

Stranton Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111591
Local Authority	Hartlepool
Inspection number	310633
Inspection date	27 February 2009
Reporting inspector	Graeme Clarke

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	278
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Peter Hart
Headteacher	Mr Neil Nottingham
Date of previous school inspection	18 April 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Southburn Terrace Hartlepool TS25 1SQ
Telephone number	01429 275595
Fax number	01429 276765

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

The inspectors gathered evidence from lesson observations, looking at pupils' work, assessment information, documents, interviews and discussions with the headteacher, staff, pupils and a governor. They evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following aspects:

- the progress pupils make throughout the school
- the extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- the effectiveness of teachers' marking to promote learning
- the effectiveness of arrangements for care and welfare in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but the inspectors found much evidence to confirm that the school's own evaluations are justified, and these have been included in the report.

Description of the school

This average size primary school serves families in central Hartlepool which is an area of significant deprivation. A high proportion of pupils is eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average although none have a statement of special educational need. Almost all pupils have a White British heritage. A very small number are learning to speak English as an additional language. Early Years Foundation Stage provision is in the Nursery and Reception class. After-hours care is available for children aged 3 to 11 years who are on the school roll. This is not managed by the school and was not part of this inspection.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Stranton Primary is a good and improving school where pupils achieve well. Many aspects of its work are excellent. Pupils' well-being lies at the heart of the outstandingly effective approach the school takes to supporting their personal development. The headteacher, very ably assisted by his leadership team ensures the whole staff emphasises important values such as respect, creativity, innovation, enjoyment and a love of learning. They are exceptionally successful in helping pupils acquire and demonstrate these values in daily life. Very productive links with parents, the local authority, nearby churches and a mosque, heritage and outdoor centres and with schools in other countries offer huge benefit to pupils' education and development. They make an extensive contribution to community cohesion. A strengthened partnership with parents results in above average attendance. Almost all parents hold the school in the highest regard. One sums up their views: 'The school has a very positive approach to children's welfare and safety. The teachers are very good. The results have given our children a lot of self-confidence and they show consideration for others. ...Parent-teacher communication is excellent. Nothing is ever a problem – they always find a solution.'

Pupils begin Year 1 with below average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. The school very successfully helps them improve as they move through Years 1 to 6 and reach broadly average standards. New approaches to organising teaching in Key Stage 1 led to a noticeable improvement in the school's results in the 2008 assessments although they were still below average. A new vigorous approach to 'mental maths' followed the school's analysis of Year 6 mathematics results in 2007. It really paid dividends in 2008 when pupils made very good progress. The provisional results in mathematics were above average and showed considerable improvement over those in 2007 and exceeded the school's challenging target. Pupils also made very strong progress in reading. Provisional test results in 2008 showed standards in English and science were broadly average and met challenging targets. However, at the end of both Years 2 and 6 boys do less well than girls in all subjects. The school is very aware of this situation and is developing new approaches to improve boys' literacy in particular. Overall, given their starting points, pupils make good progress and achieve well. Thorough analysis of a rigorously maintained record of pupils' performance leads to very effective mentoring support by skilled teaching assistants. The school helps any pupils slipping behind, with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or who are gifted and talented to make good progress. This school is very inclusive and careful support for pupils with English as an additional language enables them to make similar progress as their peers.

The school is a happy and caring community where a rich curriculum and excellent pastoral care lead to outstanding personal development including pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils welfare is assured. Many pupils enjoy commendable success in voluntary sports activities. Their grasp of the importance of diet and physical activity is reflected by the Healthy School and Activemark awards. Pupils act considerately in the communal parts of the school. They are confident and polite talking with adults. They thoroughly enjoy everything the school has to offer, get great pleasure from learning, contribute well to lessons and work very industriously. Behaviour is impeccable and bullying rare. Pupils willingly support others, for example as learning mentors and playground buddies, and when playing with young children in the after-hours care group. Pupils from Reception to Year 6 take justifiable pride in their contribution as school councillors. Pupils readily help others, locally, nationally and internationally and deserve their eco-school award. The school's 'international weeks' and

involvement in links with Romania enhances their awareness of global perspectives. Together these represent an outstanding contribution to cultural development and community cohesion. Effective partnership with secondary schools and experience of enterprise activities, coupled with excellent social development and sound basic skills, prepare pupils well for their future.

A broad and extremely exciting curriculum very successfully develops pupils' standards in all subjects. Visits, visitors and excellent work in the arts, humanities and modern foreign language contribute substantially to all aspects of pupils' personal development. Good, sometimes outstanding teaching inspires pupils to want to achieve highly. Carefully planned, well-suited activities and skilfully led discussion strongly motivate all pupils. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds play a full part in lessons, work industriously and take care with their work. Pupils are confident that they know what their teachers expect of them. Frequent marking congratulates pupils on their accomplishments, lets them know the standard of their work and gives them clear pointers towards improvement.

Outstanding leadership and management very effectively ensure that the whole staff team pulls together to improve pupils' achievement and foster exceptional personal development. The school gives excellent value for money. Governance is good and developing well. Governors are developing arrangements to gain a first hand view of the school's work which is enhanced by informative reports from senior staff. They have a sound grasp of the school's strengths and areas for development represented in an exemplary plan for improvements. Governors meet all their responsibilities and current government requirements to successfully promote community cohesion, prevent discrimination and safeguard pupils' welfare. The school tackled the issues from the last inspection with vigour and commendable success. Clear determination to improve and an excellent track record of extensive progress indicate the school has outstanding capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children get an excellent start to education in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Parents are very pleased with the provision for their children and the information they receive. Excellent induction and welfare arrangements help children to settle and thrive. From an exceptionally low start children make remarkably good progress, especially in their personal and social development where they grow rapidly in confidence. By the end of Reception their skills and abilities in other areas of learning are slightly below average. Children in both Nursery and Reception classes arrive at school eager to join with their classmates in the range of interesting tasks and activities. They are clear about what they are to do, contribute confidently and are justly proud of their work. They soon learn to follow routines, behave exceptionally well and move about their room and outdoor area safely and with consideration for others. They accept more responsibilities as they develop, for example joyfully accepting the role of learning mentors who encourage work and play with other children. Productive relationships establish a sense of security and happiness. Excellent teaching enables children quickly to learn to work well, both independently and cooperatively. Teachers and support staff plan carefully to ensure that information gathered from observations of children at work and play guides activities to extend children's learning and identify areas for improvement. The curriculum cleverly balances activities where children discover things for themselves and those where they work with an adult. An excellent range of visits and visitors enhance the learning and experiences of children. Exemplary leadership fosters a fully inclusive approach. New facilities for a superb, extensive outdoor classroom, built since the last inspection, have a very positive impact on children's natural

curiosity, interest and imagination. Adults know the children well, and ensure they are safe and properly cared for, both during the day and in the after-hours voluntary provision. Parents are delighted with the progress their children make.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards in reading, writing and mathematics in Key Stage 1.
- Consolidate approaches to improve boys' standards throughout the school.

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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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which 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 learners' needs?	2
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

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

2 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Stranton Primary School, Hartlepool, TS25 1SQ

I really enjoyed my visit to inspect your school. Thank you for helping the inspectors when we came into your classrooms and assembly to see you at work. You were very polite and helpful and we did enjoy talking with those of you whom we met. Your school gives you a good education and it helps you become very personable young people. Your behaviour is excellent and you are very polite to others in lessons and around the school. We were delighted to see how much you like to take part enthusiastically in school activities, how you value the friendships you make and the help you get. We were also pleased to see how you contribute to school life, for example as school councillors and learning mentors and how you help others who are less fortunate than you. The headteacher and all the staff are very proud of you.

Your school is warm and welcoming and very well organised. All the adults in the school look after you exceptionally well and that is why you feel safe and happy. When we looked at your books we like the way you are shown how well you are doing and how you can improve. You make good progress and overall standards are average when you leave school. I noted that the 2008 test results for pupils in Year 2 were higher than in 2007 but not as high as they could be. I was especially pleased that the mental mathematics sessions are helping you to improve. I also saw that the extra support given to those of you struggling a little helps you do really well. I did note though that boys do not do as well as girls and I think boys could do better.

I have asked the school to help those of you in Years 1 and 2 get on a little faster. I have also asked the school to find as many ways as possible to help boys do better in English, mathematics and science.

You have very many opportunities at Stranton Primary School to learn about life and these should stand you in good stead for the future. I hope that you all do really well.

Yours faithfully

Graeme Clarke

Lead inspector