

Easington CofE Primary School

Easington Village, Peterlee, County Durham, SR8 3BP

Inspection dates 14–15 July 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils achieve well. They make good progress throughout the school from their different starting points.
- Children get a good start to their learning in the early years provision. They are well prepared to enter Key Stage 1.
- Teaching is good in all classes. Staff set work that engages pupils effectively in their learning and enables them to make good progress.
- Pupils are well known as individuals and receive effective support if they need it. This enables all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged or vulnerable, to make good progress and achieve well.
- Pupils behave well, enjoy coming to school and are keen to learn. They get on very well with one another and say they feel very safe and well cared for in school.
- Leadership and management are good. School leaders and governors have a clear and accurate view of how well the school is performing and where it can do better. They have worked well together to improve the quality of teaching and pupils' behaviour and this is raising pupils' achievement.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not always high enough. Pupils, including the most able, are not always given work that is hard enough to enable them to make the best possible progress and reach the highest standards.
- Pupils' achievement in writing, although good, is not as strong as in reading and mathematics.
- Staff do not always give clear enough advice about what pupils need to do to improve their work. Staff make too few checks to ensure pupils respond to this guidance when it is given.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning on several occasions. One lesson was observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with school leaders and with seven governors, including the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body. The inspector also met two representatives of the local authority.
- The inspector met a group of pupils and also spoke informally to other pupils in lessons and during break and lunchtimes.
- The inspector looked at the work pupils were doing in lessons and in their books over time. He listened to pupils read and talked to them about their enjoyment of reading.
- The inspector observed the work of the school and examined a number of documents concerning pupils' current achievement and progress, development plans and information about teachers' performance. He also looked at records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding arrangements. The minutes of governing body meetings were also considered.
- The inspector considered 69 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire, as well as 48 responses to the school's version of this questionnaire conducted in December 2014. In addition, he spoke informally to several parents. He also considered seven responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Robert Birtwell, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Pupils are taught in four mixed-aged classes from the Reception Year to Year 6. Children attend the early years provision full time.
- Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average. These are pupils supported by the pupil premium which is funding the school receives for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is average.
- One teacher joined the school in October 2014.
- The school is part of the Peterlee Partnership Teaching School Alliance, a voluntary grouping of local schools.
- During the inspection the school was undergoing a major building project. This meant that some areas of the school and grounds were not in use but this had no adverse impact on the inspection process.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the quality of teaching and raise pupils' achievement, especially in writing, so that more pupils make the best possible progress, by making sure that:
 - expectations of what pupils can achieve are always high enough
 - the work set is always hard enough so that pupils, including the most able, are consistently challenged to make the best possible progress and achieve the highest standards
 - pupils have more opportunity to write at length across the curriculum with a clear focus on accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar
 - pupils are always given very clear guidance about what they need to do to improve their work and that checks are made that pupils respond to this advice.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher leads the school effectively and is well supported by all staff and governors. In this small school all staff successfully take on responsibility and act as middle leaders. Their actions have led to improvements in the quality of teaching and pupils' behaviour and have raised pupils' achievement.
- School leaders have a clear view of how well the school is performing and where it can do better. The school's systems for checking how well pupils are doing are thorough. School leaders closely monitor the quality of teaching and check and evaluate each pupil's performance.
- Staff make good use of information about pupils' attainment and progress. Any underachievement is quickly recognised and addressed by providing extra help or support if it is needed.
- There are few disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils in the school, but the pupil premium is spent effectively to support their learning in the classroom or individually and they make good progress.
- The school's provision for pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs is good. As a result, these pupils achieve well. This shows the school's successful commitment to equal opportunities for all pupils.
- School leaders use information about the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement to check how well teachers are performing, and to identify where further support or training is needed. This is helping to raise the quality of teaching. Staff are working increasingly effectively with other schools in the Peterlee Partnership Teaching School Alliance to improve practice.
- Information about pupils' achievement is also taken into account when judging how well teachers are performing and making recommendations about their salary.
- The curriculum is well planned. It engages pupils effectively in their learning and promotes good behaviour. There is a good range of activities, clubs, trips and visits to enrich the curriculum. Older pupils talked very enthusiastically about a residential outdoor activities trip for example, and others spoke about visits to museums and the theatre.
- The curriculum addresses discrimination effectively through a set of core values that are well understood by all pupils. It promotes tolerance and respect for others, and contributes well to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils have an improving knowledge of other cultures and religions. For example, there have recently been visits to a Sikh temple and a synagogue.
- British values are addressed well in lessons and through activities and assemblies. For example, the importance of democracy is successfully highlighted through elections for the school council and for head boy and girl. To coincide with the general election the school worked with Parliament's Education Service. Some pupils have visited World War One battlefields and they presented an assembly to the school afterwards. The school prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- The school's safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements. Staff and governor training is regularly updated, and systems and procedures are effectively implemented.
- The school uses the additional primary school sport funding successfully. A specialist teacher takes lessons and trains staff, and a sports apprentice helps to run a range of sports activities. The school also participates in a wider range of sports competitions through the Youth Sports Trust. Consequently, over 90% of pupils are involved in sporting activities and this has a positive impact on their physical well-being and lifestyles.
- The local authority has provided effective monitoring and support for the school. This has helped to raise the quality of teaching and is helping the school to improve.
- Most parents who responded to the Parent View survey were supportive. However, some parents expressed concerns about various aspects of the school. After exploring these concerns, the inspector judged the overall effectiveness of the school to be good.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - There have been substantial changes in the governing body recently, and many governors are relatively new. However, governors have a good range of skills and experience, and carry out their duties effectively. They evaluate how well they are performing and have undertaken training to improve their skills.
 - Governors have a clear view of how well the school is doing and where it needs to improve. They are well informed about the quality of teaching and understand the link between teaching and pupils' achievement. Governors understand how to analyse and use data about pupils' attainment and progress. They know how the pupil premium is spent and the impact it is having on the achievement of

the few disadvantaged pupils in the school.

- Governors are very supportive of the school and visit frequently in a variety of capacities. They hold the school to account effectively by asking probing questions, and by setting challenging targets as part of arrangements to check the headteacher's performance. They also make sure that pupils' achievement is taken into account when making decisions about teachers' pay. They manage the school's finances effectively and make sure that the school meets its statutory duties, including those related to safeguarding.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils know how they are expected to behave and understand why good behaviour is important in their learning. They say that behaviour has improved and most pupils behave well most of the time. However, they say that occasionally one or two pupils 'let the school down'.
- Pupils are well motivated and have positive attitudes to learning. They are keen to succeed and listen carefully to staff. Pupils work well both independently and in groups. As a result, lessons typically proceed smoothly with no interruption to learning.
- Pupils get on well with one another and with adults in the school. There is a strong caring ethos throughout the school. This has a positive impact on pupils' learning and enables them to make good progress.
- School records and discussions with pupils show that poor behaviour is increasingly rare. Pupils say that there is very little racist or discriminatory behaviour in school, and that on the few occasions pupils do misbehave, staff sort it out quickly and fairly.
- A very small number of pupils occasionally show challenging behaviour but staff manage this consistently and well. These pupils are supported in a caring and supportive way, involving close work with parents and other agencies. This leads to improved behaviour of these pupils.
- The inspector observed good behaviour in lessons, in assembly and around the school. Pupils mix well and are considerate of one another. They play enthusiastically and safely together during breaks, and behave sensibly and responsibly at lunchtime. Pupils have responded very sensibly to the disruption caused by building work in the school.
- Pupils take on responsibility in a variety of different areas. They act as school councillors, and some older pupils act as 'buddies' to help younger pupils. This makes a good contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils say that they enjoy coming to school because it is 'small and friendly and has a good standard of education'. As a result, attendance is above average.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say that they feel very safe and are well cared for in school.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of different kinds of bullying, including name-calling and discrimination. They understand the difference between bullying and falling out. They say that bullying is very rare but would report it and try to sort it out if it occurred. They are very confident that the school would deal with it quickly.
- Pupils have a good awareness of how to keep themselves safe in different situations. Pupils have a good knowledge of online safety and how to keep themselves safe when using the internet. There have been successful visits from the police dealing with issues around personal, road and cycling safety.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The quality of teaching has improved and is good across the school. This was confirmed by the work in pupils' books, the school's records of pupils' progress and checks on the quality of teaching. As a result, pupils in all classes are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Staff know pupils well as individuals and there are positive and productive relationships in the classroom. Staff set work that engages pupils in their learning and motivates them. Pupils say that staff make lessons fun and interesting, and get help if they are stuck. As a result they enjoy lessons. One pupil said that 'we have a laugh but learn a lot'.

- Reading is well taught and pupils' knowledge of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) is increasingly secure. This ensures that pupils make good progress.
- Pupils are taught well in mathematics and their knowledge of basic numeracy skills is secure. Pupils have opportunities to use their mathematical skills and reasoning to solve problems. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 greatly enjoyed solving a 'Mathematical Murder Mystery'. Different pupils had different challenges, and questioning was used effectively so that they all made good progress.
- Writing is well taught overall and pupils make good progress. However, progress is not as rapid as in reading and mathematics. Pupils have too few opportunities to write at length in different subjects and there is not enough emphasis on accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Staff typically have clear expectations of what pupils can achieve, but they are not always high enough. Staff do not always make sure that the work set is challenging enough to enable pupils, including the most able, to learn as well as they could. Pupils are not always given work that is hard enough to enable them to make the best possible progress and reach the highest standards.
- Staff mark pupils' work regularly. They use praise well, but do not consistently provide clear enough guidance on what pupils need to do to improve their work. In addition, they do not always check that pupils respond to this advice when it is given.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils make good progress during their time in the school. From starting points when they join the Reception Year that are generally typical for children's ages, pupils reach average standards by the end of Year 6. However, test results can vary from year to year because of the small number of pupils and the wide range of abilities within each year group. Inspection evidence shows that pupils are making good progress in all classes.
- Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2014 were above average in writing and mathematics, and average in reading. Current Year 2 pupils are on track to achieve similar results this year. This represents good progress from their starting points. Evidence from observing learning in lessons and analysing pupils' work shows that pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 are currently making good progress.
- In 2014 standards at the end of Key stage 2 were average in reading and writing, and below average in mathematics. All pupils made the progress expected of them in reading, and the proportion was average in writing and mathematics. The proportion who made more than the expected progress was close to average in reading and mathematics, and below average in writing.
- Inspection evidence and the school's most recent data show that all groups of pupils are making good progress and achieving well. Current year 6 pupils are on track to achieve similar standards this year, with almost all pupils making expected progress, and a larger proportion making better than expected progress.
- Pupils make good progress in reading because they have opportunities to read regularly and are well taught. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 national phonics screening check has improved. In 2014, it was below average, but is much higher this year.
- Pupils make good progress and achieve well in mathematics. They have secure basic skills and use these to reason effectively and solve problems.
- Overall, pupils achieve well in writing but the standards they attain and their rate of progress are not as high as in reading and mathematics.
- The most able pupils generally make good progress and achieve well. However, in common with other pupils, they are not always given work that is challenging enough to enable them to make the best possible progress, especially in writing.
- There are few disadvantaged pupils eligible for support through the pupil premium in the school. Their progress is carefully checked and the funding is used effectively to support them. As a result, they learn well and make good progress. There are too few pupils known to be eligible for this funding to comment on their achievement and progress as a group compared to non-disadvantaged pupils in school or nationally.
- Similarly, there are few disabled pupils or those who have special educational needs in the school. They achieve well and are making good progress because their needs are accurately identified, their progress is carefully checked and they receive effective support.

The early years provision

is good

- Most children join the early years with skills and knowledge that are around those typical for their age. However, this can vary from year to year because of the small number of children.
- Children make good progress from their individual starting points. The proportion who achieve a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year is above average. Children are well prepared to enter Key Stage 1 and the mixed year group class ensures a very smooth transition.
- The quality of teaching has improved and is good. Staff know children very well and ensure that learning activities are purposeful and well focused, and that children are fully involved in their learning. Staff make good use of both the indoor and outdoor environment.
- Children behave well and show good attitudes to learning. They listen attentively to staff and concentrate well on what they are doing. They work well together and show care and concern for others.
- For example, the children enjoyed using a variety of equipment indoors and outdoors to reinforce and develop their understanding of number. The children were well motivated and staff encouraged them effectively by asking probing questions.
- Staff check children's progress regularly and use this information to plan activities to extend children's learning. Staff work effectively to meet the needs of individual children. Any disadvantaged or vulnerable children are well supported and make good progress.
- There are increasingly strong links with parents and effective liaison with nursery providers. These ensure that children settle quickly into the early years provision. The inspector spoke to several parents during a morning session of shared reading. All parents were happy that their children were making good progress in a safe and caring environment.
- The early years leader is new to the school and the provision is well led and managed. All staff work well together with a common sense of purpose. They are well trained and know how well each child is performing. This ensures that children make good and improving progress.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	114231
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	461688

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	113
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rita Humphries
Headteacher	Andrea Swift
Date of previous school inspection	8 February 2012
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