



Fishburn Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 114095
LEA Durham
Inspection number 279311
Inspection dates 17 January 2006 to 18 January 2006
Reporting inspector Mrs Christine Graham

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	East View
School category	Community		Fishburn
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		Stockton-on-Tees, TS21 4AU
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01740 620162
Number on roll	238	Fax number	01740 620162
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr John Irvine
Date of previous inspection	1 October 1999	Headteacher	Mr Daniel Eason

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector.

Description of the school

Fishburn Primary School is the only primary school in Fishburn County Durham. Most pupils from the area attend the school and some pupils also come from surrounding villages. The numbers of pupils eligible for free school meals is in line with the national average. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is close to national average. The majority of pupils are white British. The school has a nursery. Attainment on entry to nursery is slightly below that of children nationally. The school has a much larger proportion of boys than girls. The headteacher has been in post since September 2004.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with Section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to the standards and achievement of pupils.

The headteacher has been in post for the past four terms. Before his appointment the school went through a difficult period which prevented it from progressing as well as other schools. During his time in post he has successfully identified the many areas requiring improvement and formed positive links with parents and the wider community. The personal development of pupils has greatly improved and a good basis for learning has been established.

Improvements to the pupils' attainment have been too slow. The progress made by pupils and the standards they achieved were particularly low in national tests in 2005. Inspection evidence shows that while pupils now make satisfactory progress in most aspects of science and mathematics, standards in writing throughout the school are still too low. There are weaknesses in the basic skills and teachers' expectations vary from class to class. Pupils do not receive enough good quality guidance on how to improve their work. Not enough attention has been given to improving pupil progress through a clear and systematic analysis of weakness. Teaching was satisfactory during the inspection and good in a small number of lessons.

Members of the leadership team are very new to the role. They provide good support to the headteacher but are not yet leading improvement. The governing body is very effective. It is very well informed and has a clear view of the progress the school has made and of the areas which still require improvement.

Behaviour is good. Pupils are encouraged to adopt safe and healthy lifestyles. The new Early Years Unit is very effective. It provides children with a good start to their education.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are not always given appropriate support. The school has improved over recent months and has the capacity for further improvement. It does not yet provide satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- give subject leaders the skills to rigorously monitor learning and the pupils' attainment
- develop a more accurate view of the quality of teaching and what must be done to improve it
- provide pupils with more opportunities to write and improve grammar, punctuation and presentation
- ensure that all marking gives pupils accurate guidance on how to improve.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Children enter the Foundation Stage with attainment below that normally expected for their age and they make good progress in the nursery and Reception. This is due to improved organisation in the new Early Years Unit and to the good teaching they receive which is effective in meeting their needs. By the end of the Reception Year most pupils have achieved the Early Learning Goals and are ready for Year 1. However, in the rest of the school standards are lower than they should be and progress is inadequate for many pupils.

Pupils in Key Stage 1 achieve results in line with national expectations in assessments at the age of seven. The attainment of some pupils is not as good as it could be because work is not always well matched to their needs. Standards at the end of Year 2 are satisfactory. Pupils maintain but do not add to the gains made in the early years of school.

Standards at the end of 2005 in national tests at the age of eleven were very low. Pupils made too little progress and many achieved less well than they could have done. Test results in English, mathematics and science have been below those achieved nationally for the past three years and have declined year on year. The school has put in place many strategies to improve the pupils' learning but these have not had enough impact on their attainment.

Work seen in classes during the inspection shows that standards are rising in mathematics and science but that not enough improvements have been made in English. Pupils in Year 6 are making better progress this year.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The personal development and well being of pupils is good; this matches the view of the school. It has been greatly improved over recent months and the work done has been effective. The attendance of pupils is satisfactory, although it declined slightly in 2004/05. Behaviour is good in classes and around the school. There are effective systems in place to maintain this during lunchtimes and playtimes. Attitudes to school and lessons are good. Pupils show a strong sense of responsibility. They like coming to school and are very clear about the large number of improvements which have been made in the last eighteen months. Learners particularly enjoy more practical activities where they can be fully involved in the lesson.

The school is involved in a number of initiatives which provide physical activities for pupils. They get more than the recommended amount of exercise. School meals are very good. Recent work on evaluating and improving the quality of school meals has resulted in many more pupils using the service. Pupils are well informed about how to stay safe and healthy. They raise money for charity and are increasingly involved in making decisions about the school and in taking responsibility for aspects of school

life. Links with the community are good and the school is used as the base for many village activities.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils receive good moral guidance and an education which enables them to live in a multi cultural society.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The school judged teaching to be good but it is satisfactory. A great deal of work has been done on developing teaching skills. Teachers are encouraged to plan lessons which include practical well sequenced tasks which will help all pupils learn but especially the large numbers of boys in this school. In the best lessons teachers achieved this. Pupils worked in a practical way, often working with a partner or group. Pupils were able to share ideas and explain their thinking to a friend. Careful use of questioning provided appropriate challenge. Teachers not only expected the correct answer but also an explanation of the methods used to work it out. Any incorrect answers were explored and corrected. Pupils were able to plan their work and choose their own strategies to solve problems. Pupils enjoyed these lessons and worked hard because they could see they were making progress. There are too few lessons of this quality. In some lessons there is not enough time allowed for pupils to complete work and not enough attention is paid to the learning needs of individuals. The marking of pupils' work varies greatly across the school. While most tells pupils what they can do there is too little guidance given to pupils on how to improve. Teaching assistants provide good support to pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. It meets all statutory requirements and has recently been improved in an effort to raise standards. This has been effective especially in science where the content of lessons and methods used to teach have been reviewed and new resources provided. Practical investigative work is developing well. Resources for information and communication technology (ICT) have been considerably improved and it is now integrated into subject teaching. A new ICT room has been created and pupils are encouraged to use the internet as an aid to learning. The school uses a number of support packages to help pupils who find learning more difficult. A wide range of sporting activities are offered both as part of the taught curriculum and as extracurricular clubs. Pupils are taught how to stay safe and live healthy lives from their earliest days in school. They are encouraged to protect the environment and recycle materials. A local artists group works in the school each week. The art seen in school is good. A Spanish Club is run by students from Durham University. Pupils enjoy the opportunity to learn another language.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

All statutory guidance is in place. School security has been much improved in recent months and this has lessened the amount of vandalism to the building and grounds which was affecting pupils' education. Pupils identified a concern about bullying and as a result procedures have been strengthened. All incidents are reported to the headteacher and appropriate action is taken. Pupils report feeling much safer in school and are clear that if bullying should happen it would be dealt with very quickly. Relationships with parents are good. One of the first acts of the new headteacher was to ask parents for their views. He has acted on these responses and, as a result, parents now have much greater confidence in the school. A very large number of parental questionnaires was received. Most were very positive and appreciative of the support pupils receive. Many noted that if they had a concern the school would sort it out. Pupils receive good guidance to support personal development but, in some classes, too little guidance on how to improve their attainment.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The leadership of the school is satisfactory. Since his appointment the headteacher has done much to improve the school and has created a good basis from which to improve standards. Systems are in place to improve the attainment of pupils. These are proving to be particularly effective in Year 6 and in the early years. The headteacher manages and leads all aspects of improvement. While he has a clear view of what is needed, subject leaders are not rigorous enough in identifying weaknesses in learning. Although school self-evaluation is satisfactory school leaders do not yet have an accurate view of the quality of teaching. A new leadership team is in place but it is at an early stage of development. Its members are very supportive of the headteacher but some are not yet at the stage of taking individual responsibility. For this reason not enough improvements have been made to the pupils' progress and achievement. The headteacher has formed very good links with the community and, as a first step in auditing the quality of the school's provision, questioned all stakeholders about their current view of the school and how they would like to see it improve. These views were built into school improvement planning. The headteacher has strengthened the governing body by approaching local figures and persuading them to become governors. Governance is now very effective. Governors are very well informed about the school and know what progress has been made and what needs to be done. The school improvement plan identifies key areas and shows the progress made. Actions taken have been effective. The school has the capacity to make further improvements.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	4	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	4	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	4	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	No
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Alexandra House

33 Kingsway

London

WC2B 6SE

T 0207 421 6800

F 0207 421 6707

Ofsted helpline

08456 404045

Fishburn Primary School

East View

Fishburn

Stockton-on-Tees

TS21 4AU

17 January 2006

Dear children,

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. We really enjoyed our visit.

We could see that you like your school and get on well with each other and your teachers. Your behaviour is very good in class and at lunchtimes and playtimes. We were pleased to hear that Mr Eason makes sure there is no bullying. You told us how pleased you are with all the improvements that have taken place recently. We think that you are right and that your school has become a much better place.

We were interested in what you thought about your work. Children at your school sometimes don't do as well with their work as they should. We can see that you work hard and that you listen to your teachers carefully. However too many of you make lots of careless mistakes, especially when you are writing. You must remember to use capital letters and punctuation so that the reader can understand your work. We saw beautiful handwriting in some books but not in all of them. Some of you had lovely writing one day and untidy writing the next. You will all be taught how to write beautifully and your teachers will make sure that you always present your work properly. Some of you wait for your teachers to tell you what is wrong with your work. We think you are clever enough to check your work before you hand it in. You could make it better and get higher marks. Mr Eason and other teachers are going to check that these things are happening.

We have asked your teachers to mark your work carefully and tell you exactly what to do to make it better. We have also asked them to give you more lessons where you can work in groups or with a partner to do practical tasks. Those types of lessons will help you remember what you have learned. You told us that those are the types of lessons you enjoy most. It is important that you finish every piece of work and ask your teachers to explain anything you don't understand.

Your teachers are going to work very hard over the next few months to make your school even better. You will find that lessons become even more exciting and that you learn faster.

I'm sure I will soon hear that children at Fishburn Primary School achieve fantastic results.

Best Wishes

Mrs C E Graham

Her Majesty's Inspector