



Esh Winning Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 114138
Local Authority Durham
Inspection number 289815
Inspection date 6 February 2007
Reporting inspector Derek Neil HMI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	The Wynds
School category	Community		Esh Winning, Durham
Age range of pupils	3-11		County Durham, DH7 9BE
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0191 373 4701
Number on roll (school)	229	Fax number	0191 373 6477
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs E Grimes
		Headteacher	Mrs Diane White
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

Esh Winning Primary School is situated in the Deerness ward of County Durham.

The attainment of pupils when they start school in the Nursery and in Reception varies but usually it is slightly below what is typical for children of that age. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is about average. The number identified by the school as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. Almost all pupils have English as their first language. The school operates on two sites and a road runs between the two buildings. Part of the premises is shared with the local community; the village library is housed on one site, for example. The school has won various national awards including the Healthy Schools, the silver Eco-schools and the silver Artsmark awards.

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 provides a satisfactory education for its pupils and gives satisfactory value for money. The inspection confirmed the school's evaluation of itself in many respects. The majority of parents appreciate the support it gives their children, particularly in the Nursery. One wrote to inspectors, 'This is an outstanding Nursery, where my child has improved and enjoyed every minute.'

Although there are annual differences in pupils' level of attainment when they enter the school, in general they make satisfactory progress in all key stages, although the standards in reading in Key Stage 1 are below average and have been declining for some years. By the time pupils are 11, the proportion reaching the expected standard is broadly average, though relatively few reach higher levels. Boys tend to achieve better than girls. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress. The school is a calm and orderly environment where pupils develop social skills and learn how to be responsible citizens as they work and play together. Most pupils enjoy school and behave well. They have a good awareness of environmental issues and understand what they must do to stay healthy. Their attendance, however, is below average and has been declining for several years.

The pupils' academic and social development is due to some solid teaching throughout the school, a well planned and varied curriculum that is well suited to their interests and needs, and a high level of care and support.

The school's development since the last inspection has been varied. While some aspects have got better, others have deteriorated. The headteacher provides sound leadership, and has successfully brought about improvements in pupils' behaviour and attitudes in recent years. However, although the school collects masses of data about its own performance, it does not use the information well enough to identify its main priorities. This leads to weaknesses in the way it plans for improvement. Governors are keen to support the school but do not sufficiently hold it to account for standards. Nonetheless, the capacity to improve is satisfactory because governors and managers are fully committed to the school and are ready to act upon advice.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise the standard of pupils' reading in Key Stage 1.
- Improve girls' achievement.
- Increase attendance rates.
- Use data better as a basis for planning improvements in the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Although there are annual variations in the levels of ability in different year groups and in the progress they make, the overall achievement of pupils is satisfactory. They

make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage and enter Key Stage 1 sometimes slightly below and sometimes above the levels expected at that age.

By the time they are seven the proportion attaining the expected standard in mathematics and English is slightly below average. Although standards in writing have been gradually improving, standards in reading have been declining in recent years and last year were significantly lower than average. Higher attaining pupils can decode words well but sometimes read without understanding. Lower attaining pupils do not have sufficient strategies to decode words they do not recognise.

In Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make satisfactory progress and by the time they are 11 the proportion reaching the expected standard is broadly average, though relatively few pupils reach higher levels. Boys perform as well as boys do nationally but girls' performance is below average. The reasons for this have not been investigated by the school. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress in both key stages because of the high level of well planned support they receive.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Most pupils enjoy their time in school. They behave well in class and at play time. They are courteous and polite to visitors. Most concentrate well in lessons, pay attention to the teacher and try hard. Their moral, social and cultural development is good though their understanding of cultural diversity is limited, and the school recognises that their spiritual development could be enhanced. Pupils willingly take on additional responsibilities to help with the smooth running of the school; a small number of older children, for example, help to manage the tuck shop. The school council has brought about improvements, particularly to the playground. Pupils show responsibility to the wider community by raising funds for local charities, for example, and by sponsoring a child in Africa. They are aware of health and safety issues. They feel safe and adopt safe practices in school. They understand the need for a healthy diet, although they recognise this does not always lead them to change their own habits. Many pupils take regular exercise. However, their attendance rate is below average and has been steadily declining for some years, despite the school's use of a reward system.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching is satisfactory with some good features. Teachers plan their lessons well. It is clear what the pupils are meant to learn and teachers carefully match the work to the different levels of ability in the class. Lessons consist of a good variety of short activities. Teachers choose the words they use with care in order to try to extend pupils' own vocabulary. The relationships in the class are good and behaviour is managed well. The flexible use of support staff means that pupils are sometimes taught

in small groups and get high levels of individual support when needed. At times, the teachers do not make their explanations clear to the whole class, partly because the ancient chalkboards in their classrooms are unhelpful. In some classes pupils work well independently of the teacher, for example, when discussing issues with their partner; in others, the teacher's management of independent work is less successful. Pupils' extended writing is marked thoroughly and teachers give helpful guidance on how it might be improved; this leads to good progress. The school recognises that it now needs to adopt a similar approach to marking other aspects of pupils' literacy and their mathematics.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is broad and balanced. As well as meeting national requirements it has a number of distinctive qualities which are focused on the pupils' needs. It rightly places a strong emphasis on improving basic literacy and numeracy skills. It uses the local area to develop pupils' understanding of their own culture and of environmental issues. The use of a nurturing programme throughout the school is designed to develop pupils' self-esteem, which for some children is quite low. The facilities which are shared with the local community are exploited well to enhance children's learning; classes make regular visits to the village library, for example, which is part of the school premises. The school recognises the need to make its curriculum more flexible now and to add a more creative element to lessons.

Pupils' learning is enriched by visits to places of historical and cultural interest, and by the school's involvement in a variety of stimulating projects. These include several based on national schemes, such as the Artsmark award. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of people from other cultures and countries is limited, however, despite the opportunities provided by the school to widen their horizons.

Pupils enjoy a good range of out-of-school experiences including a gardening club and several popular sports activities; a good number of the Key Stage 1 pupils, for instance, regularly attend the gymnastics club.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Rigorous procedures, including risk assessments, child protection procedures and health and safety checks, ensure that the children are reasonably free from harm, in an organised and well supervised environment. For example, when crossing the road to the other site at lunchtime, pupils are very closely supervised by staff. Pupils feel safe and secure, and say they know who to turn to if they have problems or concerns. They welcome the school's peer support structure, which they say works effectively. Bullying is rare and pupils report it is dealt with promptly by the staff.

Teachers know their pupils well. This, together with the school's close links with specialist outside agencies, ensures pupils' particular needs are well provided for. As one parent wrote, 'My child has had a lot of problems...but thanks to the help of the

headteacher and staff we have been able to address these with appropriate professional help. Without the school's support, my child would not have made such fantastic progress.'

Teachers use assessment information effectively to track pupils' progress and to identify individuals who appear to be underachieving. The system enables the school to provide additional support for pupils whose attainment is below what is expected. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported in small groups by teaching assistants, which enables them to make good progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher provides satisfactory leadership. The school has a sound knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses. In the recent past it has recognised a need to improve pupils' behaviour and attitudes to work, and has tackled these issues successfully. The school development plan sets out a suitable series of actions for the future but is not clearly derived from an analysis of available data, and does not consider how the actions will affect the quality of education or pupils' achievement. Senior managers collect a lot of data about the school's performance, including results in national tests and surveys of parents and pupils, but do not use this information effectively to identify the key priorities for development or to evaluate how successful their initiatives have been.

Governors are keen to support the school and have helped to ensure that it has all the required policies. They are not, however, sufficiently involved in holding the school to account for pupils' standards. They have recently identified a need to be more directly involved in evaluating the school's performance. The budget is healthy and the school has sound plans for future investment, in particular by updating its equipment for information and communication technology (ICT).

Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. The school has tackled the two main issues in the report, but the steady improvement in writing in Key Stage 1 has not been sustained. The provision in music has been improved but the school has no evidence of how its actions have led to better teaching or higher standards in the subject. Overall, standards across the school have not risen significantly and in some respects have declined. However, because governors and staff are fully committed to the school and are ready to act upon advice the school's capacity to improve is satisfactory.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
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	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	3

The quality of provision

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

¹ 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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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

Esh Winning Primary School

The Wynds

Esh Winning

Durham

County Durham

DH7 9BE

6 February 2007

Dear Pupils

Thank you for welcoming me so warmly into your school. I enjoyed watching you in lessons and at play; talking about your school with you and your teachers; and looking at your work. Now I want to share with you what I thought.

Here are some of the many things I liked about your school.

- You told me you like coming to school and feel safe there.
- I saw that most of you were clearly enjoying your lessons, and I understand you like other activities such as playing sports.
- Your behaviour is good. You listen carefully to the teacher in class and you walk around the school in a sensible way, showing consideration and respect for others. You should be very proud of this.
- Your teachers and other staff take good care of you while you are at school.
- You do lots of interesting things in lessons. The nurture classes seem to be a good way to make you feel good about yourself.
- You know how important it is to eat healthily and take plenty of exercise.
- The teachers make good use of the local area and the facilities in the school to make your time there interesting for you.

I think you and your teachers could make the school even better and this is what I would like to happen now.

- I would like all of you to come to school as often as you can because when you are absent you are not making progress with your work.
- I have asked your teachers to help the younger pupils to improve their reading, and to help the girls to make as much progress as the boys.
- Your headteacher is working very hard to make this a good school and I have asked her to look at different sorts of information to find out what needs to be done to make it better.

I hope you continue to enjoy the many good things about your school.

Yours sincerely

Derek Neil

Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools