



Aycliffe Village Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 114101
LEA Durham
Inspection number 279313
Inspection dates 5 December 2005 to 6 December 2005
Reporting inspector Mrs Heather Evans

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Aycliffe Village
School category	Community		Newton Aycliffe
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		County Durham, DL5 6JL
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01325 300227
Number on roll	106	Fax number	01325 300227
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Susan Hindle
Date of previous inspection	1 January 2000	Headteacher	Miss Joanne Clarke

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 5 December 2005 - 6 December 2005	Inspection number 279313
-----------------------------	---	------------------------------------

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one additional inspector.

Description of the school

This smaller-than-average primary school provides education for boys and girls aged between 4 and 11 years. An average number of pupils claims free school meals. Most pupils live close to the school but others travel a considerable distance. Attainment on entry is about average, although more pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities than in most schools of this size. Almost all of the pupils are white British and everyone speaks English as their family language.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Inspection evidence supports the view of the staff and governors that this is a highly effective school. As a result of outstanding planning and teaching, pupils of all backgrounds attain standards well above those expected. Overall, pupils' progress, achievement and personal development are outstanding. The curriculum has outstanding strengths in many areas, notably in English, mathematics, science, music and art. Work in information and communication technology (ICT) exceeds expected levels and is greatly improved. In the tests in 2005 an above average percentage of pupils achieved level 5, the level above that expected. The quality of teaching, learning, and the curriculum is outstanding, as is the quality of the care, guidance and support that staff provide. The quality of provision in the Reception class is good; most children achieve and some exceed the expected learning goals. Provision is better than at the time of the previous inspection, but there is still a need for a covered area for outdoor play. The school works very effectively with the local community and with specialist outside agencies. Teachers cater exceptionally well for the needs of all pupils, including those with special gifts or talents and those who experience learning difficulties. Parents and pupils hold the school in very high regard.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The weaknesses identified at the time of the previous inspection have all been remedied. Imaginative plans look for further improvement in English and the arts and in the outdoor provision for the Foundation Stage. The school is very well placed to move forward. Finances are managed very well. Value for money is very good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Pursue all possible ways of providing a covered area so as to extend opportunities for outdoor play for children in the Reception class.
- Extend the national initiative in literacy, presently being successfully piloted in Years 2 and 3, to other classes across the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Standards are consistently high. In 2005 a high proportion of pupils in Year 6 attained Level 5 in English, mathematics and science. The progress and achievement of pupils are outstanding when compared with their previous experiences. In most years the small numbers mean that comparisons with national standards must be reviewed with some caution. Standards are close to average when children enter the Reception class. Children settle quickly and develop as independent learners. They make rapid progress. By the end of Year 2 achievement is outstanding and standards are above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. By the end of Year 6 standards and achievements exceed the expected levels. The cross-curricular approach to learning enables basic skills in English and mathematics and skills in ICT to be used superbly well across a range of subjects.

Teachers have very high expectations of all children, whatever their starting level. Progress is rapid and results in very high achievement. In all classes, work is challenging and the pace of work is brisk. Teachers use assessment information exceptionally well to set imaginative targets for individuals and groups. They encourage pupils to tackle more difficult work with enthusiasm and confidence. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities engage in work that is tailored to their specific needs. Skilled support enables them to achieve very well. Pupils say that working and learning together are fun.

Grade: 1

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Support for each pupil's personal development and well-being is outstanding. Pupils enjoy coming to school and know that all the staff do everything they can to help them learn. Behaviour is consistently good because the staff make their high expectations very clear. The positive values of the school have established an ethos that is appreciated by all pupils. Boys and girls say they feel safe and know that they are cared for very well. Younger children know that the older pupils look after them and that they are their friends. Attendance is good but some pupils lose ground because their families take holidays in term time.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils remains very strong. Pupils learn about a range of cultures through work in different areas of the curriculum, including music, geography and religious education. Teachers ensure that all pupils understand how to lead safe and healthy lives. The school is fully involved in many community events and also shares projects with other schools. Teachers listen to pupils' views and take them into account when making decisions. The school council reports directly to governors and has a useful impact on the decisions made. The way pupils develop their academic and social skills prepares them very well for the next phase of their life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Across the school teaching has many outstanding features. Most classes have a mix of ages. Pupils' learning is rapid and their achievement is excellent. Pupils work collaboratively and independently on demanding tasks that capture their interest and challenge their thinking. Teachers expect everyone to do their best in order to succeed. All adults know the pupils very well and they match work very closely to pupils' earlier achievements. Probing questions cause pupils to concentrate as they think, and think again. Teachers require all completed work to be presented very well and to demonstrate high standards.

Learning is enjoyable and lessons move at a fast pace. The use of ICT very effectively supports teaching and increases the rate of learning. Progress towards targets is evaluated extremely well, and this is used sensitively to inform planning. Pupils say that comments made on their marked work help them to think how they might improve.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have good support in lessons. Some succeed better than they could imagine and feel justly proud of their achievements. Behaviour is good and pupils know that any misbehaviour carries sanctions. At the end of lessons pupils are encouraged to listen to what others have done. They praise what they like and make sensible suggestions as to what could be improved.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

Curricular provision is outstanding. Staff work collaboratively to ensure that all pupils receive a lively and stimulating curriculum that goes beyond the requirements of the national curriculum. Teachers are constantly looking for ways to increase opportunities for learning. A strength of the school's curriculum is the balance between teaching basic skills in mathematics and English and finding interesting ways to apply these accomplishments in other situations. The use of ICT is a very strong element of subject planning. The work to pilot a national approach to extend literacy across drama, music and art is proving to be exciting and pleasurable. The school is eager to extend this work across all classes to build on the measured success of the approach.

The extended curriculum is stimulating, relevant and enjoyable for all children. Very effective links between subjects extend the scope and range of work in the mixed-age classes. Teachers modify their teaching styles to meet the needs of groups and individuals. An outstanding strength of the school is the regular review of achievements and planned work by the teaching and support staff, resulting in the modification of plans as required.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

All pupils are cared for outstandingly well. The school's ethos is calm and supportive. Staff are fully committed to pupils' welfare and teachers help pupils to develop healthy lifestyles and adopt safe practices. Pupils say they feel safe and explain how adults help them to build long-lasting, trusting relationships.

Staff give very effective support for pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, or any worries. Opportunities are created for pupils to discuss problems. Teachers work well with parents to meet pupils' needs. Very effective links with the local secondary school aid pupils' transition to the next stage of their education. Pupils involve themselves fully in planning their learning experiences. They know what they have learned already and are very clear about how they might improve. The school goes out of its way to work with other agencies, parents and local schools. Child protection is secure and risk assessments are carried out rigorously.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The leadership of the headteacher, working with the staff and the governors, is outstanding. Every involved adult knows the pupils and the aims of the school very well. This team has worked very successfully to involve pupils, parents and external specialists in the process of building on the good standards seen at the previous inspection. They have resolved all of the issues identified at that time. Parents are involved at every step from when their children start in Reception to when they prepare for the move to the secondary school.

The way that all staff work together in the process of self-evaluation and planning for improvement is exceptionally good. The regular shared monitoring by staff enables them to set targets for groups and individuals aimed at raising pupils' attainment to even higher levels. Governors have an excellent grasp of the school's strengths and have structured plans for further development. The school has no significant weaknesses but is committed to strategic planning that reflects the vision of the headteacher and her staff with the governors. Pupils are delighted with the improvements in the provision for ICT and are eager to have even more computers. All teachers value every child as an individual, and work together with great success to promote their social, spiritual, academic and creative learning to the highest possible level.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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
--	-----------------------	--------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	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?	1	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	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?	1	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	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	Yes
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
www.ofsted.gov.uk
Ofsted helpline
08456 404045

Miss Joanne Clarke
Aycliffe Village Primary School
Aycliffe Village
Newton Aycliffe
County Durham
DL5 6JL

30 November 2005

Dear Pupils

Thank you for your help when I inspected your school. Please let everybody know how much I enjoyed visiting your school. It is a happy and exciting place to learn and you all work together very well. Many very good things are happening and these are some that I liked best.

Your lessons are full of fun and excitement about learning. It is very good to see how well you behave and help one another. Your work in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology, music and drama is very good. The staff work very hard and care for you extremely well by planning enjoyable activities. They help you to learn very well. You visit interesting places and the visitors to your school, especially the African drummers, all help to make your work more enjoyable.

You do very well in your tests because you work hard and learn from one another by sharing opinions and testing ideas. Those of you who come every day do best as you do not have to catch up after having extra holidays. Your good attendance helps you to achieve as well as you do.

There are no important things wrong with your school, but there are one or two things that could make it even better and I know that your teachers are already working hard to make these happen.

There is no canopy in the garden outside the reception class and this means that children sometimes have to stay inside when they would rather play and work out of doors. The new and exciting work in literacy that is going on in Years 2 and 3 is not yet available in every class, but your teachers want this to be used everywhere.

Thank you again for helping me to find out about how good your school is. I know that your teachers want it to get better and better.

Yours sincerely,

Heather Evans, Lead Inspector