



# Vane Road Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 114206  
**LEA** Durham  
**Inspection number** 279333  
**Inspection dates** 7 February 2006 to 8 February 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mrs Christine Graham

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Vane Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Newton Aycliffe
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		County Durham, DL5 5RH
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01325 300380
<b>Number on roll</b>	328	<b>Fax number</b>	01325 321203
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr Chris Foster
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	1 February 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Sue Collier

<b>Age group</b> 4 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 7 February 2006 - 8 February 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 279333
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## Introduction

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

## Description of the school

Vane Road Primary School is in Newton Aycliffe, County Durham. It is the same size as most primary schools but the falling birth rate in the area means pupil numbers have been significantly reduced during recent years. The school does not have a nursery and admits children from the age of four. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is in line with the national average as are the number with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Most pupils are of white British heritage. Children enter school with attainment in line with that expected for their age. An increasing number of pupils join the school after the Reception year.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The school believes that overall effectiveness is satisfactory and inspectors agree. School self-evaluation is satisfactory but the use of school data to evaluate effectiveness and plan improvements is fairly recent. Although results in national tests and assessments are in line with national averages at the ages of seven and eleven, the progress made by many pupils has not always been as good as it could be. However, since 2004 the school has been well supported by the local authority and has put in place effective strategies to improve individual attainment. Pupil progress is now at least satisfactory in all classes but information about the learning of individuals is not yet used consistently. Provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Teaching is satisfactory overall, with some being better than this. Teachers currently receive too little specific guidance on how to further improve their practice.

The school has an increasing proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. While these pupils make satisfactory or better progress with their learning, a small number have very specific needs or statements of special educational need. Arrangements to meet their distinctive requirements are not always fully responsive or appropriate to their needs.

The school meets all statutory curriculum requirements. The provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has been considerably enhanced in recent years. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good, and the care, guidance and support provided are satisfactory.

The headteacher provides satisfactory leadership. Senior managers have a growing understanding of what needs to be done and a willingness to learn. However staff training and development is not well matched to changing roles and some staff are not well enough prepared for new responsibilities. The school is fortunate to have a very skilled governing body; however, they are only just beginning to hold senior managers to account for their actions. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the pace of improvement so that the school can respond quickly to changing external demands.
- Develop a more accurate view of the quality of teaching and what must be done to improve it.
- Ensure that arrangements for pupils who have statements of educational need provide appropriate and effective support.
- Provide further support and training for staff at all levels so they carry out their responsibilities more effectively.
- Use assessment information consistently, in all classes, to set demanding targets.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

The school believes achievement and standards are satisfactory and inspectors agree. Children begin school with standards which are typical of those seen nationally. They make satisfactory progress in the Reception classes and benefit from an interesting and well planned curriculum designed to meet their needs. During the first two years of school pupils continue to make satisfactory progress and, by the end of Year 2, standards are in line with national averages in reading and slightly better in mathematics and writing. This progress continues as pupils move through the school. As a result, attainment at the age of eleven is in line with, or slightly above, national averages. While the majority of pupils attain the nationally expected Level 4, too few who might have been expected to attain Level 5 do so. The school recognises that the rate of progress was not always fast enough and has introduced an effective system for tracking pupil progress. Test results in writing, in 2005, improved significantly and work seen during the inspection confirms that this improvement is continuing. A lack of momentum in the teaching of science has been corrected by a review of the methods used and pupils now possess an increased understanding of scientific processes. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are given appropriate support with learning and make satisfactory progress.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Provision for the personal development and well-being of pupils is good. Assemblies make a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. 'Assemblies let you know about the world,' said one pupil. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have a strong moral sense and feel one of the strengths of the school is that 'teachers treat all pupils fairly and no one is left out'. Pupils demonstrate a clear concern about the environment and are committed to recycling. Community projects such as the Young Enterprise Initiative and work with a local newspaper help to raise their awareness of the local area, as does the 'safety carousel' where Year 6 pupils work alongside representatives from the police, fire and local health services. The school is working towards a Healthy School Award but snacks at break-times are not always as healthy as they could be. Residential opportunities and activity weekends support social development and teamwork and help pupils develop the skills necessary to contribute to the community and for life beyond school. Attendance is good and pupils of all ages enjoy school. The newly formed school council gives pupils good opportunities to voice their opinions and suggest improvements. Decisions are made democratically and pupils are able to judge the suitability of new ideas. The behaviour of pupils in lessons and around the school is good. All pupils understand the importance of physical exercise and the 'Trim Trail' and 'Huff Puff' activities at lunchtime give children opportunities for physical development and the chance to create their own games.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching is satisfactory overall with some being better than this. Teachers have gained a great deal of benefit from the training and support provided by the local authority. However they do not receive sufficient, specific guidance on how to further improve their practice. In some classes staff focus too much on the numbers of pupils reaching specific National Curriculum levels of attainment and take too little account of the progress made by individual pupils. In the best lessons teachers realise the importance of measuring progress and of tailoring teaching to the learning needs of individuals. Teacher expectation is high and learning is carefully structured in order that all pupils can achieve well. Tasks are exciting and challenging and inspire pupils to do their best. The marking of pupils' work gives clear guidance as to what has been achieved and how to improve further. Pupils understand their targets and are actively involved in assessing their progress. Displays in all classrooms celebrate achievement and provide support and guidance to learners. The quality of assessment and teacher marking is improving and is now of a good standard in many classes. However, information gained from assessment is not used consistently in all classes or in all subjects to set challenging targets for pupils.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

Although the curriculum has improved significantly, the inspection team does not share the school's view that it is good, but judge it to be satisfactory with some good features. A great deal of investment has been made in information and communication technology (ICT). There is now a well planned suite of computers and interactive whiteboards in all classrooms. All pupils are developing a good range of skills and the ability to use ICT as an aid to learning in other subjects. The school was slow to respond to the changing requirements of the science curriculum. With the appointment of a new coordinator the subject has been reviewed and children now learn in a much more practical and investigative way. A good range of extra curricular activities considerably extends the sporting and musical opportunities available to pupils. Involvement in work with the extended cluster of local schools provides opportunities to be involved in a range of interesting activities.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 3**

The care, guidance and support given to pupils are satisfactory. Procedures for supervision and outdoor play for all pupils, and lunchtime and home-time arrangements for the youngest children, are good. Relationships within the school are good and all pupils say there are lots of people they can talk to if concerned. 'Worry Boxes' are strategically placed around the school. The care and support provided for pupils with

learning difficulties and/or disabilities is satisfactory; however, the targets on the plans made for the education of these pupils are not specific enough to allow accurate assessments of progress to be made. Although the school feels it meets the needs of all pupils, arrangements for the very small number of pupils who have very distinctive requirements are not always appropriate, dignified or fully responsive to their needs. Child protection procedures are in place. Potential risks around the school and on activities out of school are assessed and minimised but incidents of exclusion or restraint are not always consistently recorded or analysed. Pupils are given good moral guidance and report a high level of support from staff which helps them to improve and become confident learners.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The headteacher provides satisfactory leadership for the school. She has created a calm and ordered environment which provides an effective basis for learning. Staff recruitment procedures are effective and good quality staff have been appointed. However, opportunities for training are not always available to meet the needs of staff taking on new or changing roles. School self-evaluation is satisfactory but has been too focused on attainment compared to national expectations, rather than the progress of individual pupils. The school has not always acted quickly enough to improve the provision made for pupils. The headteacher and governors have managed the difficult budgetary position, brought about by falling rolls, well. They have managed to maintain staffing levels, improve resources and maintain relatively small class sizes.

Senior leaders and middle managers have a growing understanding of what needs to be done to improve the school and are becoming confident in leading their subjects, analysing assessment data and monitoring outcomes. They receive good support from the local authority and carry out their responsibilities with increasing effectiveness. They are enthusiastic about the changes that have been made, and whilst accepting there is still some way to go, are committed to further improving the provision made for pupils. The governing body bring an impressive range of personal and professional skills to the role. They have recently streamlined their procedures and have organised training in order to increase their effectiveness. However, they have not always been well enough informed about the outcomes for pupils or clear enough about what needed to be done to bring about improvement.

Good recent gains have been made in most aspects of the school's work.

Capacity to bring about further improvement is good.

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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?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	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	2	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	2	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>	3	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3	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	3	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	No
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	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

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The Pupils

Vane Road Primary School

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Newton Aycliffe

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DL5 5RH

9 February 2006

Dear Children

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

Your behaviour in lessons and around the school was very good. You were very sensible when we had the fire alarm and we were very pleased to see how much you wanted to get back to your lessons. We could see that you get on very well with each other and your teachers. We were very pleased to hear that you feel one of the best things about your school is that teachers are fair and that no one is ever left out. Your new School Council seems to work very well and we thought you had some interesting and practical ideas about things you would like to improve.

You work hard in lessons and are given lots of opportunities to discuss your ideas with a partner or with the rest of your class. We think this is helping you to improve your work even more. Your teachers were pleased to know how much you like the targets they set for you and how much you appreciate the classroom displays which remind you of what to do in order to reach them.

Although you work hard, some of you told us you don't always work as hard as you could. We have asked your teachers to make the work, for some of you, even harder so that you learn the most you possibly can. We know that you enjoy lessons which are practical and allow you to test out your own ideas. We have asked that you get even more lessons like that.

You know lots about how to keep safe and healthy but we did notice some people eating crisps at playtime. Fruit or the oat biscuits made by the school would be much better for you. Some children need a little bit of extra care and we were delighted to see how understanding and thoughtful you were about that. We have asked Mrs Collier to make sure that those children are looked after very carefully so that you can all work and play very safely together.

We think that your school is going to become even better during the next few months and that you will become very tired because you will be working so hard.

We very much enjoyed meeting you and hearing what you had to say.

Best Wishes

Mrs Graham and the inspection team