during short visits to parts of lessons and extended visits to seven lessons. Inspectors joined assemblies in each key stage and held discussions with pupils and members of the governing body and staff. They scrutinised the school's documentation including information about child protection and safeguarding, minutes of governing body meetings, curriculum planning, development plans, records of pupils' progress and pupils' work throughout the year. They analysed 48 questionnaires from parents and carers, 53 from pupils in Key Stage 2 and 16 from members of staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The school's arrangements to sustain attainment and progress by all groups of pupils presently in school.
- How well the school uses its staff and resources to help individual pupils at risk of underachievement and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities to make good progress.
- How successfully teachers use assessment techniques and information to foster pupils' progress.
- How effectively the leadership team and governing body review and evaluate the work of the school and plan improvements.

## Information about the school

This village school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school. Numbers in year groups fluctuate from year to year. An average-sized proportion of pupils is known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is also broadly average overall but varies within year groups. Most pupils are of White British heritage and a small number have Caribbean and African origins. None are learning English as an additional language. The school has gained Healthy School status, the Activemark, the Basic Skills award, the silver Artsmark and the LEAF litter 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

Castleside is an improving school where pupils receive a good education. The leadership team's accurate self-evaluation leads to a clear development plan with appropriate priorities for attention. The headteacher, leadership team and the governing body successfully work with a common purpose to foster a caring ethos and promote the school's values. Governance is satisfactory but the governing body has yet to fully establish its role in reviewing and evaluating the school's work. Improved teaching is paying dividends in the form of above-average attainment, good learning and good progress. Having successfully tackled the areas for improvement indicated at the last inspection and raised the quality of education it provides, the school has a good capacity for sustained improvement.

Pupils participate enthusiastically and wholeheartedly in lessons, work with commendable endeavour and thoroughly enjoy learning. From the time they join the Reception class they make good progress as they move through the school. Within all year groups, a majority of pupils presently are reaching levels above those expected for their age, more so in reading and writing than in mathematics. Progress in reading and writing is notably good because a concerted effort to improve literacy is particularly successful. It is too soon to see the effect of a new school-wide initiative to improve progress in mathematics. All aspects of pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. In particular pupils feel safe as a result of the school's diligence in safeguarding their welfare. Pupils behave well and the school is calm and orderly. Staff effectively manage the conduct of a very small number of pupils with behavioural difficulties and ensure that they and their classmates are able to make good progress.

Pupils' good achievement stems from good-quality teaching throughout. Teachers and assistants use assessment information effectively when planning activities for pupils and to identify additional support for any pupil at risk of falling behind. However, marking is not consistently helpful. Good-quality care, guidance and support underpins the good progress made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Work within the curriculum widens pupils' horizons and enhances their reading, writing, numerical and computer skills throughout all subjects. Well-organised activities successfully extend pupils' awareness of their local community and other cultures overseas but insufficiently of the diversity of life in present-day Britain.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Consolidate arrangements to ensure pupils make good progress and sustain above-average attainment in reading and writing, and in mathematics especially, by:

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- – implementing to the full the new curriculum initiative to improve pupils' mathematical understanding
- – improving the quality of marking so it consistently includes pointers for improvement to help pupils move on to the next level.
- Extend the involvement of members of the governing body with senior leaders in shared observations of pupils at work and discussions of findings to enhance evaluation and development planning.
- Press ahead with arrangements to promote community cohesion by providing opportunities that widen the breadth of pupils' experience and understanding of the diversity of belief and culture throughout the United Kingdom.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****2**

Following the pattern of a school inspection, pupils recently undertook their own wide-ranging evaluation of their school in a very candid and commendable way. They describe how they thoroughly enjoy taking part in lessons and how much they like school where they feel safe and free from bullying. Observations of pupils at work and play and discussions with them entirely support their views. They are motivated to work industriously and productively, for example writing at length and creating work of good quality. Their handwriting skills are well-developed and they take great care to present their written and mathematical work neatly. They are keen to answer questions and happily take part in discussions both within the whole class and in groups. Of particular note is the confident and articulate way they speak to adults and their classmates when describing their work. Pupils' learning, achievement and enjoyment of school are good.

Children begin the Reception class with skills and abilities broadly as expected for their age although their language skills are a little lower. A large majority makes good progress and begin Year 1 with levels of attainment above the average. From a point in 2008 when attainment was broadly average, year on year the results of statutory tests and the school's credible assessments show that pupils make good progress and their attainment has risen in recent years. Most pupils in all year groups are now reaching levels above those expected for their age although mathematics is weaker than English. Pupils presently in Year 6 are doing particularly well, especially in reading and writing, with a large majority well on track to reach or exceed targets by the end of the year. Boys and girls make equally good progress. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress.

Pupils feel safe in school and understand clearly why procedures for safe conduct should be followed. They are considerate, polite and courteous to others and respectful of property. Pupils are well aware of the importance of diet and exercise for a healthy lifestyle. They take great pleasure in physical activities and voluntary sports activities after school are popular among both girls and boys. Through an effective school council and as volunteers who undertake jobs around the school and in the locality, pupils help to make a good contribution to their school and the lives of others in their community. They have a good understanding of the local community and of the culture of other countries but less so of the diversity of life in Britain today. Pupils have well-developed basic and social skills, which coupled with a pattern of average but improving attendance, effectively pave the way for the next steps in their lives.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

<sup>1</sup> 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?

A more consistent picture of teaching in the school emerges than at the last inspection. Pupils benefit from effective lessons and intensive teaching sessions given by a pool of talented teachers and skilled teaching assistants. Thorough planning, which draws on information about pupils' attainments, is used to make learning intentions clear and design activities to suit pupils' abilities. Where teaching is at its best, pupils learn well through skilfully-managed tasks, adroitly-led discussion and adept consolidation of their understanding. Such teaching encourages pupils' active involvement, sustains their interest, and fosters high endeavour. Pupils follow classroom routines diligently and work responsibly in whole class, small groups or individual activities. A uniform approach to marking pupils' written work is well-established. Pupils have helpful information to help them assess their own progress and teachers always let them know how well they are doing. They give pupils pointers for improvement but do not always indicate the steps needed to move to the next level of work in order to make pupils' learning fully effective. Importantly though, marking in mathematics does not have the same degree of consistency as for written work.

Strengths in the curriculum lie in the many activities during and after school that broaden pupils' experience and support their good progress. Assemblies, visitors and visits in partnership with the church and heritage centres expand pupils' spiritual, moral, social and

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cultural development. Opportunities to take part in residential outdoor activities and sports substantially contribute to developing pupils' physical and social skills. Themes in history, geography and science link effectively to promote good progress, for example where a Year 5 and 6 mathematics lesson clearly developed the graph skills pupils needed for a science investigation later that day. Pupils' improved attainment and progress in English stem from a successfully-established systematic approach to develop writing skills. In recognising the need to strengthen mathematics understanding, the school has recently introduced a similarly methodical approach to develop pupils' skills but it is too soon to see its impact. Culture weeks widen pupils' understanding of life in other countries.

Adaptations tailored to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities during intensive teaching sessions foster their good progress.

A caring environment prevails throughout. Careful identification, skilful teaching assistance and a close eye kept on their development together make a key contribution to fostering vulnerable pupils' confidence and progress. Good arrangements successfully prepare pupils for moving on to secondary education. Effective procedures in partnership with the local authority's welfare service have improved attendance this year.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

**How effective are leadership and management?**

Senior leaders and governors have successfully improved the school through their commitment to raising attainment and promoting effective teaching. Initiatives, for example, to raise writing standards are established and bearing fruit. Equality of opportunity is good and as a result all groups of pupils make similarly good progress. Focused training has improved the effectiveness of adult support for vulnerable pupils who are consequently able to play as full a part in school life as possible.

Procedures for reviewing the school's strengths and setting priorities for development are yet to involve members of the governing body working fully together with staff. The governing body benefits from the headteacher's and local authority's comprehensive reports which together give its members an up-to-date perspective. Mindful of developing its role, the governing body has begun to become more involved in gathering information at first hand and playing a greater role in evaluation and strategic planning. Following a thorough analysis, the governing body has assured a satisfactory contribution to community cohesion with plans in place to widen pupils' awareness of life in modern-day Britain. Considerate relationships and assiduously followed safeguarding arrangements assure the welfare of all pupils and meet current guidelines for good practice. Of particular note is the way in which the curriculum promotes pupils' understanding of the importance

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of being well-behaved and looking out for themselves and others, such as when on the playground or cycling on the road.

Effective partnerships, for example with support agencies, enhance the quality of education. The expertise of a nearby special school contributes to the school's strong support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school successfully reaches out to parents and carers through bulletins, newsletters and meetings. Parents and carers appreciate the useful information and ideas the school offers to help them to support their children's learning at home.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children in the Reception class settle quickly, behave well, play happily together and enjoy learning. They make good progress and develop above-average skills and abilities in all areas of learning to form the basic building blocks necessary to get off to a secure start in Key Stage 1. Progress is markedly good in aspects of personal development, communication language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. Higher-ability children successfully surpass the early learning goals to reach the highest levels.

Children learn well from a good balance of activities directed or supported by adults and those they initiate themselves. Outdoor facilities have recently been enhanced. They are being used effectively, even during inclement weather, when well-wrapped-up children thoroughly enjoyed working and playing outside; however, there has not been time for the new arrangements to have an impact on children's outcomes. Teaching is sharply focused. For example, work on developing the sequence of a story's elements successfully extended children's communication and social skills. Diligent assessments are used well to



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record children's progress, plan the next activities and, through learning journals, to share information about children's development with parents and carers.

Improvements since the last inspection result in the facility being led and managed well with successful caring and working relationships prevailing throughout. An effective key worker team ensures a good balance of well-arranged activities which promote children's independence and stimulate their imagination and enjoyment. Staff review the way planned activities work out in practice at appropriate points in the week and ensure they are adapted and well-suited to foster children's good progress. Forged at the outset when children join the Reception class, good links with parents and carers aim to foster a partnership in successful learning.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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**

An above-average proportion of parents and carers returned questionnaires. All feel their children are supported to learn. Almost all have a very positive view of the school, for example, by indicating their satisfaction that their children enjoy school, that the school keeps their children safe, that their children are well-taught and in turn are happy with their experience. They feel the school is led and managed well and that it takes their views into account. The inspectors uphold these views. A few parents and carers wrote comments to voice personal concerns about bullying or the management of pupils' behaviour. Inspectors followed up these concerns. Pupils told inspectors that bullying is rare, that they know how to report any incidents should one occur and that any incidents are dealt with quickly. The inspection found that staff skilfully manage the difficult behaviour exhibited by a very small number of pupils and ensure it does not affect the progress of others.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Castleside 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 inspector received 48 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 90 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	33	69	13	27	2	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	33	69	14	29	1	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	24	50	21	44	1	2	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	25	52	19	40	3	6	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	25	52	22	46	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	23	48	25	52	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	26	54	21	44	1	2	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)	20	42	25	52	2	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	22	46	24	50	2	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	14	29	22	46	6	13	2	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	17	35	24	50	2	4	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	23	48	22	46	3	6	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	27	56	18	38	1	2	1	2

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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## 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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



10 March 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Castleside Primary School, Consett, DH8 9RG**

Thank you for your welcome when I visited to inspect your school. I was impressed by how polite and helpful you were. I was delighted to see how much you like to take part in lessons and that you were well-behaved in class and around the school. I did enjoy talking with those of you whom I met. I was pleased to see how you contribute to school life in many ways to help others.

I am pleased to report that your school gives you a good education. All the adults in the school look after you well and keep you safe. You make good progress through the school. Your teachers have helped you to improve your work, especially in reading and writing. Assessments of your work show many of you are doing better than most pupils of the same age. You are all taking part in a new way to learn mathematics because results in mathematics have not been quite as good as in reading and writing. I have asked the school to continue to help more of you make good progress and keep your results above average in future.

When I looked at your books I liked the way your teachers let you know how well you are doing. When they mark all of your written and mathematics work I have asked them always to let you know in a little more detail how you can make improvements. I have asked the school to make sure that you learn more about people living in other parts of Britain. I have also asked the governing body to visit and see how well you are doing and to share their findings with your headteacher so together they can plan how to improve your school even more.

You have many opportunities at Castleside Primary School to learn about life and these help you to prepare for the future. I hope that you all do really well.

Yours sincerely

Graeme Clarke

Lead inspector

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