



# Durham Gilesgate Primary School

Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 114211  
**Local Authority** Durham  
**Inspection number** 289837  
**Inspection dates** 12–13 October 2006  
**Reporting inspector** David Earley

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Kepier Crescent
<b>School category</b>	Community		Gilesgate, Durham
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11		County Durham, DH1 1PH
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 3847284
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	213	<b>Fax number</b>	0191 3750300
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr Michael White
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Mark Turner
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 April 2002		

<b>Age group</b> 3–11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 12–13 October 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 289837
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a smaller than average sized school. It takes pupils from a wide range of backgrounds, most of whom come from a socially deprived area and the proportion of such pupils is increasing. Eligibility for free school meals is well above average, with an above average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Attendance is below average as are the proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as a second language. There is a resource centre in the school for hearing impaired pupils and an outreach Nursery to support children with special educational needs within its own and other settings.

## 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 which gives satisfactory value for money. The school has conducted a thorough self-appraisal which has helped it to recognise its weaknesses and implement strategies for improvement. A significant part of this has been the professional development of staff, which is helping to raise standards. The headteacher, staff and governors, well supported by the local authority, share a determination to drive up standards. A legacy of significant underachievement is being addressed successfully by the school so that pupils are now making better progress.

Overall, achievement is satisfactory. Standards on entry to the Foundation Stage are below what is typical of children of this age. They make satisfactory progress overall, although 60% of children who enter the Foundation Stage leave at the end of the Nursery to join other schools. Those who remain tend to be the least able ones. They make satisfactory progress in relation to their capabilities but do not achieve the standards expected of children of their age by the time they join Year 1. The teaching in Key Stage 1 is good and pupils therefore make good progress and achieve well, reaching average standards in Year 2. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 2. Their rate of progress is increasing because strategies put in place by the school to improve achievement are having a positive impact, although standards are still below average in Year 6 in English, mathematics and science.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall but it is inconsistent. It is satisfactory in Foundation Stage and Key Stage 2 and good in Key Stage 1. Although good teaching was seen in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 2 during the inspection, the quickening rate of progress is more recent in these areas and some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching remain in Key Stage 2. The curriculum is satisfactory but it is well enriched by a wide range of visits out of school, visitors to the school and links with outside agencies which help to support learning. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to practise and improve their basic skills of literacy and numeracy across other subjects.

Pupils have good attitudes to school and their behaviour and personal development are good. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils understand how to stay healthy; they enjoy school and say that they feel safe. They play a full part in the life of the community and their preparation for their future economic well-being is satisfactory.

Attendance is below average and unsatisfactory despite the efforts of the school to improve it.

This is a very caring school where pupils are well supported personally and in their work. Measures to ensure safety are secure. Good support, including links with outside agencies, ensures that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress as do those pupils with hearing impairment and those for whom English is a second language.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. There is a shared commitment to making sure that all pupils have equal opportunity to succeed and to improve teaching and learning. The school's finances are soundly managed to support improvements in learning.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science.
- Improve the consistency of teaching.
- Improve attendance.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to extend their skills in literacy and numeracy in order to raise standards.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Overall achievement is satisfactory. Pupils make satisfactory progress although standards are below average.

Most children enter the Foundation Stage with standards below those typical for their age. In the Nursery, children make satisfactory progress, achieve satisfactorily and reach standards which are slightly below those expected. Sixty per cent of these children leave the school at this point and attend Reception classes at other schools nearer their homes. The remaining children tend to be those whose starting point in the Nursery was well below average for their age, particularly in mathematics, communication, language and literacy and personal and emotional development. They make satisfactory progress but most of them do not reach the standards expected for their age by the time they join Year 1. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage has improved and the school's assessments indicate that the children are making better progress than before. The evidence of the inspection supports this although there has not been sufficient time for the improvements to have an impact on overall standards.

The 2005 test results at the end of Year 2 were below average in reading, writing and mathematics. The 2006 test results were better than this and showed that pupils made better progress, particularly at the higher Level 3 in writing. Pupils are currently making good and improving progress because the teaching is good.

The results of the 2005 test for pupils in Year 6 were below average overall. They were close to average in English and mathematics but significantly below average in science. Results in 2006 were similar in English and mathematics but improved slightly in science. This particular class had been adversely affected by weaknesses in teaching in earlier years and disruptions to teaching during 2006. The inspection evidence, supported by the school's assessment data, indicates that current progress has improved in Year 6 because former weaknesses in teaching have been largely remedied, staffing is now stable, and the strategies for improvement are proving successful. There has not been time for all of these improvements to show through in improved national test results.

Because support is good, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, those with hearing impairment, and those for whom English is a second language make good progress.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They enjoy school and have positive attitudes towards it. Their behaviour in and out of lessons is good and they show respect for adults and for each other. Attendance is below average because a group of parents, despite the best efforts of the school and local authority officers, do not make sure their children attend regularly enough. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good. Pupils are encouraged to adopt a healthy lifestyle through healthy eating and participation in sport. Pupils say that they feel safe in school and that bullying rarely occurs. Because basic skills are improving, and the fact that pupils have many opportunities to engage in collaborative work, and to accept responsibilities and learn how to budget for school visits, they make satisfactory preparation for their future economic well-being. Pupils are confident that they have someone to talk to if they feel they need to, either an adult or a playground buddy. The school council plays an active part in helping to make decisions for the benefit of pupils. One group of pupils has recently worked with the school travel planning team and has launched a 'Five Minute Walking Zone' around school to promote the safety of pupils.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall though inconsistent. Although examples of good teaching were seen in all key stages, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall in the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 2. In the Foundation Stage, staffing is now stable following a period of disruption, and this is leading to improved teaching and progress. In Key Stage 2, previously weak teaching has been largely eliminated although there are inconsistencies in practice, which the school's staff development programme is helping to overcome. Work is usually matched to differing abilities but in some lessons the pace is slow and work is insufficiently challenging. In these lessons, pupils lose interest and are not fully engaged with their learning. Teaching is good in Key Stage 1. In some lessons throughout the school the pace is brisk, pupils are challenged by the teachers' questions and work at a variety of interesting and lively activities. Lesson aims are generally shared with pupils so that they are aware of what they are to learn, and good relationships help to create a positive working atmosphere. Teaching assistants provide valuable support for those who need it, especially hearing impaired pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory with some good features. It is broad and balanced, and a wide range of out of school visits and visitors to the school help to enrich learning. For example, visiting a Roman museum and taking part in a simulated dig increased relevance and added purpose to pupils' learning. Pupils have opportunities to play musical instruments and to learn French. There are good links with the local secondary school, for example in developing work in sport and science. Because schools work closely together, transfer to the next stage of education is usually a smooth one. Although there is a close focus on literacy and numeracy, not enough opportunities are taken to extend these skills in the other subjects of the curriculum in order to further help raise standards. Good links with outside agencies such as the Hearing Impaired Service and the resource centre for hearing impaired pupils in school help to support pupils.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Care, guidance and support are good. A good level of support is provided for all pupils in this very caring school. Child protection procedures are in place and all staff have been trained appropriately. Risk assessments are carried out where necessary and pupils are given the opportunity to be involved in writing them. Health and safety procedures are regularly reviewed and government recommendations for safeguarding children are followed carefully. There is good support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, both in the Nursery outreach unit, and throughout the school, as well as for hearing impaired pupils and those for whom English is a second language. Assessment and tracking procedures are good and pupils have a clear idea of how to improve. The school works well with external agencies and parents are kept informed of their children's progress through open evenings and regular reports.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school has taken decisive action to reverse the legacy of previous underachievement. The headteacher, with the support of the governing body, has implemented a range of strategies that are leading to improving standards and achievement. The actions taken by the school were based on a clear appraisal of the school's strengths and weaknesses, which led to a clear plan of action. An important aspect of the focus of the school's strategies for improvement is the professional development of staff. With the support of the local authority, this has helped to improve pupils' progress although inconsistencies in the quality of teaching remain. The headteacher checks closely the quality of teaching and learning and his efforts are complemented by subject coordinators who have a clear understanding of achievement and of how to raise standards. Staff work well as a team

and are supported by governors who know the school well and help to hold it to account for its performance. The budget is astutely managed in order to plan for falling rolls. Issues from the previous inspection have been addressed satisfactorily. The school makes sure that all pupils are fully included in all that it does. Most parents have positive views of the school. They are encouraged to be involved in the life of the school and are helped to further their own knowledge so that they can help their children.

Shared commitment to improvement, realistic self-evaluation and the successful implementation of strategies to raise standards gives the school satisfactory capacity to improve.



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## 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>	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	4
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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<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.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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

Durham Gilesgate Primary School

Kepier Crescent

Gilesgate

Durham

County Durham

DH1 1PH

16 October 2006

Dear Children

Thank you very much for your warm welcome when we came to visit your school. We enjoyed talking to you and are pleased that you enjoy coming to school and feel safe there. It is good to see that you do lots of jobs around school, like being monitors and buddies, and that the school council helps to make the school a better place. We could see that you liked the healthy meals provided by the school and that you get plenty of exercise to help to keep you fit. You all get on well with each other and if you have a problem you know that adults will do their best to help to sort it out.

These are some of the things your school does well:

- your headteacher and teachers help you to improve your English, mathematics and science and this is now getting better
- you learn to help people in the school community and in the community outside school
- your school is a very caring place and gives you good support and guidance to help you to improve
- children who find learning difficult and those whose first language is not English and those who have difficulty with their hearing receive good help to improve their work.

These are some of the things we think could be better:

- we want you to keep working hard so that your English, mathematics and science get even better
- to help you improve your English and mathematics we want you to use these skills more in subjects like history and geography
- we have asked the school to remind the parents of those who don't attend as well as they should to help them improve their attendance
- we have asked the teachers to teach you more good lessons to help you to improve your work.

Thank you once again for making us so welcome.

Yours sincerely

David Earley

Lead Inspector