

Clavering Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111614
Local Authority	Hartlepool
Inspection number	310643
Inspection dates	18–19 March 2008
Reporting inspector	Moira Fitzpatrick

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	350
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Neil Addison
Headteacher	Mr Tony Metcalfe
Date of previous school inspection	1 May 2004
School address	Clavering Road Hartlepool TS27 3PN
Telephone number	01429 422088
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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 larger than average school. The majority of pupils are from White British heritage and there are no pupils with English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average; so too is the proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational need. The school has achieved a number of awards since the previous inspection, including the Healthy School award, the Activemark and the Basic Skills Quality Mark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to pupils' achievement and standards in writing; to teaching and learning in Key Stage 2 and to the school's self-evaluation.

The school's effectiveness is inadequate because a significant proportion of pupils do not make enough progress in writing in Key Stage 2. By the end of Year 6, though standards in mathematics have been above average, standards are average overall because of a steady decline in English standards in the last three years. This makes pupils' achievement inadequate overall, because they are not doing as well as they could, given their starting points and capabilities. Although the school has been aware of this decline, actions taken have not been effective in raising standards. This lack of progress in Key Stage 2 is due to ineffective teaching. Therefore, teaching is judged to be inadequate overall. Nevertheless, there is some good and outstanding teaching in Key Stage 2, whilst in Key Stage 1 teaching is of a consistently high standard. In these classes teachers have high expectations of pupils and a good knowledge of their needs. They make learning fun and keep the lessons moving at a brisk pace. In Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress to reach standards that are significantly above average by the end of Year 2.

The school's pastoral care for pupils is good because staff are committed to pupils' welfare and well-being. Support and guidance for learning are satisfactory. While in some classes these are very good, in others they do not provide enough support for pupils to improve, especially in writing. The curriculum is satisfactory and there are some good features, such as the enrichment through links with the local secondary school and extra-curricular activities. Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils enjoy school and behave well so that there is a secure and supportive atmosphere in classrooms. Attendance is good. Pupils know how to stay safe and live healthy lifestyles. They are keen to contribute to the school's improvement through the school council and enjoy taking on responsibility, such as caring for younger pupils or being register monitors. They are suitably prepared for the future with a clear understanding of what it means to be a good citizen.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school has undergone considerable turbulence since the previous inspection owing to the unavoidable absence of some senior staff. This has impacted on school self-evaluation which is inadequate. A lack of regular and rigorous monitoring has left the school with insufficient detail about the most significant weaknesses, so that actions have not been well targeted nor have they been sustained well enough to have an impact. Weaknesses in teaching have not been remedied in a short enough timescale because the school's performance management system was not robust enough. This has been strengthened and teachers are now held to account for the standards and progress of their pupils. Improvements to systems for assessment and tracking are developing and provide the school with a more accurate picture of where weaknesses in teaching and learning need to be tackled. The school has an adequate capacity for improvement. The school has not made sufficient improvement since the previous inspection, because standards and pupils' achievement have declined, particularly in writing at Key Stage 2.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children join the Foundation Stage with skills that are typical for their age. They make very good progress in all areas of learning to exceed the expectations for their age by the end of Reception. They are very well prepared for the move to Year 1. Adults take very good care of children, making them feel safe, happy and secure. Very good relationships with parents help them to support their children's learning. The Foundation Stage is very well led and managed. There is a constant focus on improvement and much thought has gone into developing the new building to ensure that the excellent provision improves even further. Teaching is never less than good and is often outstanding. Excellent assessment of learning is very well used to provide high levels of challenge for all children. The development of children's personal skills, confidence and independence is outstanding.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing in Key Stage 2
- Eradicate inadequate teaching in Key Stage 2 and improve the consistency of teaching in this key stage
- Improve school self-evaluation.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Standards are average, but pupils' achievement is inadequate. This is because a significant proportion of pupils do not make enough progress in their writing from their starting points at the end of Year 2 to Year 6. By the end of Year 2, pupils have made good progress to reach standards that are significantly above average in reading, writing and mathematics. The dip in overall standards from here to the end of Year 6 is due to too little progress in writing in some Year 3, 4 and 5 classes; consequently pupils do not reach the targets set for them in English.

School data and inspection evidence show that pupils now in Year 2 are on course to maintain the same high standards they have achieved in the last five years. Pupils now in Year 6 are on course to reach their challenging targets in mathematics and science, but not in English. National test results show that there has been a steady decline in standards in English from 2005, which has reduced the school's overall performance. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities generally make the same progress as others, and perform less well in English than they do in mathematics and science.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, although their cultural development is only satisfactory. Pupils enjoy school, because they feel safe and secure and know who to turn to if they have concerns. Attendance is good. Pupils' good behaviour and enthusiasm for learning help to increase the pace of learning in many classes. Good relationships help pupils to cooperate and support each other in their learning. In lessons where the pace is too slow, as in some Key Stage 2 classes, pupils' enthusiasm wanes and their rate of learning slows significantly. Pupils know how to lead a healthy lifestyle and are keen to take part in physical activities in and out of school time. Nearly all pupils walk or cycle to school. They make a good contribution to the community

through their role as monitors, members of the school and eco-councils and have a number of school improvements to their credit. They are suitably prepared for the future with their basic skills, including reading and numeracy and their good attitudes to citizenship.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

The quality of teaching and learning varies starkly across the school and is inadequate overall. This is because significant numbers of pupils do not make enough progress in their writing during Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 1 teaching is consistently good and occasionally excellent, because teachers make good use of accurate assessment of pupils' learning to plan work that is well matched to their needs. This allows pupils to start promptly with tasks and learn at a good rate because they can work independently. In this key stage, teachers plan learning so that pupils learn through practical activities, from computers and by working collaboratively with each other. These methods increase pupils' confidence and enthusiasm for learning, so that they always work hard and do their best. These good features are also found in some, but not all, classes in Key Stage 2.

Where learning is inadequate in some Key Stage 2 classes, teachers' assessment of learning is not rigorous or accurate enough. Planning does not take account of different needs and too many pupils have tasks that are either not challenging enough or are too difficult for them to manage on their own. Sometimes, teachers talk for too long without involving pupils, so that they become passive and bored. Despite good behaviour and attention by the pupils, teaching time is not well used to maintain their interest or their pace of progress. There is a lack of consistency in the quality of marking for older pupils who generally have too little opportunity for self-assessment or help with how to improve their work. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported and make the same progress as their peers.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and meets requirements. It adequately matches the needs, interests and aspirations of most pupils. In Key Stage 1, it is very well planned to help the younger pupils move successfully from their play-based learning to more formal methods. Planning for the basic skills of numeracy and information and communication technology is adequate, but in Key Stage 2, planning for literacy does not ensure progression for pupils in all classes. Some aspects of the curriculum are good, especially the enrichment of the curriculum through links with other schools and the community, and after school activities. Visits and visitors add another dimension which gives pupils insight into the wider world. Older pupils enjoyed their recent link with a local newspaper to help them learn about report writing. Thorough planning for personal, social and health education helps pupils to stay healthy and teaches them about personal safety and the need for good relationships. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is satisfactory. Pupils are effectively identified and the curriculum is usually adapted to meet their learning needs.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Pastoral care for pupils is good because staff show a strong commitment to their well-being. Pupils say they feel safe in school and know where to turn for help. The caring atmosphere and personal support for pupils are much appreciated by parents who see this as one of the school's strengths. Child protection, safeguarding and risk assessment procedures are in place and meet requirements.

Academic guidance for pupils is satisfactory overall, despite some excellent practice in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. This is because inaccuracies in the assessment of pupils' work and inconsistencies in teachers' use of assessment information hinder progress for pupils in some classes in Key Stage 2. The school has established new systems for tracking pupils' progress this year but these are not yet used effectively by all staff to spot underachievement and then take remedial action. Good procedures for improving attendance ensure that this is above average. The school has good links with external agencies to provide additional support for pupils who need it.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The quality of leadership and management is adequate overall, but there are some weaknesses which have impacted on the quality of provision and pupils' progress in writing. For example, not enough has been done at Key Stage 2 to improve inadequate teaching and ensure that significant underachievement in writing is eradicated. Neither the headteacher, nor the deputy headteacher have been effective in tackling these weaknesses or in ensuring that all Key Stage 2 staff meet the school's expectations of them. In the recent past, performance management has not been robust enough to hold all staff to account, though this is improving this year as a result of support from a consultant headteacher.

Members of the senior leadership team who are responsible for the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 provide very good leadership and management and between them have established some excellent assessment practice on which the school can build. The quality of subject leadership is variable and this is reflected in the standards reached in different subjects. Since the previous inspection, subject leaders have not had sufficient time to monitor and evaluate their subjects, and this has reduced their effectiveness. Governors are supportive of the school. Whilst they are adequately informed about most aspects of its work, they do not have an accurate enough picture of progress in different classes to support the senior leadership in dealing with inadequate teaching.

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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?	4
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	4

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	4
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	4
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	4
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?	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

20 March 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Clavering Primary School, Hartlepool, TS27 3PN

Thank you for the welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. It was good to see how hard you work and try to do your best. We could see that this really raises your standards when you are in Nursery, Reception and Years 1 and 2, and in mathematics for all of you across the school. We noticed that some of you in Key Stage 2 didn't get on so well with your writing and have asked the school to give you more help with this. You can help by reading as much as you can, because this gives you plenty of ideas and it helps you to learn new and interesting words that other writers use.

We think that your behaviour is good and that it makes your classrooms pleasant places for learning. You are kind and caring with each other and you told us that you enjoy school. Some of you also told us that sometimes lessons are too slow or that the work you do is either too difficult or too easy. We agree that sometimes you lose interest because your teachers talk for too long or don't make lessons lively. We have asked the school to make your learning more interesting so that you learn at a good rate and do even better. You are all learning to be good citizens of the future by taking on responsibility and helping the school to run smoothly. It was good to hear about the work of the eco-council and the school council and to know that you understand about looking after the environment.

You told us that you feel safe and happy in school and that the staff look after you well. We agree, and so do your parents, who are glad you are so well cared for in school.

Some of the things we have suggested to your headteacher and teachers to make your school even better will be happening very soon, because we have set a target to improve quickly. You can help by working as hard as you do now and continuing to behave so well.

Our very best wishes to all of you for the future.

Yours sincerely

Moira Fitzpatrick

Lead Inspector