

Seaview Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	129823
Local Authority	Durham
Inspection number	307255
Inspection dates	9–10 July 2007
Reporting inspector	Margaret Shepherd

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	298
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Stephen Turns
Headteacher	Mrs JA Phipps
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	The Avenue Deneside Seaham County Durham SR7 8PD
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a new school that amalgamated from two schools, an Infant and a Junior school, in September 2006. It serves an area of considerable social and economic deprivation. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above average, as is the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There are more pupils with these difficulties in the infant classes, with some classes having nearly two thirds of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There is a small proportion of pupils with English as an additional language. The school has undergone disruption in this first year because of building construction.

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 that has made a remarkably good start to creating its new provision for all pupils. The headteacher has set an extremely clear vision of the importance of providing a relevant and exciting education for each pupil. This is particularly evident in the innovative curriculum, which is consistently in place throughout the school. This results in good personal development and well-being. Pupils thoroughly enjoy their learning. They respond well to the many systems in place to care, support and guide them. Their behaviour is good and they are polite and courteous to each other and to adults. They contribute well to the opportunities to help the school community in projects such as being buddy team members. They are also keen to attend school clubs, particularly when they lead to participation in events in the locality. Pupils are prepared well for their future lives through developing skills, such as taking responsibility for team decisions. They have a good understanding of the importance of keeping safe and healthy. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Pupils respond very sensitively to the spiritual opportunities they encounter through the creative curriculum.

Pupils achieve well. By the end of Year 6, standards are average. Children make good progress in the Nursery, where considerable efforts have been made to improve the quality of provision since the school opened. Progress in Reception is satisfactory. The school has clear plans to extend the opportunities for independent learning indoors and outdoors in this class to match that of the Nursery. The school has concentrated on its provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and they make consistently good progress. This is because teachers and teaching assistants work very well together in lessons to support pupils' individual needs. There is an impressive range of external specialists that the deputy headteacher has set up to extend provision for these pupils. The small proportion of more able pupils make good, but variable, progress. This ranges from satisfactory to very good because teachers do not consistently support their needs in lessons. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers provide very interesting starting points for learning in lessons through the innovative curriculum. In some lessons, teachers spend too much time in talking in whole class sessions and do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to talk. All teachers manage behaviour well.

Leadership and management are good. The partnership between the headteacher and deputy headteacher is excellent. Their clearly allocated roles have ensured that the school has made remarkable progress in establishing its new identity. They have created an excellent range of partnerships with external specialists to extend the work of the school. Governors and senior leaders have a great commitment to taking the work of the new school forward. They have a good understanding of the school and its place in the community and are currently developing their formal monitoring skills of pupils' achievements. Governors and the headteacher have made careful decisions to deploy resources efficiently and these result in good value for money. The very good start made in creating a new school, together with the school community's determination to build on the key principles that have been put in place ensure that the school has a good capacity to succeed in the future.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure teachers give pupils more opportunities to talk in whole class sessions and provide a consistent level of challenge for more able pupils;
- Extend the curriculum for children's independent learning in Reception.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good and by Year 6 standards are average. Children start school in the Nursery with standards that are well below expectations and many individuals have speech and language disabilities. They make a good start in Nursery, which settles them into school routines well. Progress is satisfactory in Reception and, by the end of their Reception year, many children are working at levels below those expected for their age, particularly in their language skills. They make good progress in their social development and many meet the expectations for this area by the end of Reception.

Pupils make good progress over time through the rest of the school although there is some unevenness in the progress resulting from the variations in teaching. Progress accelerates in Year 6 where it is very good. The very high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the smaller number of more able pupils in the infant classes, results in standards at the end of Year 2 being below average in mathematics and well below average in reading and writing. The differences between these subjects are an outcome of the speech and language disabilities children have on entry. There are fewer pupils in Year 6 with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and, in the national tests, standards are average in English, mathematics and science.

In its first year, the school has set a high priority on supporting pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. It has been very successful in this aim and these pupils make consistently good progress. The level of challenge for more able pupils is not as consistent through the school and these pupils' progress, although overall good, varies between different classes.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being are good. The school has been most effective in creating links between older and younger pupils. Pupils are proud of their new school. Despite all the disruption caused by the changes, their behaviour is good, whether it be in lessons, moving around the very long corridors or at lunchtimes. They are considerate and polite to each other and to adults. Pupils thoroughly enjoy the exciting opportunities they receive through the creative curriculum. Pupils have a good understanding of keeping safe. Through projects such as the anti-bullying project, they are clear how they should respond if they are worried. They know the importance of keeping healthy. Attendance is satisfactory. Pupils respond well to the support the school provides to encourage them to come to school, such as the Place 2 Be project. They contribute well to the school community and the wider community of the town. Pupils are keen to attend clubs, particularly when there is an outcome like playing a range of different types of drum when they led the procession in the Seaham carnival. Pupils are well prepared for their future lives through taking part in real life contexts, such as planning the renovation of a public area near to the school. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils respond extremely sensitively to the many spiritual opportunities provided through assemblies and key events in the innovative curriculum and have an exceptionally good understanding of the cultural differences within Britain.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. The quality varies between satisfactory and outstanding. In its first year, the school has worked hard and successfully to establish key teaching strategies through the school. These include the effective management of behaviour, the use of exciting activities that stem from the innovative curriculum and the setting and using of targets for individual pupils. The partnership of teachers with support staff is good and results in focussed support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. These pupils play a full part in lessons, resulting in good progress. Inconsistent features in teaching and learning include too much time spent by teachers in talking in whole class sessions and not enough opportunities for pupils to talk. Some teachers do not challenge more able pupils consistently enough either in posing more complex questions or in providing tasks that are at a higher level of difficulty from the rest of the class. Features of the outstanding teaching include a very fast pace, very good subject knowledge and very well targeted questioning across the full class that matches different individuals' needs very effectively.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The headteacher has a very clear vision of the importance of providing an exciting and relevant curriculum for its pupils through the use of creative themes, which include the use of key pieces of literature. There is also a strong focus on using the community to extend pupils' learning. The consistency in the success of this curriculum is remarkable, taking into consideration the short time that staff have been working together. Pupils are captivated by the stimulating experiences staff plan for them within the themes. These provide an interesting context for learning across all the different subjects of the curriculum, particularly in developing basic skills. The stimulating curriculum is having a positive impact on academic and personal development. The curriculum for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is very carefully structured to support their individual needs. The school is in the process of developing a curriculum for more able pupils to give consistency throughout all classes and to raise their standards. The school's priority of extending independent learning of children in the Nursery indoors and outdoors is successful. It does not follow through to the Reception curriculum. The partnership with a wide range of additional specialists into school enhances the curriculum extremely well. This is particularly good in music, with experts from the Sage and in the use of artists in residence resulting in standards that are higher than expected for primary age pupils. The school provides a rich range of extra-curricular clubs that attracts large numbers of pupils and adds considerably to their enjoyment of school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, support and guidance are good. Personal support is particularly good and is a strength of the school. The deputy headteacher has worked tirelessly on this aspect resulting in confident pupils with good levels of self-esteem. There is a very good range of systems in the school to support individuals; such as, the lunchtime friends' scheme or the Seaview stars' assembly each week. Pupils say they feel very confident to approach staff if they are worried. Safeguarding procedures are in place. Pupils receive clear academic guidance through targets, which they

refer to in lessons. Senior leaders are working their way through producing policies to cover all of the practices that are up and running through the school. Support and guidance for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is particularly good. Pupils are identified early and a wide range of different strategies are in place to support their different needs. The school has excellent partnerships with parents and external specialists that are of great benefit to pupils' academic and personal development.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The outstanding leadership and management of the headteacher are demonstrated by her very clear vision of the importance of forging a new identity for the school and combining all the strengths of the two separate schools. She is concerned with raising standards, academic and personal development, and manages the process of change extremely well. The deputy headteacher works in a very productive partnership with the headteacher. Governance is satisfactory. The governing body and the new senior leaders have not been in post long enough to consolidate their full roles. They are all keen to extend their responsibilities and have a very clear vision of how they want to do this. Self-evaluation skills are good. Leaders work hard to deploy resources efficiently and the school provides good value for money. The very good start to the creation of the new school, combined with the staff and governors' commitment to extend their work gives the school a good capacity to succeed in future.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
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	3
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	1
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	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.

Annex A

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	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

12 July 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Seaview Primary School, Deneside, Seaham, County Durham, SR7 8PD

Thank you for being so welcoming to us when we came to your school. You were all so friendly and helpful in answering our questions and we thoroughly enjoyed being in your new school.

We are very impressed with what a good start your headteacher, staff and governors have made in creating a new school for you all. We think that you have really got to know each other in your first year together. You behave really well, whether you are in lessons or moving around all those long corridors. We think that your teachers and teaching assistants give you really interesting activities in your lessons. The themes you learn about each term are really exciting, particularly the special stories that you read so thoroughly. We are particularly impressed with the art and music that you produce; particularly the drumming. You work hard in lessons and you use your targets well.

We have asked your teachers to make sure that you talk more in whole class discussions. We have also asked them to make sure that the work you are given really challenges you to learn even better. We know that your teachers have worked hard to improve the Nursery and we have asked them to make the same sort of improvements in your Reception class.

Each one of you has made a really good start in making your new school a good place to learn. We hope that you keep doing that and that your school just keeps getting better.

Best wishes

Maggi Shepherd, John Pattinson, Keith Oglesby

Ofsted Inspectors