

Collierley Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114022
Local Authority	Durham
Inspection number	311452
Inspection dates	16–17 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Dave Byrne

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	104
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Carol Rocke
Headteacher	Mr David Grimes
Date of previous school inspection	1 March 2004
School address	Front Street Dipton Stanley County Durham DH9 9DJ
Telephone number	01207 570298
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is small school situated in an area of higher than average social and economic disadvantage. A well above average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and almost half take free school meals. The vast majority of pupils are of White British background. The number of pupils joining school in Key Stage 2 is high. At the time of the inspection the headteacher had been in post for just over two terms. Out of school care is provided for pupils before and after school and during school holidays.

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. It is improving rapidly under the headteacher's good leadership and management. Parents are very pleased with the school's work saying that, 'All children are cared for very well and treated as individuals.' Good quality care and guidance helps pupils to feel safe and secure. As a result, they behave well and have good attitudes to learning, generally working hard and doing their best. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall but their knowledge and understanding of our multicultural society is only satisfactory. In response to initiatives taken by the school, most pupils strive to eat sensibly and take regular exercise. Pupils are well prepared for their future lives.

The small cohorts in the school mean that statistical comparison of results in national tests in Years 2 and 6 with national figures is unreliable without further information about the progress of individual pupils. The school sets challenging targets but the high mobility of pupils make these difficult to track accurately. Pupils' work confirms the school's own diagnosis of current standards as being broadly average in Key Stages 1 and 2. Given that children start school with skills and knowledge that are much lower than typical for their age and the high proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, such standards represent good achievement. This is the result of good teaching across the school. Pupils do well in mathematics, science and reading, but not as well in writing. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress but more able and talented pupils do not always reach their potential. The satisfactory curriculum is successfully enriched by French in upper Key Stage 2, but pupils have too few opportunities to develop writing in a variety of contexts. Pupils benefit from a good range of extra-curricular activities with a strength in access to sporting events.

Leadership and management are good, although governors are not involved enough in holding the school to account. The school's evaluation of its own performance is accurate and it has set the right priorities for further development. The budget is well managed and provides pupils with good quality accommodation and excellent outdoor facilities.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The Foundation Stage is good because it is very well managed. As a result of good teaching, children receive a very good start to their school life. Good quality accommodation with outstanding resources for outdoor learning gives children a rich range of learning experiences. A good balance is struck between directing and supporting children and enabling them to learn through creative and imaginative play. As a result, children make good progress from their low starting points, although they do not reach the level expected for their age by the start of Year 1.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing by providing more opportunities for pupils to write in a variety of contexts.
- Improve the provision for more able pupils to enable them to reach their potential.
- Strengthen the role of the governing body in providing challenge to the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement is good. From low starting points children make good progress in the Foundation Stage. Despite this, many children have still not reached the levels expected for their age when they move into Year 1. In Key Stage 1, progress is good. As a result, standards in Year 2 rose sharply in 2006. They were above average in reading and writing and average in mathematics. In 2007, teacher assessments for Year 2 fell below expectations, primarily because of the very high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. In Key Stage 2, progress in past years has been satisfactory but inspection evidence shows that this has improved and is now good. In 2006, test results showed standards matched the national average in English but were significantly below average in mathematics and science. A dramatic improvement occurred in 2007 and standards in English, mathematics and science are broadly average. The weakest area is in writing, where pupils could do better. Across the school, girls tend to do better than boys, primarily because a higher percentage of boys have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Whilst the large majority of pupils make good progress, more able and talented pupils do not always achieve their potential.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being, and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. Pupils are enthusiastic about school. They are particularly keen on mathematics but writing is less popular. Staff have a clear and consistent expectation about behaviour and this, coupled with their good relationships with pupils, leads to good conduct. Pupils state that there is very little bullying and where it occurs it is dealt with effectively. They confidently take responsibility and care for others well. The buddy system encourages pupils to look after others and their voice is heard through the recently formed school council. The school's Healthy School award is a reflection of pupils having a satisfactory understanding of the importance of eating sensibly and taking regular exercise. The idea of 'community' is an important aspect of the school's philosophy. Pupils are involved in local community issues and raising monies for charities. Whilst pupils have a secure understanding of world religions, their understanding of the richness and diversity of modern multicultural society is only satisfactory. Attendance is average; the majority of pupils attend regularly and are punctual. Given the good attitudes and their improving standards, pupils are well-equipped for their future lives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. There are particular strengths in teaching in the Foundation Stage and upper Key Stage 2 where progress is very good. In all classes, teachers know pupils very well and good use is made of assessment to identify individuals' needs, particularly in mathematics. Many pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their needs are well met in class and very well met when given small group support. More able pupils are given harder work, but the level of challenge is not always high enough to extend their learning sufficiently. Good use is made of information and communication technology (ICT) to bring learning alive. In one lesson for example, pupils were enthralled by using photographs

of Dipton displayed on their class interactive whiteboard to locate places on a map. Teachers prepare lessons well and back this up with vibrant and exciting classrooms encompassing good quality displays. Whilst there are strengths in the teaching of mathematics, reading, science and ICT, expectations for pupils' writing during lessons are not high enough. As a result, standards in writing are not as good as they could be. Marking is generally effective in giving pupils a clear picture of how they can improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory with recent improvements increasing pupils' achievement and enjoyment of learning. Planning is weak for writing across the curriculum which tends to hold down pupils' performance in English. The school knows this and is in the process of evaluating the place of literacy, numeracy and ICT alongside other subjects. The value of linking subjects to add interest to learning is being explored but is not yet planned well enough to have a measurable impact on pupils' achievement. The standard curriculum is effectively enhanced by a variety of activities. Older pupils learn French and visiting theatre groups, musicians, dance teachers, athletics and sport coaches extend learning for all pupils. There is a good range of extra-curricular clubs. The good quality provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is not matched by that for more able and talented pupils. High quality personal, social, health and citizenship education contributes very positively to pupils' personal development and well-being.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. Staff know the pupils well and have established good relationships with both pupils and parents. Child protection and effective safeguarding procedures are firmly established. Staff are proactive in helping vulnerable pupils. For example, pupils can raise any issues that bother them through a 'Worry Box'. Good links with specialist personnel from education, social and health services enhance the good support provided for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The guidance for more able pupils however, is not refined enough. Effective systems record and track pupils' progress and attainment and inform the targets for improving their performance. Success in gaining the confidence of parents through initiatives such as the family learning project in mathematics successfully extends support for pupils' learning at home.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. Strong, dynamic leadership by the headteacher has turned the school around in the last two terms. Achievement is rising after a period when it was not good enough; better links exist with parents and the local community, and staff morale is high. Management responsibilities for individual subjects are being discharged more effectively, most noticeably in mathematics and increasingly so in English. Responsibilities are well managed for essential areas of provision for the Foundation Stage, for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship development. Good self-evaluation contributes to the correct priorities for the school's development and the implementation of good strategies for school improvement. Effective assessment and tracking

systems provide accurate evaluations of pupils' performance and the quality of teaching. This information contributes to the creation of challenging targets for pupils' academic and personal development, although due to the high levels of mobility in Key Stage 2 it is difficult for the school to track outcomes accurately. However, this process is successfully raising standards in mathematics and is beginning to do so in writing.

The governing body ensures that all statutory duties are met and provides invaluable support for the school. However, its role in monitoring the school's performance is underdeveloped. Care is taken when managing finances so that good quality accommodation with very good outdoor facilities has been provided. The school has improved since the last inspection and given the current circumstances, it has a good capacity to improve in future. It gives good value for money.

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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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
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	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?	3
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	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

18 October 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Collierley Primary School, Durham, DH9 9DJ

Thank you for welcoming me to your school recently. I am writing to let you know what I think about your school.

Your school is a good school. You behave well and the way you care for others and not just yourselves is most encouraging. You enjoy lessons and work hard to do your best. It was good to see those of you in Years 5 and 6 pitting your wits against each other in completing your tables quiz. You clearly like mathematics very much and do well in it, as you do in reading and science. Many of you, however, are not as keen on writing and standards could be better. The school is trying to find ways of helping you to do better in writing. Those of you who find learning difficult have good support which means that you make good progress. Some of you find some of the work easy and the school is going to give you more challenging work to make you think harder.

Your teachers make sure that you are cared for and looked after and are very keen to improve the school further. They work hard to provide you with a good range of activities in addition to lessons. It is good to see so many of you enjoying after-school sports which will help you to stay fit and healthy.

Your school is very well managed by the headteacher. He is leading the school in the right direction so that you all get the most possible from your time there. The school's efforts to involve your parents and carers in your education are very positive and helping you to do even better in lessons. Your governors are planning to monitor the school's work more rigorously in future. They give up a lot of their own time to help the school.

I wish you all luck in your future education. If you all continue to put others before yourself, try hard in lessons and do your best to be good citizens, you should continue to do well when you move on to your secondary schools.

Best wishes

Mr Dave Byrne

Lead inspector