

# Durham Lane Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	111562
<b>Local Authority</b>	Stockton-on-Tees
<b>Inspection number</b>	288989
<b>Inspection date</b>	22 May 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	John Heap

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	206
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Simon Close
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Jacqueline Ball
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 September 2002
<b>School address</b>	Amberley Way Eaglescliffe Stockton-on-Tees TS16 0NG
<b>Telephone number</b>	01642 780742
<b>Fax number</b>	01642 788834

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This broadly average-sized school serves residential areas that have few signs of disadvantage and a below average proportion of pupils entitled to a free school meal. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. A small proportion of pupils is from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds and none is at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. A very small number of pupils are looked after by the local authority. An average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and this includes a speech and language unit. The school has achieved a range of external awards, such as Healthy School and ActiveMark status. There have been recent and significant changes to the senior management team.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Inspection findings confirm the school's effective self-evaluation that a good education is provided. As a result, pupils benefit from good teaching and make good academic progress. The vast majority of parents who returned inspection questionnaires also agree that the school is effective and one parent wrote in these terms: 'The school provides a well-balanced caring environment for my children, which in turn encourages them to learn.'

A particular strength of the school is pupils' outstanding personal development. It is so strong because of the highly caring ethos and very strong elements in the effective curriculum. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and attitudes to learning are very good. Older pupils relish helping the youngsters and this is a strong part of the very effective contribution pupils make in the school. Pupils have an excellent knowledge and understanding about maintaining a healthy and safe lifestyle and this is highlighted by the national awards the school has acquired. Pupils have a sound insight into the more diverse communities in Britain. This could be better.

Children enter the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception) with broadly typical skills and they get a steady start to their education. Standards by the end of Year 6 are consistently and significantly above average and achievement is good. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, those from minority ethnic backgrounds and those in the care of the local authority make the same good progress as their peers. Results in national tests at the end of Year 2 fluctuate year on year because of the changing proportions of pupils with extra learning needs and they are average overall. The overall progress that pupils make is satisfactory. Pupils throughout the school make the most progress in reading, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT). Standards in writing have been lower but these are now rising because the school has made significant improvements to the teaching, assessing and marking of pupils' work. Consequently, pupils' books show good progress in basic writing skills, particularly for the higher attaining pupils in Years 2 and 6. The judgements on writing and ICT are big improvements since the last inspection. This strong development of basic academic skills, allied to their attitudes, means pupils are very well prepared for future learning.

Leadership and management are good. The school is improving well and the capacity for further improvement is good. This is mainly because the senior leadership team is a cohesive and effective group that is promoting progress after a period of change. Monitoring is regular and rigorous. Full attention is paid to the messages on pupils' academic achievement shown by the developing and effective assessment procedures. School improvement planning is effective but the plan needs to be sharpened by making success criteria measurable. Governance is satisfactory. The governors are supportive and use the range of expertise at their disposal adequately. Nevertheless, their procedures for evaluating the school's work are not strong enough.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Sharpen school improvement planning by making success criteria measurable.
- Improve governors' evaluation of the school.
- Help pupils to have a good knowledge and understanding of cultural diversity in Britain.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' achievement is good and standards by Year 6 are significantly above average. Children's progress in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. By the end of their time in Reception, children have settled well into school and the majority of them are working at levels appropriate for their age. There is evidence that more of the children are reaching the higher levels of the early learning goals than in previous years.

Pupils' progress in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory and by Year 2 standards are average. Results change markedly year on year because of the variations in the numbers of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. For example, despite good progress, pupils with speech and language difficulties do not attain as highly as other pupils.

By Year 6, results have been significantly above average since 2002 and the number of pupils reaching the higher than average Level 5 is well above average in mathematics and science. Pupils meet the challenging targets set for them. Trends in results are rising in mathematics and science, but less so in English because writing results have been lower. Current work in pupils' books and evidence from tracking shows pupils making good progress in writing. This is the result of improvements in the monitoring of pupils' achievements and setting them more challenging work. Girls do better than boys and the school is developing appropriate strategies to close the gap. The progress of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is good from their starting points. Throughout the school, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those in the speech and language unit, receive well judged support and make good progress.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Moral and social development is exemplary and leads to excellent behaviour and very strong relationships between pupils and with adults. Children in the Foundation Stage make strong progress in their personal, social and emotional development. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and this is confirmed by their very good concentration and keenness in lessons and the consistently above average attendance. Responsibilities such as playground leaders, various classroom jobs and servers at the lunchtime salad bar ensure pupils make a first-class contribution to the caring ethos of the school. Equally, the deliberations of the school council provide a really good contribution to the day-to-day running of the school; for instance, in relation to healthy menus and behaviour. Pupils understand that there are people worse off than themselves and they readily work hard to raise contributions for charities. They thoroughly understand that it is important to lead healthy and safe lifestyles. Pupils clearly reflect well on a range of issues and form views of their own and this is encouraged in class council discussions. Cultural development is good overall. Pupils have a strong knowledge and understanding of their local culture and the community and a sound insight into the more diverse communities in Britain.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good with outstanding features. Teachers and learners work particularly well in Years 2, 5 and 6. The speech and language unit is a very settled and supportive learning environment where pupils are clearly happy and challenged learners. This, and support across the school, promotes the good achievement of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Typical features in the teaching and learning are:

- strong management that leads to keen work from pupils and few disruptions to learning
- teachers' good knowledge and understanding that promote the strong development of pupils' basic learning skills; this has improved greatly in ICT
- good and improving marking has led to pupils being challenged well.

Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory and lead to sound progress. The headteacher recognises this and is taking steps to introduce more child initiated activities. Trends are showing clearly that a higher proportion of children are reaching higher levels of attainment at the end of Reception as a result of improved teaching.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The curriculum is good with excellent features. The promotion of academic development is good and improving. ICT now plays a much bigger part in pupils' learning across the school; such as, the musical compositions in Reception. The use and development of literacy and numeracy skills across subjects are satisfactory and growing. The promotion of pupils' personal development is very good, in terms of direct teaching of health and safety matters but also in providing opportunities for pupils to develop musical skills in the large choir. Although pupils' understanding of diversity in Britain could be better, the school does benefit from support of parents who come from minority ethnic backgrounds. Partnerships with external providers improve pupils' achievement and basic skills, particularly the strong links with performing arts schools. The school enriches the curriculum with a very wide range of activities, including sports, music and chess. The external premises are well set out to promote learning and challenge pupils during their break times. This has much to do with their excellent behaviour and relationships.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

Staff know the pupils well and this is recognised and appreciated by parents and pupils alike; one pupil said, 'We are safe and know who to go to if we have a problem to sort out'. Arrangements for the safeguarding of pupils are in place and follow appropriate guidelines. Pupils' self-esteem is nurtured well and, as a result, they make good progress in their academic and social learning. Very rare incidents of unacceptable behaviour are dealt with quickly and effectively. Assessment procedures are good and the guidance given to pupils on academic progress is increasingly effective. Pupils are involved in understanding what it is they need to do to improve their learning and there are good examples of pupils judging each other's work. Parents appreciate the strong relationships that the school is developing with them: 'I would

like to state that the staff take their roles further than the job description in all ways when caring for my children's specific needs.'

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher sets a clear educational direction for the work of the school. Data are analysed well and trends are identified. With the effective senior leadership team, change is managed well to increase achievement. This is most noticeable in the improvements in English and ICT. The monitoring of teaching and learning is working well and accurate. Subject co-ordinators make an important contribution to the work of the school. They show a good knowledge of the issues in their subjects and produce appropriate action plans. Governors support the school well and there is a regular presence in the school; for instance, by the special educational needs governor. Nevertheless, evaluation of the school's work is underdeveloped and the governing body is too reliant on management to provide the information rather than seeking it proactively. There is a clear commitment across the school to improve provision. For example, improving the aged furniture in the school and developing the ICT suite. The promotion of equal opportunities is good and results in all groups of pupils achieving well. Financial management is effective and the school gives good value for money.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</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>	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

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

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

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

23 May 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Durham Lane Primary School, Eaglescliffe, TS16 0NG

Thank you so much for making me welcome when I visited your good school recently. I enjoyed coming to some of your lessons and talking to you about the school and the interesting things that you do.

What I particularly liked about your school.

- The good results that you achieve by Year 6 and the good progress that you make.
- The better work that you are doing in writing and ICT.
- Listening to the tuneful singing from the choir as I was eating my lunch.
- The good quality of teaching and learning.
- The way that everybody feels valued and part of the school community and the part the school council plays in that.
- Your enjoyment of your happy school.
- Your excellent behaviour and the way that you willingly take responsibility and help others.
- The good and improving guidance and support you receive to help you learn.

The adults in your school look after you well and I have asked them to look closely at setting targets for your achievements in their future plans that are easily measured. I have also asked them to help you have a good understanding of the diversity of life in modern Britain. Finally, I have suggested that the school governors improve the way they judge your school and the school council may well play a part in this.

Very good wishes to you all and good luck for the future

John Heap

Lead inspector