

Evenwood C of E Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114221
Local Authority	Durham
Inspection number	289841
Inspection dates	23–24 May 2007
Reporting inspector	David Earley

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	107
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Shona Stephenson
Headteacher	Mrs Sharon Stelling
Date of previous school inspection	1 October 2002
School address	New Road Evenwood Bishop Auckland County Durham DL14 9QZ
Telephone number	01388 832047
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average school in a rural location on the edge of Bishop Auckland. It serves an area of high social and economic deprivation. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is very high. Most pupils are of White British background. A small proportion of pupils learn English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is very high. Pupils enter the Foundation Stage with standards that are very low in comparison to most three year olds.

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 and improving school with some good features. Pupils' achievement, whatever their ability or background, is satisfactory overall. From their very low starting points, children in the Foundation Stage make good progress, although by the end of the Reception year the standards reached by most children are below those expected nationally. The results of the Year 2 assessments in 2006 in reading, writing and mathematics were below average. The results of the national tests in Year 6 in 2006 were below average in English, mathematics and science. Progress in Key Stages 1 and 2 is satisfactory. School data and inspection evidence indicates that progress is beginning to accelerate as a result of recent improvements in teaching and the curriculum.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Relationships are very good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are polite and helpful. They feel safe and have a good understanding of how to lead healthy lifestyles. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and wider community and are soundly prepared for their future economic well-being. The school has implemented appropriate strategies to improve below average attendance.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. There are examples of good and excellent teaching throughout the school but this quality is not consistent. The best lessons are lively and interesting but when the pace of lessons is slow and explanations are not clear, progress slows. The work set for pupils is generally appropriately challenging for different abilities and ages in mixed-age classes, but the marking of work does not always show pupils how to improve. The curriculum is satisfactory overall, and good in the Foundation Stage where it is broad and balanced. In Key Stages 1 and 2, there is an appropriate focus on literacy and numeracy but insufficient opportunities to extend basic skills in other subjects. Initiatives to broaden the curriculum are beginning to have a positive impact on achievement and progress but there has been insufficient time for this to raise standards overall. The curriculum ensures that pupils learn how to live healthy lifestyles and promotes their personal and social development. There are good links with outside agencies to support pupils' learning.

Care and guidance are good. This is a caring school where each pupil is valued. There are good links with parents who appreciate the care shown by the school. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported. Teaching assistants and external agencies make good contributions to their learning and care. Systems for ensuring health and safety and safeguarding pupils are good. There are effective systems for academic support, including the tracking of pupils' progress.

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The headteacher's leadership is good. Her clarity of vision and decisiveness help to provide a vision for raising standards, which is shared by staff and governors. The school's careful prioritisation of issues leading to improvements has resulted in good personal development and improving progress and achievement. Subject leaders are not currently sufficiently involved in the monitoring of teaching and learning within their subject areas and this reduces their effectiveness in helping to raise standards. The school knows that subject leaders need to improve their skills in monitoring teaching and learning and plans are in place to address this. Governance is satisfactory. Governors

are supportive and take part in training in order to help them to shape the direction of the school and hold it to account for its performance.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is all at least good.
- Improve the effectiveness of subject leaders.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory. Most pupils, whatever their background or ability, make satisfactory progress. Standards throughout the school are affected by the very high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in each year group. However, trends show that achievement and progress are improving.

Children enter the Foundation Stage with standards much lower than expected for their age. By the time they enter Year 1, standards are below what would be expected nationally. This represents good progress from a low starting point and is a result of the good teaching and the good curriculum in the Foundation Stage.

Progress and achievement are satisfactory in Key Stage 1. The results of the 2006 assessments at the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics were below average. Inspection evidence and school data indicate that current achievement in Year 2 is satisfactory although the school expects pupils to reach below average standards in Key Stage 1 national tests.

Satisfactory progress continues in Key Stage 2. In the 2006 tests at the end of Year 6, standards in English, mathematics and science were below average overall. Given the pupils' low starting points this represents satisfactory progress overall. School data and inspection evidence indicate that in the current Year 6 achievement and progress in lessons are satisfactory. The school expects pupils in the current Year 6 to reach below average standards in Key Stage 2 national tests. Recent improvements in teaching and the curriculum in both key stages are improving pupils' progress and achievement but have not as yet raised standards.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development is good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Pupils' understanding of the cultural diversity of wider British society is satisfactory. Behaviour is good because pupils are taught to take responsibility for themselves and are encouraged to collaborate with others. There are lots of opportunities to eat healthily and take exercise so that pupils have a good understanding of how to lead healthy lifestyles. Relationships are very good. This helps to increase the self-esteem and confidence with which pupils approach their learning. A parent described her child as 'dancing with delight' on returning to school after a period of illness. Pupils say that they feel safe and valued and this is enhanced by the school's strong Christian ethos. Although attendance is below average it is improving as a result of the effective action taken by the school. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and

wider community. Buddies help pupils to take care of each other and the school council helps to bring about improvements. For example, pupils produced designs for the local community garden and took part in a scheme to keep the local area litter free. Because there is a strong focus on improving literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills, and on learning about the world of work from visits and visitors, pupils are soundly prepared for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. The quality of teaching and learning is improving and there are examples of good and excellent teaching but this quality is not consistent across the school. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good and as a result children make good progress. The best lessons are lively and interesting and conducted at a brisk pace so that pupils want to learn and work hard. For example, older pupils filmed their performance poetry and younger pupils donned numbered party hats to help to extend their understanding of place value. In some lessons where the pace is slow and explanations are not clear, the rate of progress is slower. There are some good examples of marking, which helps pupils to know what they need to do in order to improve. However, this practice is not consistent throughout the school, resulting in opportunities to extend learning being missed. Teachers plan activities well so that in mixed-age classes work is well suited to different ages and abilities.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory overall. A good curriculum in the Foundation Stage enables children to make a good start because it is rich and stimulating. The curriculum in Key Stages 1 and 2 is being broadened to give more emphasis to creative and artistic areas and provide increased opportunities for enrichment and excitement. This complements the focus on literacy and numeracy and allows more scope for enjoyment and success. The school is aware of the need to develop the teaching of English and mathematics in other subjects in order to extend basic skills and give more purpose and relevance to learning. The curriculum is well adjusted to meet the wide range of ages and abilities and ensures that personal, social and health education gives pupils a good understanding of how to lead healthy lifestyles. There are good links with outside agencies, which help to extend the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. There is a warm, caring family atmosphere in the school and all pupils are known well and valued by staff. Most parents are positive about the care shown to their children and a parent commented on the close knit relationship between home and school. Child protection and risk assessment procedures are effective and the school follows government recommendations for safeguarding children. Relationships are very good and pupils are confident to approach an adult should they have a problem. Good support for pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, looked-after children and those who learn English as an additional language enables them to progress at the same rate as other pupils. This is enhanced by the work of teaching assistants and support from external agencies. There are

effective systems for assessing and tracking progress in order to provide pupils with targets for improvement. The school has in place a good range of strategies, such as 'passport parties' for encouraging good behaviour and effort.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher provides strong leadership with a clear vision for raising standards and improving provision. Following previous disruptions to leadership and staffing, actions taken by the headteacher have been well prioritised and effective. In this, she has been soundly supported by the newly formed leadership team and staff. Staff work increasingly well together to create a caring and inclusive community. The focus on good personal development has provided a firm foundation for improving achievement. This has been enhanced by secure evaluation of performance leading to a clearly prioritised school improvement plan. Governance is satisfactory. Governors know the school well and are supportive. They undertake training in order to increase their skills in helping to shape the direction of the school and hold it to account for its performance. Although there have been considerable changes in leadership and staffing since the previous inspection, issues identified have been satisfactorily addressed. Subject leaders have a good understanding of their subjects but they are not sufficiently involved in monitoring teaching and learning in order to make further improvements within subject areas.

A shared commitment to raising standards, strong leadership, realistic evaluation of performance and the improvements already made give the school good capacity to improve.

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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	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	2
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

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	3

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?	3
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.

Annex A

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	2
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

25 May 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Evenwood CofE Primary School, Bishop Auckland, DL14 9QZ

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school. I was really impressed by the way you behaved and by how you were polite, courteous and helped me to find my way around. It was good to see how you try really hard to lead healthy lifestyles by eating sensibly and getting plenty of exercise. You told me that you enjoyed coming to school because teachers are kind and caring and you have lots of interesting things to do. I think that you are really helpful to each other and that the buddies and school council do a good job. I think that the way the school council raised funds so that older children could have fruit is brilliant. I was pleased to hear that you also work hard to organise fundraising for charities.

These are some of the things your school does well.

- Your teachers make lessons lively and interesting and this makes you want to learn.
- The care shown to everyone is really good so that you are well looked after.
- The headteacher is good at running the school and all the adults work well together to make improvements.

To make your school better I would like you to improve your work in English, mathematics and science and I would like all your lessons to be as good as the best in school. I would also like your teachers to ensure that when they mark your work they tell you what you need to do to make your work even better.

Thank you once again for being so kind and welcoming.

Yours sincerely

David Earley

Lead Inspector