

# South Pelaw Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	114015
<b>Local Authority</b>	Durham
<b>Inspection number</b>	363813
<b>Inspection dates</b>	20–21 June 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Kate Pringle

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>	4–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	156
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Barry Jackson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Dorothy Hales
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 July 2008
<b>School address</b>	Hilda Park Chester le Street County Durham DH2 2JT
<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 3884820
<b>Fax number</b>	0191 3881483
<b>Email address</b>	southpelaw@durhamlearning.net

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Twelve lessons and six teachers were observed. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at pupils' books, assessment information, policies and procedures, school development plans and updates of pupils' progress. Views of stakeholders were also considered through questionnaire responses from 103 parents and carers and 12 staff.

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

- How effectively the leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage ensures that provision enables children to make good progress.
- How effectively teaching and learning challenges the needs of differing abilities in order to secure good progress for all groups across the school.
- How well the developing curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to become independent learners making best use of their skills in literacy and numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) to support learning
- How well engagement with parents and carers and other partners ensures that their views enhance provision and assure the best outcomes for pupils, especially for those whose circumstances place them at risk of becoming vulnerable.
- How successfully all leaders and managers use their individual roles to improve provision and outcomes for pupils.

## Information about the school

This is a smaller-than-average-size infant school where the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average. There are presently no pupils from minority ethnic groups or who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. Few pupils have a statement of special educational needs.

The school holds a number of awards including: Healthy School Status, Basic Skills, Impetus, the Activemark, Investors in People, Investing in Children and Anti-Bullying Accreditation.

**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 that provides a positive environment in which pupils play and learn well. The impact of this is effectively demonstrated in the above average attainment of pupils and in the good quality care, guidance and support they receive. Relationships with parents and carers are good overall. They know that their children progress well because they feel safe and happy at school. Comments such as, 'My children are happy and have gone from strength to strength', and, 'a fantastic school with very caring teachers' reflect the views of many and indicate a high regard for staff and the care they take of the children. The well-developed understanding that pupils have of right and wrong underpins their good behaviour and positive attitudes towards each other.

Pupils achieve well. They get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and make good progress from the skills and attainment expected for their age on entry to reach above average attainment by the time they leave in Year 2. This is because good quality teaching enables successful development of pupils' basic skills in literacy and numeracy. New systems to track learning are becoming increasingly effective. However, the use of this information is not used consistently well across classes and not all pupils are challenged to reflect their individual abilities. Similarly, the use of the recently introduced marking scheme is variable. Not all teachers use this effectively to fully inform pupils of their successes against their targets or how to progress to the next step in learning. Good relationships in classes reflect positive attitudes to learning. The developing curriculum is providing greater opportunities for pupils to engage in more practical and creative activities, which increase their motivation and interest. Most pupils attend regularly, however, the level of attendance is average. This is because of the proportion of authorised holidays taken during term time. There is no unauthorised absence.

The strong lead of the headteacher has enabled a greater distribution of roles and responsibilities, and thus increased the involvement of others in the monitoring and evaluation of subjects. This has contributed significantly to the enhancement of certain aspects of the school's work, including a more creative curriculum, which has improved links between subjects, and the use of a range of new assessment and marking strategies. The greater understanding of the school's work by leaders and managers has increased the pace of development. However, the school recognises that the sharing of such responsibilities is still too variable and needs to ensure all leaders have opportunity to play a full part. Self-evaluation clearly reflects an understanding of the successes of the school. Development plans clearly indicate actions for improvement supported by appropriate training of teachers and other staff. Noted improvements since the last inspection include an overall improving picture of attainment, the development of outdoor provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and the introduction of assessment systems to track pupils' progress. The school has a good capacity to improve.

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

- Ensure the consistent use of assessment information across the school to:
  - provide challenging activities that are well matched to individual abilities
  - ensure that pupils use their targets and that marking reflects where pupils succeed in these and indicates pupils' next steps in learning.
- Further extend responsibilities so that all leaders and managers may contribute fully to self-evaluation and improvement by:
- ė increasing opportunities for all leaders and managers to monitor and evaluate key aspects of the school's work.
- Improve levels of attendance by working with parents and carers, and outside agencies, to ensure that pupils attend regularly by reducing the levels of authorised absence for holidays during school time.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**2**

Pupils speak well of their school and the many opportunities it offers them. They enjoy good relationships with staff and respond enthusiastically to tasks set by teachers demonstrating positive attitudes to work and responsible behaviour. They respond particularly well to activities which engage them in practical and investigative tasks, which enhance their opportunities to practise their skills in literacy and numeracy.

The focus upon basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics is very successful and the school demonstrates an improving trend in all areas. Pupils make good progress. There is no difference between the achievements of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. Pupils' above average skills, their average attendance and their increasing self- confidence as they move through the school, all prepare them well for the future.

Pupils talk confidently about feeling safe in school. They know that adults will help them whenever they are upset. Pupils enjoy taking part in a good range of physical activities to keep them active. They are aware of the benefits of eating certain foods in moderation and have a growing awareness of the dangers of drugs, for example, the need to take the correct amount of medicine. Pupils enjoy opportunities to be responsible and through roles, such as school councillors and buddies, they successfully improve the quality of play activities and help their friends when they feel unhappy. Additional opportunities enable pupils to engage within the local community with outside agencies, for example, to develop local play parks. More recent initiatives to promote of eco-friendly activities and improving links with other schools, nationally and internationally, are developing pupils' understanding of the wider world and of those from other cultures and backgrounds.

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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?

Positive relationships promote good behaviour in lessons. They also promote pupils' willingness to please teachers and work hard, which is reflected in the good progress that pupils make. Teaching ranges from satisfactory to good. Where it is more effective, there is good pace and pupils have time to consider and practise their skills. The tasks set challenge them as they progress through focused learning objectives and success criteria which are better matched to their individual needs. Where teaching is less effective, there is a weaker link to use of assessment information to fully address individual pupils' targets and match work to pupils' abilities. Similarly, not all marking reflects pupils' successes against their individual targets or gives advice on what to do to improve further.

A developing curriculum is providing pupils with good opportunities to understand links between subjects. A broad range of subjects is taught, including French. The curriculum is enhanced by a good range of visits and visitors, which complement learning and inspire pupils to understand the world outside their immediate environment. The use of theme weeks and days give pupils increased practical opportunities to use their skills. Opportunities for pupils to use their basic skills and information and communication technology skills (ICT) in other subjects are increasing.

Staff provide good care and pastoral support at the right time because they know and understand pupils well. This is particularly true for pupils and their families whose circumstances place them at risk of becoming vulnerable or those who have special

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educational needs and/or disabilities. Partnerships with a range of outside agencies provide an effective range of support. Recent developments to extend the opportunities for parents and carers to work alongside their children in school are increasing their knowledge of how children learn. Most pupils attend on a regular basis, but too many parents and carers take holidays during term time and this reduces pupils' overall attendance to average. Good links with the junior school, through the shared before- and after-school clubs, and links with nursery providers secure good transition on entry, throughout the school and into the next stage in pupils' learning.

*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	3
<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?

The headteacher works effectively with staff and the governing body to identify the school's strengths and where improvement is most needed. Actions to introduce new assessment strategies, extend the outdoor learning environment and to provide a more creative and practical curriculum, have all been introduced since the previous inspection. Staff are now in the process of considering how these need to be further embedded. Challenging targets promote improving outcomes for pupils. The promotion of equal opportunities is good because all groups achieve equally well. There is a strong sense of teamwork, supported by professional development linked to the school development plan. The development of subject leadership is providing greater opportunities for increased monitoring and evaluation by leaders, ensuring that all have a role to play in improvement. For some this is at an earlier stage of implementation than others and this means that the pace of improvement in different areas is variable. The monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning is well-established, secure and accurate.

The governing body demonstrates a range of experience and expertise. It provides appropriate challenge to the headteacher and staff. It ensures that safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements. Communication with parents and carers is good with the vast majority of parents and carers supporting the school. Good links with external agencies and other partners, for example, local schools, supports all pupils, including those whose circumstances may make them vulnerable, and to provide specialist help for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school promotes community cohesion well. Clear plans identify actions for development of this aspect, including extending present links with schools nationally and internationally. Overall, the school provides good value for money.

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*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>2</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>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children from a number of different settings settle quickly into the Reception class because of the good quality induction procedures. Behaviour is good because children are secure due to their warm relationships with staff. Most children enter the Reception class with skills expected for their age, however, this can vary from year to year. An increasing proportion of children have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Children make good progress so that they have reached better than expected skills when they enter Year 1, with strengths in the quality of their personal and social development. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar progress to their peers because they are supported sensitively, with particular attention to their individual needs.

Children engage well in the range of activities provided both in and out of doors. They are positive about learning and are well motivated, especially in activities that promote investigation and creativity. At such times, they question and try out their ideas. Planning is of good quality overall, but is not consistently in place for outdoor learning. Assessments are recorded clearly in the learning journeys of children's successes. Opportunities to record what children understand through observations of them choosing their own activities are increasing, but currently too many assessments rely upon adult-led activities.

Leaders demonstrate a good understanding of the strengths of the setting. Past areas for action have been successfully addressed, for example, the provision of the outside learning area. However, not all staff contribute to making improvements as yet. Good communication with parents and carers means that they understand their role in helping their children to learn. Teamwork between teachers and helpers is good as staff work together, sharing ideas to plan next steps in learning. Strategies to promote the welfare of children are good and statutory requirements are met.



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*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

There was an above average rate of questionnaires returned. The vast majority of parents and carers who responded were highly positive about the school. They greatly appreciate the care given to their children and are extremely confident that their children are happy and safe and that teachers meet children's needs well. All issues raised by parents and carers, particularly those concerning behaviour and communication, were all fully investigated through discussions with school leaders and managers and form part of the evidence base used to arrive at the inspection judgements.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at South Pelaw Infant 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 103 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 156 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	65	63	35	34	3	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	74	72	28	27	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	70	68	31	30	2	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	63	61	37	36	3	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	74	72	28	27	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	65	63	36	35	2	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	57	55	45	44	1	1	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	64	62	36	35	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	62	60	38	37	3	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	43	42	52	50	5	5	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	50	49	43	42	6	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	60	58	36	35	3	3	3	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	68	66	32	31	3	3	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 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 2010/11 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.**



22 June 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of South Pelaw Infant School, Chester le Street, DH2 2JT**

Thank you for the lovely welcome you gave the inspection team when we visited your school recently. It was lovely to talk with you about how much you enjoy your school and the experiences you have from your visits and visitors.

We found that your school gives you a good education and that you make good progress in your learning. Because your teachers and other staff look after you well, you feel safe and confident. It is very good to see how well you behave and look after each other.

To help your school to become even better we have asked the headteacher and staff to improve a few things. We have asked them to plan activities which match your individual needs so that you have to think a lot more. We would also like teachers to make sure that when your work is marked, it shows you how well you are achieving against your targets and, when you succeed, to tell you what you need to learn next. We would also like your parents and carers to take you on holiday less often during school time so that your attendance is better. We would like all of the leaders and managers to share responsibilities more so that they can help your school to improve even faster. This means that more of them will help the headteacher to consider how well the school is doing and decide what it needs to do next.

You have a lovely school and I hope that you continue to work hard and do well.

Yours sincerely,

Kate Pringle

Lead Inspector

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