



# Deaf Hill Primary School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 114144  
**LEA** Durham  
**Inspection number** 279321  
**Inspection dates** 16 March 2006 to 17 March 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mrs Moira Fitzpatrick

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Trimdon Station
<b>School category</b>	Community		County Durham
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11		TS29 6BP
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01429 880358
<b>Number on roll</b>	160	<b>Fax number</b>	01429 880358
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr Ian Harper
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	1 January 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Paul Lonsdale

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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

The school is smaller than average. Almost all pupils are of white British heritage with a very small number from minority ethnic groups and who speak English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average, as is the percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational need is much lower than that found in schools nationally. When children start school in the Nursery, their attainment is below what is typical for their age, especially in language development. The school has won a number of awards in recent years. These include: two School Achievement Awards, Healthy School status, Activemark Gold, and the Basic Skills Awards. It is the first school in the county to gain a Family Learning Award, and also holds a Non-Smoking School Award.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school, with some good features and developing strengths. It gives satisfactory value for money. These judgements confirm the school's own view. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and they reach broadly average standards by Year 2 and Year 6, though standards in English should be higher. The quality of provision in the Foundation Stage is good. It is improving at a good rate, and standards are rising, because of the expertise and commitment of the Foundation Stage leader. Teaching and learning are satisfactory but improving this year under the leadership of the new headteacher. Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils accept responsibility eagerly and are keen to help in making improvements to the school. They are well cared for by teachers, who have a good knowledge of them and guide their personal and academic development well. Parents express confidence in the school and the way it looks after their children, saying they feel safe and happy there. Leadership and management are satisfactory and developing well this term because of the clear direction the headteacher has given to the work of subject leaders. The school is gaining a detailed and accurate knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses and is taking effective action to make improvements. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. Given the good support from governors, the strong and effective leadership of the new headteacher and the developing expertise of subject leaders, the school is well placed to continue to improve.

not applicable

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English across the school by ensuring that pupils make consistently good progress from Year 1 to Year 6.
- Develop the role of subject leaders until they make a full contribution to school improvement by rigorously monitoring standards and provision in their subjects and taking action to improve standards where they are weak.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory because all pupils make steady progress from their starting points in Year 1 through to Year 6, where they reach average standards. Last year, the performance of pupils in Year 6 in national tests was significantly below that of most schools because of a very poor performance in English, where many pupils did not reach the targets set for them. Several factors contributed to this poor performance, including interrupted teaching and a lack of effective assessment of pupils' progress. This meant that pupils' progress as they moved through the school was inconsistent. The situation has been swiftly remedied. The assessment and monitoring of pupils' learning this year have ensured that the current Year 6 are on track to reach the challenging targets set for them in the forthcoming national tests. Likewise, the decline in standards in Year 2 has been arrested. This year's pupils are making good progress

and are on target to reach average standards in the national tests. Throughout the school, pupils make satisfactory progress in mathematics and science and reach average standards for their age. In English, however, standards are below average, particularly in writing. Progress is still inconsistent, and the school recognises the need to continue to devise strategies for raising standards. In the Foundation Stage, children achieve well and most now make good progress from a below average starting point to reach the goals set for their learning by the end of the reception year. With good support, pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities make the same progress as their classmates.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Inspectors agree with the view of parents and the school that pupils' personal development is good. Social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good. Pupils say that they enjoy school, particularly their favourite activities such as sports, music, art and educational visits. This is reflected in attendance that is close to the national average. From reception onwards, pupils gain self-esteem, confidence and independence. They know the difference between right and wrong and, through the school and class councils, develop citizenship skills and an understanding of democracy and fairness. In lessons, pupils behave well and make sensible contributions. They concentrate and try hard to do their best. Success, and praise from teachers bring smiles of pleasure and a positive attitude to learning. Throughout the school, pupils are very keen to learn about other cultures, and their own local heritage interests them tremendously. At breaks and lunchtime, pupils play together amicably. They say that any bullying or misbehaviour is dealt with fairly and quickly by staff. They have a good understanding of how to stay safe and keep healthy, and a sound platform for success in their future stages of education and life.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. It is improving because of the increasingly effective use of assessment for learning. In some classes, teaching is good and sometimes very good, so the school has plenty of good practice which it can share among teachers. In the good lessons, teachers plan well to set tasks that are well matched to the different needs of pupils, so that all groups make similar progress. Pupils are made well aware of what they are expected to learn in lessons and are given goals to aim for by which they can judge how well they have progressed. They enjoy this very much and are spurred on to work quickly and are delighted at the end of lessons when the teacher praises them for their hard work. In the best lessons, teachers keep the pace brisk, ask challenging questions and create opportunities for pupils to learn from each other. They often make very good use of practical activities to interest pupils, who find this way of learning memorable. In the less effective lessons,

assessment is not used as effectively to ensure that pupils build on their previous learning as quickly as they do in the good lessons. This slows pupils' progress to satisfactory. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is very well planned to give children exciting learning opportunities and a good balance between adult-led and child-initiated learning.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum has improved since the previous inspection and the school is right to believe that it is now good. It fulfils all requirements and matches the full range of pupils' aspirations and capabilities. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum and, as it continues to improve and expand, it has something to offer every child. In the Foundation Stage, changes to the curriculum have led to good gains in children's personal and social development. For older pupils, numerous first-hand activities and educational visits bring the curriculum to life and motivate learning. For example, working with a local artist gave pupils an insight into their community and enabled them to make a contribution to local events. The curriculum takes account of pupils' backgrounds through a planned programme of personal development and after-school sports. As a result, pupils talk knowledgeably about safety, diet and exercise, and pupils and staff are rightly proud to have won a Healthy School Award.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school correctly judges these to be good. All relevant procedures for safeguarding pupils and ensuring their health and safety are in place. As a result, pupils say that they feel safe in school and parents are very much of the same opinion. Academic care and guidance are improving with the recent introduction of systems for tracking how well pupils do from one year to the next. This is already having a huge impact on some pupils' learning as they work hard to reach the targets set by teachers. Teachers know their pupils well and provide the help and advice needed for pupils to enjoy their school days, understand their progress, and be proud of their achievements. Staff have extended this care and guidance through a well-received Family Learning Programme. Parents who attend have a greater understanding of how children learn and the effect of this can be seen in school. Because of this success, the school is the only one in the county to receive a prestigious award for its efforts on behalf of families and pupils.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory, and are improving quickly as the recently appointed headteacher develops the role of subject leaders. Since joining the school this term, the headteacher has given a very strong lead to improving self-evaluation procedures and has set a timetable for monitoring the school's work. This enables subject leaders to discover at first hand where improvements are needed as this is an

area of their work that was previously underdeveloped. Through his evaluations, the headteacher has very quickly gained good insights into what the school needs to do to raise achievement for all pupils, and has made changes which are improving the quality of teaching and learning. As a result, standards are rising for all groups. The headteacher has successfully won the support of staff and governors for his vision of the school and has developed a high level of teamwork in a short time. Subject leaders are committed and enthusiastic and are developing the expertise to discharge their roles successfully. Governors have a good knowledge of the school, give good support and are very active in involving the school with the community through links with parents. The school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. Taking into account the good lead given by the headteacher in developing the management roles of staff, together with his clear vision and considerable expertise, the school is well placed to continue to improve.

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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>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	NA

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	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

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	NA
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

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Mr Paul Lonsdale

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16 March 2006

Dear Children

Thank you all for the kind welcome you gave us when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking with you and learning about all the things you like about school.

Here are some of the things that we like best about your school:

you behave well so that everyone can get on and learn in lessons; this is really important and makes a big difference – so well done!

we enjoyed seeing you work so hard and then check up on what you had learned in each lesson; it was good to see you reaching your targets

we are pleased that you and your parents think that your teachers look after you well; we agree they know you well and quickly sort out any problems that crop up

the improvements you are making to the school through your class councils and the school council are making a real difference to how everyone enjoys school – so keep it up!

we were bowled over by how well you all manage yourselves at lunchtime; everything runs so smoothly because you are all so sensible

it was lovely to notice so many older children looking out for younger children and helping them; we think older pupils have developed into mature young people who are very well prepared for secondary school.

To help your school get even better, we have asked the headteacher and teachers to help everyone to do better at writing, and to make sure that everyone who needs help at times with their learning is able to have this in class.

Our very best wishes for the rest of the year, and thank you again for the lovely welcome you gave us.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Moira Fitzpatrick

Lead inspector