



Easington C of E Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 114231
Local Authority Durham
Inspection number 289845
Inspection dates 17–18 October 2006
Reporting inspector Gillian Salter-Smith

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Easington Village
School category	Voluntary controlled		Peterlee, County Durham
Age range of pupils	4–11		SR8 3BP
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0191 5270259
Number on roll (school)	111	Fax number	0191 5270259
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs Loraine Dodds
		Headteacher	Mrs Carol Simpson
Date of previous school inspection	1 September 2001		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
4–11	17–18 October 2006	289845

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average sized school. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. An average proportion of pupils is identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities. All pupils are from White British backgrounds. The number of pupils in each year group is small and caution needs to be exercised in interpreting differences in national assessment and test results from year to year. Standards when children start school in Reception vary from below average to above average. The school has achieved the Active Mark Gold Award, Healthy Schools Status and The Quality Mark in 2005.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. The headteacher, leaders, staff and governors provide good leadership and management. They have established a friendly, supportive and challenging environment where pupils feel secure and valued and are eager to learn and do well. Positive relationships between adults and pupils underpin the work of the school and pupils behave very well. Pupils enjoy their lessons and the wide range of educational visits and clubs. They understand how to keep themselves healthy and safe and they take part enthusiastically in many sporting and physical activities. Pupils take their responsibilities as school council members and playtime 'buddies' seriously and they contribute well to the wider community. These activities, together with good progress in developing the basic skills of literacy, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT), prepare pupils well for their futures. Parents hold the school in high regard. Many join educational visits and help out in classrooms. A number of parents are right to be concerned about the poor quality of the outdoor play areas.

Pupils' achievement is good and standards are above average because pupils are well taught. Results in national tests in English, mathematics and science for Year 6 pupils have been significantly above average for the past three years. Standards for pupils in Year 2 were broadly average in 2004 and 2005 and were lower than in previous years. Because of good leadership and management, weaknesses are identified and dealt with quickly. Consequently, results in 2006 for both key stages have improved. Pupils now make good progress in Years 1 and 2 in response to good teaching. Action taken to improve relative weaknesses in mathematics and boys' writing is having a positive impact on standards. Opportunities to practise writing in subjects across the curriculum are not fully developed.

Features of good teaching include the way pupils' progress is analysed closely. This has led to pupils having challenging targets for learning which they understand and find helpful. Specialist teachers and well-qualified teaching assistants work closely with class teachers helping pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to achieve well.

Provision for children in Reception is good. Children settle into the routines of school life very quickly because staff know each individual very well. Children enjoy well planned play and learning activities that match their needs. Consequently they make good progress. Learning and play in the outdoors are well planned but the poor quality of outdoor areas limits the range of learning and play opportunities.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve with urgency the quality of the outdoor play and learning areas.
- Increase opportunities to practise writing in more areas of the curriculum.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children in Reception make good progress from their starting points. They reach the expected levels in most areas of learning and exceed them in communication, language and literacy, mathematical understanding and personal and social development.

In 2005, national assessments of Year 2 pupils showed that standards in reading, writing and mathematics were broadly average but few pupils gained the higher levels. The school recognised that these standards were not high enough and weaknesses in provision have since been resolved. In 2006, standards improved in all subjects, especially the proportion of pupils gaining the higher levels. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 now make good progress in response to good teaching.

In 2005, results in national tests for Year 6 pupils were above average. Pupils achieved particularly well in English but the proportion of pupils gaining the higher levels in mathematics was below average. In 2006, results improved, especially for the proportion of pupils gaining the higher levels and the school's challenging targets were mostly exceeded. Close monitoring of pupils' progress and identification of areas that need to be improved led to increased challenge for higher attaining pupils and improved results.

Boys' writing skills are weaker than girls. A recent focus on improving writing skills, especially for boys, is helping to raise standards. Girls and boys make similar progress to each other and no group of pupils underachieves. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because they are very well supported by specialist teachers and well qualified and experienced teaching assistants.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Pupils behave very well and their enjoyment of school is reflected in their good attendance. Pupils know how to keep themselves healthy. They enjoy the generous allocation of time to physical education, activity and sport, which includes a morning exercise session and an extensive range of extra-curricular activities for all pupils. Pupils feel safe and secure in school. Bullying is very rare and pupils know that they can trust the adults to help them. Pupils know how to follow clear procedures to keep them safe in the outdoor areas. Pupils take their additional responsibilities very seriously. The 'buddies' and 'mini-buddies' are properly trained and enjoy looking after other pupils in need of a friend at playtimes. Pupils are keen to raise funds for others less fortunate than themselves. They have enjoyed finding out about children from other cultures such as Japan and Zambia. Pupils' awareness of the multi-cultural nature of British society is less well developed. Pupils are developing good levels of spiritual awareness through the opportunities for personal reflection in school assemblies and lessons. Pupils' good progress in developing literacy, numeracy and

ICT skills and their willingness to take on responsibilities prepare them well for their futures.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils say lessons are fun. Positive relationships and well-deserved praise help to improve their self-confidence. Pupils find learning interesting and challenging, and they enjoy using the inter-active whiteboards. Teachers plan challenging lessons to ensure that higher attaining pupils make good progress. Writing has improved where it has arisen from activities based on drama. Opportunities to write in different ways other than in literacy lessons are not fully explored. Pupils find their learning targets for literacy and numeracy very helpful. A number of pupils said, 'they remind you of what you need to think about to do well'. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and give much encouragement and useful guidance on what to do to improve. Older pupils make increasingly accurate assessments of their own success and they find this helps them to know how to do better. Teachers work closely with experienced and well qualified teaching assistants and specialist support teachers to provide well-targeted support for lower attaining pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and meets pupils' needs well. Basic skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT are well planned and taught in these lessons, though opportunities to practise literacy skills through work in different subjects are not fully developed.

Pupils of all ages enjoy the extensive range of enrichment activities. Year 6 pupils came back from a visit to Beamish Museum full of excitement and eager to learn more. A very high proportion of pupils enjoy the many after school clubs, which lead to success in sport and enjoyment of activities such as gardening.

The school is in the early stages of developing its provision for gifted and talented pupils. These pupils benefit from some additional stimulating and demanding activities and in most lessons they are challenged to do their best.

The poor quality of the outdoor play and learning area limits the range of outdoor learning opportunities, especially for the children in the Foundation Stage.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Positive and supportive relationships underpin the good care, guidance and support provided for pupils. Teachers and teaching assistants know the pupils and their families very well so they are able to offer support and guidance where necessary. A learning mentor offers good additional support to pupils who need it. Pupils deemed to be

more vulnerable are very well cared for and the school works well with local agencies to ensure that pupils' specific needs are met.

Arrangements for child protection are in place and the required checks on adults working with children have been carried out. Procedures are in place to keep pupils safe in the outdoor play areas, though these areas are in urgent need of improvement.

Teachers keep a close check on pupils' progress and swift action is taken if any slip behind. Pupils appreciate the help they get from staff, both in lessons and when their work is marked, which helps them to know what they need to do to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher, leaders, staff and governors share a common purpose and determination to help every child to achieve well and enjoy school. This, together with the energetic pursuit of common goals, leads to success in raising standards and improving the quality of provision.

The school knows itself well, identifying correctly its strengths and its areas for improvement. This is because there are good arrangements in place to evaluate pupils' performance, lessons and pupils' work. A firm approach was taken by leadership to improve provision in Key Stage 1 so that teaching is now good and standards have risen. A clear focus on raising standards in boys' writing and in mathematics is having a positive effect on pupils' progress. Other improvements include improved ICT provision and improved accommodation for Reception and Key Stage 1.

Improvement since the last inspection has been good and there is good capacity to improve further. The school is well aware of the urgent need to improve the outdoor play areas and every effort has been made to do so. However, circumstances beyond the school's control are causing delays.

Governors bring a good range of expertise to their role. The chair of the governing body is particularly supportive of the headteacher and is a regular visitor in school. A close check is kept of a tight budget and the school benefits from considerable sums raised by an enthusiastic parents' group. The school provides good value for money.

Document reference number: HMI 2507 01 September 2006
Inspection Report: Easington C of E Primary School, 17–18 October 2006
Document reference number: HMI 2507 01 September 2006

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	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	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?	2
The standards ¹ 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

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	2
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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
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?	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	2
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

Easington C of E Primary School

Easington Village

Peterlee

County Durham

SR8 3BP

19 October 2006

Dear Pupils,

Many thanks to you all for the warm welcome I received when I visited your school. I thoroughly enjoyed talking to you and seeing you hard at work in lessons. It is important that you know what I found out about your school and what I shall be reporting to your parents and the government.

You are right to be proud of your school because it is providing a good quality of education. Your teachers and all the staff work very hard to help you to enjoy school and do well. Your behaviour is good in school and you enjoy lessons. You all make good progress in your work and many reach standards that are better than average. As many of you told me, having targets to aim for in literacy and numeracy encourages you to work hard and more and more of you are becoming skilful in deciding how well you have done in lessons. You are very lucky to have so many extra activities to enjoy, especially sport. It is good to see that younger pupils enjoy these as well as the older pupils. Many of you take on extra jobs and do them well. The 'buddies' and 'mini buds' do a really good job in befriending children at playtimes. Many of your parents and/or carers help the school in many ways and they are right to be pleased with the support the school gives you.

Your headteacher and the governors make sure that the school is getting better and better all the time. They are doing their best to make sure that the outdoor play areas will be improved as soon as possible. I know that many of you have helped to plan the new play ground. It is good to see that you enjoy writing about exciting things in literacy lessons. It would be a good idea to give you more chances to practise your writing skills in more of your lessons. You can help by continuing to try hard and do your very best work.

I hope that you carry on enjoying your time at Easington C of E school and I wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Gillian Salter-Smith (Lead inspector)