

Hartside Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114057
Local Authority	Durham
Inspection number	367401
Inspection dates	5–6 July 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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	174
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Ann Turnbull
Headteacher	Mrs Pauline Walker
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They visited 13 lessons and observed seven teachers. Discussions were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. Inspectors looked at samples of pupils' work, and a range of documentation including the analysis of the tracking of pupils' progress, school policies and procedures, school leaders' monitoring records, school improvement planning, risk assessments and other documentation relating to the safeguarding of pupils. The questionnaires received from pupils, staff and 68 parents and carers were analysed and considered.

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

- The rate of pupils' progress, particularly in mathematics, to determine whether provision is at least good.
- The contribution which pupils' behaviour makes to their learning, to determine whether behaviour is outstanding.
- How well pupils achieve, to determine how well leaders and managers use pupils' outcomes as a measure in arriving at accurate self-evaluation and in planning actions for future improvement.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average-sized primary school. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The school has undergone a number of disruptions to staffing since the time of the last inspection. The school holds the Geography Quality Mark Award Bronze Level, Sing Up Award Silver Level, Rights Respecting School and International School awards and the Activemark Gold.

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

The school provides a good education for its pupils. It is inclusive and works well in partnership with others to provide pupils with a wide range of learning experiences. Consequently, pupils enjoy school and their achievement is good. The school's contribution to community cohesion is outstanding and provides pupils with a deep understanding of the rights and responsibilities of global citizens. As a result, pupils have an extremely strong sense of social responsibility which they use to make an outstanding contribution to their school and the wider community. Good levels of care and support help pupils to develop positive relationships with staff. Behaviour is generally good and pupils are becoming confident learners, ready to tackle challenging tasks. The school has been very successful in promoting healthy lifestyles. In discussion, pupils demonstrated a deep understanding of the impact of exercise on their bodies, the importance of good mental health and of having a healthy diet.

Teaching is good overall and in the main is successful in delivering an effective curriculum which enriches and extends pupils' learning. Pupils make good progress to reach average levels of attainment overall by the time they leave Year 6. However, there is some variation in the effectiveness of teaching and in curriculum provision in bringing about good progress in all aspects of pupils' learning. In the best lessons, teachers are extremely skilful in helping pupils to understand the purpose of their learning through the context of real-life practical experiences. This is particularly successful in mathematics and in developing pupils' information and communication technology skills. This high-quality provision is not consistently used to best effect to improve pupils' progress in writing, which remains satisfactory. Although pupils benefit from exciting practical experiences on which to base their writing, the focus on learning literacy skills within these tasks is not explicit enough.

Leadership and management structures are clear and well established. Pupils' progress is carefully tracked and analysed each school year. However, pupil outcomes and their progress over each key stage have not always been sufficiently taken into account when the school makes its self-evaluation judgements. This has led to an over-optimistic view of the quality of the school's provision. Nonetheless, accurate and clear priorities for improvement are identified. Staff training and successful new teaching appointments are helping the school to tackle the dip in attainment since the last inspection. Although attainment currently remains average overall, the rate of pupil progress is good overall and is increasing strongly. For example, in the current Year 6, attainment in mathematics is above average with all pupils attaining at least an average level and 50 per cent of pupils attaining a higher level than that expected. This demonstrates the school's good capacity for further improvement.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the rate of pupils' progress in writing by:
 - maintaining a clear focus on the intended learning in each lesson to ensure that every opportunity is taken to extend pupils' literacy skills
 - using the information gained from assessing pupils' work to set high expectations of what pupils can achieve and making it explicit to pupils what they are required to learn.
- Increase the rigour with which leaders and managers check the progress made by pupils over time in each key stage and use this information in an accurate self-evaluation of the school's provision.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Overall, pupils begin school with skills which are below age-related expectations. They make good progress as they move through the school, both in their learning and in the development of their personal skills. Therefore, their achievement is good. Pupils generally behave well and show good attitudes to work and high levels of enjoyment are often evident. For example, pupils in Year 6 had great fun when carrying out their various roles to solve the financial problems which may face those running a successful company. They used their mathematical skills to great effect and worked very successfully as a team. This style of practical and relevant learning is one of the reasons why progress is now good and attainment in mathematics is above average in the current Year 6. Occasionally, particularly when teaching lacks sparkle, a small minority of pupils become disengaged and do not produce their best work. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because of good intervention strategies which meet their needs well. The rate of progress in English is increasing. A structured programme of guided reading builds on the good progress made by children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Pupils use their knowledge of the links between sounds and letters to read and to spell accurately; this is adding to sustained improvement. Spelling remains a weakness for the older pupils, who have not always had the benefit of this good provision. Pupils' writing is improving, particularly when pupils are stimulated to write at length about subjects that have captured their interest, but for the most part their progress in writing remains satisfactory.

Most pupils say they feel safe in school and that they are given good advice about the dangers they may encounter in their everyday lives. In addition to their outstanding approach to a healthy lifestyle, pupils have good opportunities to prepare for their future economic well-being. Throughout the school, they were seen to be confidently using the information and communication technology systems to support their learning, and developing very good enterprise skills through their work in supporting Fair Trade. The school council is active and influential. This provides pupils with a powerful voice to influence their learning and well-being. Even the youngest children are able to explain the responsibility they have for sustaining the world's resources and for ensuring that people in all parts of the world are treated fairly and with respect.

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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	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
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?

Teachers have good subject knowledge. They have a clear understanding of what they require pupils to learn next and they make lessons enjoyable, for example through the use of interactive whiteboards and other resources which stimulate pupils' interest. In those lessons where learning is most successful, teachers use questioning very effectively to help pupils to recognise what they already know and how they can use this knowledge and skill to make good progress. This is more effective in mathematics lessons. In literacy, although teachers use assessment information to plan activities which build progressively on what pupils already know, expectations are not always high enough. Explanations of tasks do not make it explicit to pupils what they are required to learn or how this will support future learning. Questioning is used to check pupils' understanding of tasks but opportunities are missed to extend their language skills or to provide more challenge when pupils are clearly working within their ability.

The curriculum includes much topic work which makes activities enjoyable and appropriate to pupils' interests. Pupils are provided with a range of opportunities to write within subjects such as history, geography and religious education, and this is beginning to improve their progress in writing. Topics such as that related to Fair Trade are used well to provide pupils with a real-life context for all their learning. Occasionally in English lessons, the focus is more on the topic than on the development of pupils' literacy skills. There is good support for all aspects of pupils' personal development and pupils benefit

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from a wide range of visits and visitors to school. A satisfactory programme of after-school activities is in place. Pupils, parents and carers express the view that they would appreciate a wider range of sporting opportunities.

Pupils are well cared for and are happy to come to school. This is demonstrated in their good attendance. Good partnerships with external agencies, the local authority and other schools in the area, are used well to support all pupils with their academic and social needs. There is good support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, whose progress is rigorously tracked to ensure that support is provided where it is needed. This support ensures these pupils are able to join in the lesson activities and make the same good progress as their peers. In lessons, pupils are becoming more involved in assessing their own progress but the effectiveness of this in helping them to understand what they need to do next to improve varies from class to class. As a result, although pupils confirmed that adults in the school help them to learn, a minority were not clear how well they are doing.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders at all levels are involved in supporting and securing school improvement. Following a dip in pupils' attainment since the last inspection, senior and middle leaders have been actively engaged in checking standards in their areas and in successfully leading the actions which are driving improvement. Leaders and managers regularly seek the views of parents and carers through surveys and discussions and act on their suggestions to involve them more fully in their children's learning. For example, the school has provided advice and guidance to enable them to play an active part in the improvement in of their children's skills in mathematics. Members of the governing body give good support to the school. Their regular monitoring visits have been instrumental in guiding improvement. The effectiveness with which the school promotes equal opportunities and tackles discrimination is good. There is no sign of discrimination within the school and every pupil has the same opportunities in class and other school activities. As a result, any significant variations in the attainment of the different groups of pupils, for example between boys and girls, are addressed and gaps are closing. Safeguarding procedures are appropriate and follow national recommendations. Community cohesion is a strength of the school with numerous links locally, nationally and internationally which give pupils a very good perspective on the diversity of society and their role in supporting and strengthening communities.

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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	2
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	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

During their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage children make good progress. Good links with local nursery schools before children start school ensure they settle quickly into the Reception class where they play and interact well with one another. Communication, language and literacy skills are often the weakest element of children's attainment on entry. Strong emphasis is placed by staff on developing pupils' language skills. Through a well-delivered programme of linking sounds to letters, children make rapid progress in their ability to read and to spell words. One child confidently rose to the challenge of labelling a picture by writing chimpanseye. The teacher plans effectively for adult-led activities and those which children choose independently. Detailed observations of children's play are effectively used to ensure that future activities match their needs and interests. The outdoor area is used well to extend classroom learning and to provide children with exciting opportunities to develop independence. Staff have good relationships with the children and are fully involved in supporting their personal development. They look after the children well and ensure that all welfare requirements are met. Good monitoring procedures ensure that leaders know where strengths exist and where improvements are needed. Through these good procedures, leaders and managers are driving improvement in the quality of provision and so improving outcomes for children. Consequently, children in the current Reception class are leaving the Early Years Foundation Stage with above-average levels of attainment including in their ability to read and write.

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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

Almost 40% of parents and carers responded to the inspection questionnaire. Most were satisfied with the school and agree that the school keeps children safe. A very small number of parents and carers expressed individual concerns regarding their children's safety. These issues were followed up during the inspection. Inspection evidence indicates that recommended safeguarding procedures are followed. A few parents and carers felt that the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour, that the school does not take sufficient account of their suggestions and concerns, and that leadership and management could be better. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils' behaviour is managed well and that leaders and managers are effective in bringing about pupils' good progress. The school was able to provide evidence of regular consultations with parents and carers and of where their suggestions have been acted upon.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Hartside 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 inspection team received 68 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 174 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	40	59	27	40	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	31	46	33	49	3	4	1	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	41	60	26	38	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	39	57	27	40	2	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	40	59	27	40	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	38	56	27	40	2	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	25	37	40	59	2	3	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)	28	41	36	53	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	31	46	36	53	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	27	40	31	46	6	9	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	27	40	25	37	9	13	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	26	38	32	47	6	9	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	38	56	27	40	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

	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).

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"> ■ 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.



9 July 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hartside Primary School, Crook, DL15 9NN

I would like to thank you for the help you gave the inspection team when we were visiting your school. You were friendly and helpful and we enjoyed talking to you about how you are getting on. Your school is providing you with a good education. The school is very effective in helping you to understand that although all people may be not be the same they all have equal rights. As a result, you take very seriously your responsibilities around school and for others in the world. You have an excellent understanding of how to follow a healthy lifestyle. You behave well in school and enjoy lessons. You make good progress and achieve well. This is because you are taught well and enjoy a programme of work that you find interesting and stimulating. Many of you are doing well in mathematics and reading but some of you do not do as well in writing.

Leaders and the governing body are continually looking for what more can be done to help you improve. We have asked them to do a few things to improve how quickly you make progress in your writing so that you can attain higher levels. You clearly enjoy your topic work and are good at finding out a lot of new things. We have asked your teachers to use every opportunity in lessons to develop your writing skills, by making sure that you fully understand how your writing can get better and by making sure the work they give you is always challenging.

You can help by continuing to work hard. I send you all my best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Linda Buller

Lead Inspector

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