



Staindrop CofE (Controlled) Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 114226
Local Authority Durham
Inspection number 289843
Inspection date 12 December 2006
Reporting inspector Brian Dower

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Black Swan Wynd
School category	Voluntary controlled		Staindrop, Darlington
Age range of pupils	4-11		County Durham, DL2 3NL
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01833 660334
Number on roll (school)	153	Fax number	01833 660334
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs Elaine Shaw
		Headteacher	Mrs Jennifer Brown
Date of previous school inspection	1 February 2002		

Age group 4-11	Inspection date 12 December 2006	Inspection number 289843
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Staindrop Church of England Controlled Primary School is a village school serving the parish of St Mary's Staindrop outside Darlington in County Durham. It educates boys and girls from the age of four to 11 in single age groups. The pupils are of White British heritage. In broad terms, the attainment of the small number of children starting in Reception is similar to that which is typical for children of this age.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school which has no significant weaknesses. It provides excellent value for money. Christian values pervade its work but pupils from different religious backgrounds are welcomed and nurtured. Standards are well above average and progress and achievement are excellent. The school has been recognised this year as being in the top 100 schools nationally for the progress pupils make. Some children join the Reception class with poor social and communication skills but they reach the expected learning goals by the start of Year 1. Children with better basic skills on entry exceed these goals. Pupils develop learning skills and personal qualities by the end of Year 6 that equip them very well for the next stage of their education.

A concern for academic excellence goes hand-in-hand with a concern to foster pupils' growth as confident and articulate boys and girls who can work independently and collaboratively. Pupils' behaviour throughout the school is excellent. They feel safe and secure and say that there is no bullying or intimidation. They respect each other and are warm and welcoming to those who join the school part way through a year. There is a sense of enjoyment in all that they do, demonstrated by their above average rate of attendance and their excellent attitudes in lessons. They are always cheerful, with a ready smile and eager to know what they are to learn next. Teachers ensure that pupils are aware of safety issues and the importance of a healthy lifestyle. Many opportunities are provided for involvement with the local and wider community and there is a wide range of clubs and enrichment activities which extends their understanding and enjoyment of the curriculum.

The excellent teaching is an exemplary feature of the school's provision and teaching assistants are deployed effectively to ensure that pupils receive the support they need. Teachers plan well to meet the needs of all pupils and to make them aware of learning links between different subjects. For example, science themes are often used as stimulus material for work in literacy and numeracy. Leadership and management at all levels are excellent. The focus is on improving pupils' achievement in all subjects and in providing many opportunities in and out of school for their personal development. This is underpinned by good relationships and very effective teamwork. The school is rigorous in its evaluation of its work and consults widely when planning new developments. Governors know the school well and play an active part in shaping its future direction. The high standards found at the time of the previous inspection have been maintained and have been improved in English. The school demonstrates an excellent capacity to keep up such excellent standards and raise them further.

What the school should do to improve further

- There are no significant areas for improvement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Children start the Reception year with markedly different levels of ability but they make very good progress and most achieve the levels expected by Year 1. The results of national tests in 2005 showed that standards at the end of Year 2 were well above average in reading, writing and mathematics and pupils' progress and achievement were excellent. This was a significant improvement on the standards attained at the time of the previous inspection. Test results also show that standards at the end of Year 6 are consistently well above the national average, particularly in mathematics and science. The outstanding progress pupils make in these subjects puts the school in the top 3% of schools nationally. English results have been well above average over recent years and pupils' progress in the subject has also been outstanding. The 2006 results and the school's efficient and reliable monitoring system show that high standards are being maintained. Pupils with learning difficulties achieve well and make excellent progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Christian values underpin the work of the school and foster the warm working relationships and pupils' mature and sensible attitudes. They thrive in this lively learning community, developing the skills and personal qualities which will serve them well in the future. Behaviour is exemplary and in all year groups there are extremely positive attitudes to learning. Pupils enjoy school and their attendance is above average. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent, leading to confident pupils who have respect for themselves and for others. They understand the diverse nature of British society because of the work done in geography and religious education. The very good provision for personal, health and social education means that they understand what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. Pupils are safe and secure in their school, and free from any form of bullying or intimidation. They know that staff will listen to their concerns and that there is always someone to turn to if they have worries. There are excellent opportunities for learning through involvement with the local and wider community such as helping in the design of a play area in the village.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching throughout the school is outstanding. It has many strengths.

- Teachers plan well and adapt lessons to ensure that the learning needs of all groups are met.
- A broad range of teaching and learning strategies is used to engage and motivate pupils.

- Rigorous assessment is used to set challenging learning targets and pupils receive support and guidance on how to achieve them.
- Links are made in pupils' learning between subjects to consolidate their progress.
- Teachers' expectations are high and lead to an excellent quality of learning.

Pupils work hard and learn very well, because they enjoy an excellent variety of learning experiences. For example, Year 4 pupils' imaginative and original creative writing was inspired by their study of animal and plant survival in Hamsterly Forest. The Year 6 residential visits foster social skills and self-reliance. A small number of pupils join the school part way through their primary education without the mature learning skills of those boys and girls who started at the beginning of the Reception Year. The school works hard to ensure they make progress and achieve as well as other pupils. Teachers successfully encourage parents to support their children's learning at home.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is broad, balanced and responsive to pupils' learning needs. Creativity is at the centre of curricular planning and is one reason why pupils find their work enjoyable. This is seen, for example, in pupils' enthusiastic involvement in local initiatives and projects and their active participation in visits and learning opportunities outside lessons. There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities that extend pupils' understanding and enjoyment of their work. Safety awareness and the adoption of healthy practices are present in most aspects of the curriculum. Excellent links with other schools and agencies, and the many visitors to the school have a positive impact on pupils' learning. This is seen, for example, in the older pupils' developing enterprise skills through their work at Staindrop Comprehensive School.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. Procedures for safeguarding pupils, including child protection measures and risk assessments, are well established, undertaken rigorously and have improved since the last inspection. Academic and personal development is monitored routinely and effective action is taken when weaknesses are uncovered. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make outstanding progress because of this early identification of their needs and the timely support they receive. Parents are supportive of the school and help their children's learning at home. The youngest children settle quickly and well into the school because of the excellent induction procedures. Parents are well-informed about what their children are learning and the homework they receive.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The headteacher provides excellent leadership and she is supported by a deputy headteacher and teachers who are able and committed to the pupils' welfare and progress. This effective team approach has led to stability and loyalty in the teaching and support staff. They provide exemplary care and support for every child and have been successful in establishing an excellent learning climate throughout the school. This has led to the pupils' making excellent progress and attaining high standards. The school's self-evaluation processes are thorough and there is wide consultation. Governors know the school well and are closely involved in shaping its future direction. Well established and rigorous systems are used to monitor the school's performance, such as observing teaching and the sharing of good practice. Teachers look to improve their skills and they take advantage of a wide range of professional development activities. The school has made significant progress since the previous inspection and its capacity to maintain and improve upon current high standards is excellent.

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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?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	1
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	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

Staindrop CofE (Controlled) Primary School

Black Swan Wynd

Staindrop

Darlington

County Durham

DL2 3NL

12 December 2006

Dear Pupils

Thank you for welcoming me to your school and showing me the interesting work you are doing and telling me about the many activities and visits you enjoy outside lessons. I was impressed by your exemplary behaviour and the respect you show for each other and for the adults who work in your school. You are willing to take responsibility and to help others.

You are making excellent progress in your work and are attaining very high standards. Your excellent writing and speaking and your knowledge and understanding of mathematics and science equip you well for the future. There are many opportunities for you to work in your local and wider community and you appreciate and learn from such experiences. You like being in school and you find the varied and interesting work you are given enjoyable. The teaching you receive is of a high quality and you know that your teachers and the assistants provide you with the care and support you need.

My judgement is that your school is outstanding and that there are no significant weaknesses. This does not mean that you or your teachers are complacent. You know that even an excellent school can strive to improve and there is always more to do to care for others. For example, the teachers are looking at ways to develop more exciting learning experiences for you in the school grounds. Also, you have told me about how you are using the game of chess as a calming experience when someone feels they can't cope with school routines.

I hope you all enjoyed the carol concert in your beautiful church. I wish I lived nearer and could have been with you.

My best wishes to you and have a wonderful time at Christmas!

Yours sincerely

Brian Dower