

Easington Lane Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108795
Local Authority	Sunderland
Inspection number	309802
Inspection date	23 May 2008
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	Community
Age range of pupils	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	264
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Dianne Sharpe
Headteacher	Mrs Sarah Nordstrom
Date of previous school inspection	1 June 2005
School address	High Street Easington Lane Tyne and Wear DH5 0JT
Telephone number	0191 553 6730
Fax number	0191 553 6732

Age group	3-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: progress, the effectiveness of assessment and tracking in helping to raise standards, and leadership and management. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in the report.

Description of the school

Easington Lane is a larger than average primary school serving a former coal mining area on the edge of Sunderland. There are very high levels of social and economic deprivation. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is well above average. Most pupils are of White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and /or disabilities is well above average. A new headteacher was appointed in January 2008. The school has achieved the Activemark and the Healthy Schools Award.

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 gives good value for money. There are some outstanding features. The headteacher provides a very clear vision for raising standards and improving provision, building on the existing good practice. She is well supported by the senior management team, staff and governors who share her strong commitment to improve. Inspection evidence indicates that strategies for improvement are helping to improve the rate of progress.

Achievement is good and by the end of Year 6, standards are average. When children enter the Foundation Stage their attainment is usually well below what is typical for their age. They make good progress, although by the time they enter Year 1 attainment is generally below what would be expected for their ages. In 2007, the results of the teacher assessments in Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics were significantly below average. Pupils in the current Year 2 are on track to reach average standards in writing, below average in mathematics and well below in reading. This is an improvement on the previous year, although there has not been sufficient time for strategies for improvement to have a significant impact on standards in reading. In 2007, Year 6 results in the national tests in English, mathematics and science were average. Pupils in the current Year 6 are on track to reach similar standards. The good start made in the Foundation Stage is built upon consistently through Key Stages 1 and 2 and is linked to very thorough assessment and tracking and good quality teaching. This enables all pupils, including the very high proportion in each year group with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, to make good progress.

Personal development and well-being, including spiritual, moral and social development, are excellent. Cultural development is good overall. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to learn about the cultural diversity of British society. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to lead healthy lifestyles. They say that they really enjoy coming to school and feel safe and very well cared for. They have excellent attitudes to learning and this has a positive impact on the good progress made. Attendance is good and behaviour is outstanding. Pupils make an excellent contribution to the local and wider communities. There is a strong focus on the skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT), pupils are confident and have high self-esteem, so they are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

Teaching and learning are good overall and some excellent examples of teaching were seen during the inspection. Teachers make very good use of assessment to ensure that tasks are well suited to different abilities. Lessons are usually lively and interesting so that pupils want to learn. For example, in Year 2 very imaginative use was made of drama and a puppet so that pupils' understanding of characterisation was extended. Excellent story telling skills observed in Year 6 enabled pupils to increase their understanding of writing about the emotions. Teachers work closely with teaching assistants to ensure continuity of learning and are particularly effective in supporting pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities so that they progress at the same rate as their peers. Teachers' good subject knowledge, their use of challenging questions and the brisk pace of lessons ensure that pupils become fully engaged in their learning.

The curriculum is good. Curriculum enrichment is excellent. The wide and interesting variety of extremely popular after school activities is supported by many outside agencies, including the local secondary school and professional coaches. This is complemented by the very wide range of visits and visitors and the use made of the locality and its traditions to bring excitement

and relevance to learning. The curriculum is well planned to ensure that pupils build very securely on previous learning. The school is further developing its curriculum to ensure the consistent use of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in other subjects so that knowledge and understanding are deepened and progress is accelerated.

Care, guidance and support are good. The school is part of a very close-knit community where pupils and their families are very well known and highly valued. Pastoral care and support are excellent. Pupils who have learning or emotional problems are very quickly identified and provided with exemplary nurture and support. There are close links with parents who are very supportive of the care and guidance provided by the school. Speaking for many, one parent commented that this is, 'A great school with a well deserved reputation'. Assessment and tracking systems have been extended to give teachers and pupils a clear understanding of what they need to do in order to improve. As a result, the rate of progress is improving. The school does all that it can to ensure that pupils are safeguarded.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides very strong and exemplary leadership. In a remarkably short space of time she has made a very careful analysis of standards and provision and established a clear vision for improvement shared by staff and governors. This is used to implement strategies which are building on the school's strengths and are helping to increase the rate of progress. For example, the precise tracking of progress leads to challenging targets for improvement. The headteacher ensures that all staff and governors are involved in a thorough and realistic self-evaluation leading to a clear and well focused development plan. This leads to good achievement, excellent personal development and a very inclusive atmosphere. Governance is good. Governors know the school well and are very supportive. This enables them to play an important role in holding the school to account for its performance. Improvements since the previous inspection have been good and the budget is astutely managed to support the raising of standards and improve provision. Very strong leadership, a shared commitment to build on the improvements already made and realistic self-evaluation give the school good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good so that children get off to a flying start. Relationships are excellent, helping children to settle in very quickly. An important feature of the good and improving progress of children in the Foundation Stage is the careful assessment and tracking of their learning. This enables teachers to challenge children at the appropriate levels. The curriculum is exciting and stimulating. Children are eager to come into school and become fully engaged in their learning. The happy and stimulating surroundings help them to develop their personal and social skills. Teaching is good and lessons are lively and interesting, with a good blend between adult led and child initiated activities so that children develop in confidence and independence. Leadership in the Foundation Stage is good and staff work well together in a strong team. Good links with Year 1 ensure continuity of learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in reading in Key Stage 1.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to learn about the cultural diversity of British society.

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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?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

26 May 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Easington Lane Primary School, Sunderland, DH5 0LH

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school. Your school is good and some parts are brilliant. I enjoyed talking to you and finding out about your school because everyone was extremely friendly and helpful. Your behaviour is excellent and you clearly enjoy coming to school because your attendance is good. You have a very good understanding about the importance of exercise and healthy eating in order to keep healthy and fit. I think that the school council does an excellent job in helping to make the school a better place and you do a lot to help charities and the school in Cambodia.

Here are some of the things your school does well:

- lessons are interesting and your learning is good
- there are lots of after school clubs and visits and visitors to help your learning
- teachers keep a good check on how well you are doing to help you to do better
- you are extremely well looked after and the school takes really good care of you.

These are some of the things I have suggested to help the school to get even better:

- help the younger pupils to improve their reading
- help you to find out more about the different traditions of people who live in our country.

Thank you again for making me so welcome.

Yours sincerely

David Earley

Lead inspector