



Seaton Delaval First School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 122223
LEA Northumberland
Inspection number 281197
Inspection dates 9 March 2006 to 10 March 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Andrew Scott

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

Type of school	First	School address	Seaton Delaval
School category	Community		Whitley Bay
Age range of pupils	4 to 9		Tyne and Wear NE25 0PS
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0191 2371239
Number on roll	178	Fax number	0191 2371239
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Terry Stewart
Date of previous inspection	1 November 1999	Headteacher	Mrs Linda Nicholls

Age group 4 to 9	Inspection dates 9 March 2006 - 10 March 2006	Inspection number 281197
----------------------------	--	------------------------------------

© 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 two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average-sized first school, serving a community where socio-economic conditions are below average. Virtually all pupils come from white British families and the pupil population is reasonably static. There are fewer pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities than is typical. The limited accommodation has prompted the building of a new school, with a projected move in September 2006.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school, and this judgement agrees with the school's own view of its overall effectiveness. Pupils develop well as individuals and achieve well. They enter school with skills and abilities that are usually below average and leave with attainment broadly average, and often higher. Writing is weaker than reading and mathematics, as pupils' vocabulary is not extensive enough to produce good expression. Teaching is good across the school, including the provision in the reception class, and children reach the standards expected by the end of reception. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and so classrooms are positive places to be. Pupils enjoy their work, sustain concentration and behave well; they are well cared for and know they are valued by all adults. The curriculum is good for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities but teachers could do more to enliven lessons and develop literacy, numeracy and ICT (information and communication technology) through other subjects.

The school is well led and managed. The headteacher has established a clear direction for the school and initiated some good improvements. Inspectors consider that the school's self-evaluation is mostly accurate. Priorities are sensible and well supported by all staff, although the plans for improvement are not all detailed enough to ensure swift progress on issues. Nevertheless, the school has strengthened its provision since the last inspection and is well set to improve further. As a result, the school provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of pupils' writing by devising lessons that are consistently more imaginative and stimulating.
- Develop pupils' skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT by making the most of opportunities in all subjects.
- Ensure that plans for improvement are firmly based on clear analyses and have very precise actions to guide staff.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, achieve well as they move through the school. In most years, children begin the reception class with skills and abilities that are lower than average, notably in language and mathematical development. By the end of the year, most children make good progress and usually achieve their expected goals.

By Year 2, pupils continue their good progress. In recent years, standards have been consistently above average, and remain so this year, especially in reading and mathematics. Pupils are less successful in writing, and standards are likely to be just below average this year. Pupils structure writing well, and have satisfactory spelling and handwriting, but their expression is too simplistic.

Pupils also do well by Year 4. This year's pupils should maintain above average attainment in reading, although their mathematics is closer to average. Their writing is below the expected attainment for the same reasons as younger pupils. Nevertheless, they will have achieved well over time, because they were below average when they began school and there is a higher proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities than normal.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils like coming to school and say that it is a good place to be. It is not surprising, therefore, that attendance is satisfactory and pupils behave well. They get on well with one another and adults, so the atmosphere around school is relaxed yet purposeful. In lessons, pupils are attentive, enjoy learning and work effectively in groups. Pupils particularly enjoy the opportunities to indulge in role-play and discovering the mysteries of science.

Pupils understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle, taking advantage of the fresh fruit available daily for them to eat. They enjoy sport although there are few extra opportunities for physical activity after school. Pupils feel safe in school and know that there is always someone to confide in if they have a problem. They develop well socially, carrying out jobs in school responsibly and respecting the views of others. Links with local businesses and the Young Enterprise scheme enable them to understand the wider world. These skills, together with their competence in literacy and numeracy, set them up well for the future. Overall, therefore, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory, not better, because teachers do not provide enough opportunities in lessons and assemblies.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. Teachers concentrate understandably on basic skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT, enabling pupils to develop good spelling, for example, and competent calculation. They present new learning clearly so pupils are quite clear about what they are required to learn. High expectations of behaviour mean that the atmosphere in classrooms is mostly conducive to hard work and pupils concentrate well. However, pupils sometimes lose interest and their pace of learning falters when teachers are not lively enough in their presentation.

Teachers' planning of lessons is good, as it is based on sound assessment, and work broadly matches the needs of all pupils. The many teaching assistants and other adults help to ensure that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress. However, the planning can be too brief and not imaginative enough to provide exciting activities for pupils to improve their writing, for example. Similarly, pupils do not have much scope to think for themselves and take responsibility for their

own work. This is evident in their mental agility in mathematics, a skill that the school is keen to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Inspectors judge the curriculum to be satisfactory and not good, as the school believes. There is a sensible focus on basic skills in English and mathematics. Teachers sometimes reinforce these skills through other subjects but do not make the most of all opportunities. Pupils benefit from visits to bring their learning alive, such as a visit to Beamish to appreciate the Victorian way of life. However, the everyday curriculum is not so stimulating and sometimes too routine to motivate pupils. Pupils say they enjoy the activities outside lessons, although the range of activities is quite limited.

The school does well to ensure that all pupils benefit equally from the curriculum. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have good learning plans and effective support in lessons. Teachers are increasingly meeting the needs of the most able pupils and those with specific talents. Children in the reception class receive a good curriculum that successfully blends formal teaching with learning through independent play.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school looks after its pupils well. There are effective systems to ensure their care and safety and to meet the needs of individuals. There is close liaison, for example, with outside agencies to provide the right specialist support for pupils with specific needs. Pupils report that the school deals very effectively with the very few instances of aggressive behaviour that occur. The school promotes healthy living and encourages pupils to be responsible for their own safety. Parents have a good opinion of the school and know that their children like school, feel safe and are well cared for.

The school has good procedures for checking how well pupils progress in their work. These enable teachers to determine where there are weaknesses, such as the quality of expression in writing, and set sensible targets for improvement in literacy and numeracy. However, this arrangement is quite new and pupils are not yet all aware of their targets. Furthermore, teachers' marking is not consistently helpful in advising pupils how to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher has good priorities for the school, rightly promoting standards as well as pupils' personal development. She has generated positive teamwork among staff, who share her vision, and is well supported by the deputy headteacher. She has initiated many improvements to the school, including brighter accommodation, increased support staff and more

consistency in behaviour management. Senior staff lead their subjects well, although they have little opportunity to work alongside colleagues to share good practice.

Governance is good. The governors know their school well and keep abreast of what is happening in school through regular visits. They are fully involved in the school's development and, mostly, call the school to account for its actions. Parents think highly of the school and believe their children make good progress. A few parents believe that the school could do more to take account of their views, but inspectors do not share this view.

The school's self-evaluation is satisfactory. Teachers use data well to pinpoint areas of concern, such as writing, but do not always deduce how these areas can be best improved. Writing, for instance, is a continuing priority and the school has yet to find a solution to its shortcomings. Nevertheless, the school has improved well in recent years, for example, in sustained standards and staff development. Therefore, the school is well placed to improve further.

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?	2	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?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	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	3	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?	2	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?	2	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?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	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	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	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

Ofsted helpline

08456 404045

Mrs Linda Nicholls

Seaton Delaval First School

Seaton Delaval

Whitley Bay

Tyne and Wear

NE25 0PS

11 March 2006

Dear Children

Mrs Fall and I thoroughly enjoyed our visit to your school, and meeting you and your teachers. Thank you very much for all your comments and help around the school. We believe that your school gives you a good education because:

you do well in your work, especially in reading and mathematics

you behave well and get on with one another well

your teachers want the best for you and so you usually work hard

the adults in the school take good care of you and make sure you are healthy and safe

your headteacher and governors have done well to improve the school and ensure a bright future for you.

However, your school could be better if:

teachers provide more interesting lessons to help you to improve your writing

there are more chances for you to develop your skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT in all the other subjects

all plans for improving the school are clear and detailed.

I wish you every success for the future in your new building.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Scott

Additional Inspector