

Leadgate Community Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114039
Local Authority	Durham
Inspection number	357470
Inspection dates	30–31 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Linda Buller

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	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	105
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Cllr Watts Stelling
Headteacher	Mr Mark Watson
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Alder Grove Leadgate, Consett County Durham DH8 7RH
Telephone number	01207 502937
Fax number	01207 581873
Email address	leadgatejunior@durhamlearning.net

Age group	7–11
Inspection dates	30–31 March 2011
Inspection number	357470

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 123 4234, 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 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Inspectors visited nine lessons, observed four teachers and had discussions with members of the governing body, staff, pupils, parents and carers. They observed the school's work, looked at the school's self-evaluation documentation, monitoring and assessment information, lesson plans and school policies. Inspectors analysed questionnaires from pupils, staff and 60 parents and carers. The school's safeguarding procedures were also evaluated.

- Pupils' achievement, particularly of boys in writing, to determine how well teachers use assessment to support learning.
- The achievement of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, to determine how well the curriculum is adapted, and effective support provided, to meet their needs.
- The effectiveness of the actions taken by leaders and managers at all levels to bring about and sustain improvement.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average-sized school. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. Since the last inspection the school has undergone a number of staffing changes. Following the retirement of the headteacher, the deputy headteacher is leading the school in an acting capacity. The school has a number of awards, including Healthy School status, International School Award, Active Mark and Investors in People.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a satisfactory school. The acting headteacher has a determined focus on developing the provision made for pupils and raising the standards they reach. As a result, the school is improving rapidly and there are good features to its work. In this welcoming school pupils feel safe and valued because staff know the pupils well and provide good levels of care. Rigorous systems of self-evaluation provide leaders with an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Key priorities are identified and effective actions taken. This is having a positive impact on pupils' learning and progress and has successfully narrowed the gap between the achievement of boys and girls. Analysis of the data gained from the detailed system for tracking pupils' progress is at the heart of the school's drive to improve. The school is able to pinpoint exactly the aspects of provision that have the most impact on outcomes for pupils and those which need to improve. Despite staffing changes the school is moving forward and outcomes for pupils are improving quickly. This demonstrates the school's good capacity to bring about sustained improvement. New curriculum planning is effectively supporting learning through links across subjects. This is providing pupils with relevant learning opportunities to use their English and information and communication technology (ICT) skills. The focus on providing interesting activities, such as those linked to gaming, in order to motivate boys when writing, has led to good improvement. As a result, pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6 is rising quickly but remains broadly average in both English and mathematics. In other year groups pupils' progress is improving and pupils attainment is rising rapidly and securely.

Teaching is satisfactory and in lessons teachers effectively use targeted questioning to check pupils' understanding and, when needed, provide additional explanation or support. The use of this ongoing assessment is less effective, however, in recognising when pupils are ready to move on to their next challenging task. This is a key reason why, although improving, pupils' progress is satisfactory overall. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make the same satisfactory progress as their peers. When taught in small groups, with a curriculum which is planned specifically to address their needs, these pupils make good progress. In some lessons, however, the tasks planned for these pupils are those which match their age rather than their individual ability. On these occasions their progress slows.

The school's action plans are clear and a very good tool for development. Staff share a desire to improve teaching and learning. Those taking on the responsibility for leading different subjects are developing quickly but the full impact of their efforts have yet to be seen across the school as a whole.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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?

- Continue to raise pupils' attainment, particularly in English and mathematics, by:
 - teachers using their knowledge of how well pupils are doing in lessons to recognise when pupils are ready to move on to the next challenging activity
 - providing pupils with more opportunities to apply their knowledge by independently writing at length
 - improving the consistency of teachers' marking by extending the good practice seen in the marking of pupils' writing to other subjects, particularly mathematics.
- Improve the progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities in lessons by:
 - using the accurate assessment of pupils' levels of attainment to adapt tasks in lessons in order to match their level of ability rather than their age
- Further develop the role of subject leaders to increase their effectiveness on school improvement.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and improving because staff have become increasingly effective in promoting good learning. Pupils enjoy learning and genuinely want to please their teachers and demonstrate a keenness to answer questions. Almost all are well motivated and listen carefully. They try their best at all times and are keen to support each other. Most pupils enter the school having attained broadly average standards at the end of Key Stage 1. From their starting points pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, generally make satisfactory progress. However, due to increasingly good teaching the rate of pupils' progress is improving quickly, especially in the development of writing skills. As a result, previous variations in performance between different groups of pupils and between subjects have been eliminated. Despite this good improvement there are still fewer pupils in this school than nationally who reach higher levels by the end of Year 6. This is because pupils are still too often provided with a scaffold for learning, with teachers not recognising quickly enough when pupils have the skills they need to be able to work independently with more challenging work.

Most pupils love school life and are full of praise for their teachers. Attendance is above average, with very few pupils frequently absent. A supportive ethos that values hard work, achievement, helpfulness and respect for others is demonstrated in pupils' good behaviour and how well they care for each other. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay healthy. They eat sensibly and take part in one or more physical activities. Pupils are willing to take on responsibility and many do. They fully appreciate the forum which the school council provides to express their views and to contribute to the development of the school. Pupils say they feel safe and know exactly who to go to if they are troubled. They fully understand the part they play in limiting the risk to their safety. For example, they explain in detail the reasons for the exclusion zones which exist around the school field. The Eco council and the partnerships with schools internationally contribute to the good progress pupils make in their understanding of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of their lives.

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	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
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	2
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?

Whilst teaching and learning are satisfactory overall the amount of good teaching is increasing. Good relationships characterise all teaching and these form the basis of good class management. At the beginning of lessons teachers are very careful to make sure that pupils know what they are to learn. They check pupils' understanding by asking searching questions, often of pupils who do not have their hands up, encouraging all of them to participate fully in the lesson. Good use is made of assessment information to identify the precise difficulties faced by pupils. In some classes, particularly in writing, this information is also used to guide pupils towards the setting of challenging targets for improvement. This is not yet consistent in all classes or subjects. In writing, the high-quality marking of pupils' work in books, which requires pupils to respond and improve further, is one way in which accelerated progress has been achieved. This good practice is not yet apparent in the marking of pupils' mathematics work.

A comprehensive review of the school's curriculum has led to a number of changes, particularly in the way in which pupils' writing skills are developed. In the main, these have been successful; for example, pupils are now progressively developing the skills needed to write within a variety of genres. Pupils are provided with an increasing number of opportunities to develop literacy skills in other subjects. For example, Year 6 pupils made good progress in their reading skills in an ICT lesson when developing research 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

and skimming and scanning information to create powerpoint presentations. However, too few opportunities are provided for pupils to put their writing skills into practice by independently writing at length. As a result, although the number of pupils who reach the level of attainment expected for their age has improved, fewer pupils than nationally are reaching higher levels. A wide range of after-school clubs, such as art, drama, football and rugby, visits and visitors, provide good enrichment and effectively support pupils' social development.

Pastoral care is a strength of this nurturing school community. Parents and carers commented favourably on the sensitive care that is given to all groups of pupils. Good liaison with outside specialists for the most vulnerable pupils has improved attendance and has helped to ensure that all pupils have an equal chance to succeed.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
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?

Despite staffing changes the school is improving. The rigorous analysis of the performance and involvement in school life of different groups has narrowed gaps in attainment and removed barriers to inclusion. This is testimony to the school's good promotion of equality of opportunity. Leaders and managers have been successful in bringing about good improvement in targeted areas. Those new to management roles are developing quickly and are already contributing to developments taking place.

The governing body meets its statutory obligations. Governors provide a sound level of challenge and are establishing systems to monitor effectively how well the school implements policies and procedures. There are effective partnerships with outside agencies and good links with other schools. This promotes the well-being of pupils effectively and supports their learning. Engagement with parents and carers is good and the school has regular and effective processes to take their views into account. Safeguarding procedures comply with statutory requirements, ensuring that pupils are safe and secure in school. There is a strong emphasis on ensuring that the school is a cohesive community. Work with faith partners in the local community, schools internationally and consideration of sustainability issues throughout the curriculum are providing pupils with the depth of understanding needed to become effective global citizens.

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

Views of parents and carers

A larger proportion of parents and carers than average responded to the inspection questionnaire. Those who did so were almost wholly positive about the work of the school. All parents and carers agreed that the school keeps their children safe and helps them to develop healthy lifestyles. Inspection evidence supports parents' and carers' positive views. A very small number of parents and carers felt that the school could do more to help them support their children's learning. Inspection evidence indicates that newsletters, curriculum information, parent workshops and the school website provide parents and carers with a wide range of guidance regarding how pupils' learning can be supported at home.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Leadgate Community Junior 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 60 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 105 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	35	58	24	40	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	43	72	17	28	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	34	57	24	40	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	31	52	28	47	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	38	63	21	35	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	35	58	21	35	4	7	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	31	52	29	48	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)	27	45	31	52	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	30	50	28	47	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	25	42	34	57	1	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	28	47	32	53	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	38	63	22	37	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	39	65	20	33	1	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

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).

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">■ 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.



5 April 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Leadgate Community Junior School, Consett, DH8 7RH

Thank you for making us so welcome when we inspected your school recently. We were impressed with your politeness, good manners and the considerate way in which you help each other. We particularly appreciated your good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning in lessons. It is clear from how well your attendance has improved just how much you all enjoy coming to school.

The adults in school take good care of you and provide you with interesting activities. This provides you with a satisfactory quality of education and helps you to make satisfactory progress. Recently your progress has begun to improve. One of the reasons for this is how well you have been helped to improve your writing skills. Now that you understand many of the things you need to include in good writing, we have asked the school to make sure you have the chance to put this into practice by doing longer pieces of writing without the support of your teachers. To help you to continue the improvement in all your learning, we have asked the staff to make sure that when you are doing well in your work you are provided with a new challenging activity. We also noticed that some of you struggle a little with the activities you are given. We have asked the school to make sure that the work you are given is not too difficult and always helps you to build on what you already know.

Those who lead and manage your school are very keen to help you do as well as you can and all of the staff are going to help the headteacher to improve your school even further.

You can play your part by continuing to try your best in lessons at all times. Thank you once again for the help you provided during the inspection.

Yours sincerely,

Linda Buller

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 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.