

Egglescliffe Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111671
Local Authority	Stockton-on-Tees
Inspection number	310655
Inspection date	14 September 2007
Reporting inspector	Andrew Scott

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	175
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Canon Timothy Ollier
Headteacher	Mrs Gillian Wild
Date of previous school inspection	1 March 2004
School address	Butts Lane Egglescliffe Stockton-on-Tees TS16 9BT
Telephone number	01642 787945
Fax number	01642 391820

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This smaller than average school is situated in a village where socio-economic conditions are better than average. Pupils come from the village and surrounding area, and are mainly from White British families. A few pupils do not have English as their first language but none is at an early stage of acquiring it. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average.

The school was visited by one inspector for one day. The overall effectiveness of the school and the following issues were investigated: academic achievement, pupils' personal development, the curriculum and the quality of care, guidance and support. Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation document, national published assessment data, the school's records and procedures, observation of the school at work, parents' questionnaires and discussions with staff and pupils. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school has developed very well since the last inspection and its provision for pupils is now good. There are some outstanding features especially with regard to its ethos and pupils' personal development. Parents endorse these attributes; indeed, they sing its praises. One wrote simply, 'Children thrive at this school.' Outstanding leadership by the headteacher and the dedication of all staff have created a school where expectations are high and everyone is valued – pupils, staff and parents alike. Christian values quietly flavour all its work. In recent years, the accommodation has been upgraded, staffing has been strengthened and standards are becoming higher. As a result, the school has good capacity to improve even further.

Pupils clearly love their school. 'We are all friends,' said one older boy. Behaviour is excellent because misbehaviour is not considered an option; pupils just disapprove of it. They are well balanced, caring and responsible, especially in their adoption of healthy and safe lifestyles. All this stems from the top. One parent explained that, 'The headteacher is a wonderful role model for the staff, as they are for the children.' Social skills are extremely well developed and pupils instinctively look after one another. Spiritually, they are well advanced and they benefit from ample scope to develop culturally. Their sense of citizenship is reinforced by activities like the elections of house captains and fundraising, but their contribution to the local community is more limited. Consistently high attendance emphasises the pupils' happiness with their school.

The school takes excellent care of its pupils. Formal systems for safeguarding pupils are very thorough and all documentation is scrupulously maintained and organised. Staff training is frequent and pertinent, and the vetting of all adults at the school is rigorous. Equally as important is the outstanding pastoral care by all staff for all pupils, especially the more vulnerable pupils. The curriculum is of high quality. The sharp focus on basic skills enables all pupils to reach expected standards and often exceed them by the time they leave. A particular strength of the school is its inclusiveness. For example, the contribution by teaching assistants for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is sensitive, unobtrusive and effective. Consequently, all pupils achieve equally well. There are many exciting activities throughout the year that enrich the curriculum.

Standards by Year 6 are usually above average, as they were in the national tests of 2006, because of the consistently good teaching. This shows that pupils achieve well in their time at school because they tend to start with broadly average skills and abilities. The performance of Year 6 pupils in the 2007 national tests was even better and reflects, in part, the abilities of this group of pupils. The targets for the current Year 6 class are equally high and underline the school's commitment to challenging but realistic targets. It is a similar picture in Key Stage 1. In Year 2, teachers' assessments showed standards were beginning to rise in 2006 to be above average and the improvement has continued in 2007.

A few parents have concerns about staff turnover and the teaching of pupils in mixed-age classes. However, the evidence clearly shows that these factors are not detrimental to pupils' progress overall. Teaching is effective, and sometimes outstanding, precisely because teachers plan carefully to take account of pupils' different ages and needs. Expectations are high in lessons so pupils develop an outstanding attitude to work. This is evident in their excellent concentration and willing cooperation with others. Their neat handwriting typifies the care they generally take. Pupils are right to believe that guidance from staff in lessons and in the marking of their work improves their learning appreciably, as do the excellent learning targets

that are individualised and regularly upgraded. However, teaching could be even more effective if teachers provided pupils with more opportunities to apply their skills in other subjects so that learning is more purposeful and also encouraged pupils to take the initiative more in their learning.

Whilst overall leadership and management are good, the individual leadership of the headteacher is excellent. The clear and very sensible vision that she has for the school is accompanied by her determination. As a result, she has improved the school appreciably and has established excellent values for the pupils. She is supported very well by other members of the management team, who are responsible for key aspects of the school. Staff appointments are made with considerable zeal and deliberation to continue the strong and fruitful teamwork that exists. All staff are encouraged to develop professionally and so feel empowered and confident within their areas of responsibility. Governors are very supportive and hard working; they hold the school to account well and have plans to be more closely involved with subject areas.

The school's self-evaluation is very good. It analyses data shrewdly and monitors its work systematically and effectively. The recent changes of staff have prevented continuity in subject leadership but the school is already overcoming this. Other priorities include more secure fencing of the school grounds. Parents are particularly pleased with the headteacher and staff and the progress their children make. One mother described her son's progress as 'incredible.' In view of the above average standards, the excellent personal development of pupils and the lower than average income, the school offers good value for money.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The provision in the Nursery and Reception classes is good. Children enter school with standards that are broadly typical for their age and achieve well so that, by the end of Reception, they exceed the level expected for their age. This is because teaching is highly focused on individual needs and the good curriculum provides ample scope for children to learn through exploration. The care for children here is excellent and helped by close links with parents. The school is well aware of the urgent need to develop its outdoor facilities for these children.

What the school should do to improve further

- Encourage pupils to develop more independence in their own learning.
- Develop the outdoor classroom for Foundation Stage children.

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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 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	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?	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	1
The behaviour of learners	1
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	1

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?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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	1
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

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

17 September 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Eggescliffe Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School,
Stockton-on-Tees, TS16 9BT

I am writing to thank you for the part you played in the inspection of your school. Your comments were very helpful in enabling me to get to know your school in the short time I was with you.

I think, like you, that yours is a good school. Some parts of it are excellent, particularly you! I was very impressed by your calm maturity, your thoughtfulness, your excellent behaviour and your care for one another. You have a wonderful attitude to learning and clearly take full advantage of all that the school offers. It is no surprise that your attendance is very good.

Your standards of work are good and improving. The results of national tests in Year 6 this year were especially high. You achieve well in your work because your teachers teach you well. They have clear and high expectations of you, and plan work carefully to match your needs. I know you appreciate the help you receive from them and other staff in lessons and in their marking. The excellent curriculum helps you to develop important skills in literacy and numeracy, although sometimes you do not show enough initiative in your own learning. I have asked the school to encourage you to be more independent in your work and I am sure you will be happy to respond to this. Children in the Nursery and Reception thoroughly enjoy themselves and the school is going to make their learning even more exciting by improving their outdoor space.

The school takes great care of you. Your headteacher does an excellent job, supported by all the other staff, in making sure you are safe and valued. She has made sure that the school is developing very well, and I know that she appreciates your views and those of your parents in making it even better.

I wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Scott

Lead Inspector