

East Stanley School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114026
Local Authority	Durham
Inspection number	311455
Inspection dates	25–26 September 2007
Reporting inspector	Mary Sewell

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	208
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr John Dean
Headteacher	Mr Anthony Blackett
Date of previous school inspection	1 February 2004
School address	Chester Road East Stanley Stanley County Durham DH9 0TN
Telephone number	01207 233611
Fax number	01207 282693

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

East Stanley School is of medium size and situated in an area of regeneration in north Durham. The pupils come from diverse social and economic backgrounds. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is close to the national average. The proportions of children taking free school meals, those from minority ethnic groups and those whose first language is not English, are lower than average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

East Stanley School provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. The school promotes a strong family ethos which is a strength of the school.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils make satisfactory progress and leave school with average standards. The results of the 2007 national tests indicate higher overall achievement than in the previous year. In particular, standards in science are better and boys' writing has improved. However, some of the higher-ability pupils did not achieve the levels predicted for them. Pupils' personal development is good; they are happy and well cared for; they feel safe and know whom to talk to if they need help. They grow in confidence and self-esteem during their time at the school and make a positive contribution to its running through the school council, the house system and by taking on responsibilities around the school.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. However, some lessons lack challenge for the higher-ability pupils because the teachers' expectations are not always high enough. Relationships with the pupils are good and most aspects of teaching, such as planning, subject knowledge and the use of support staff are adequate. The marking of pupils' work, though, often fails to show the pupils clearly enough what they need to do to improve. The curriculum is satisfactory and is being reviewed to incorporate more links between subjects.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The care and support provided for the pupils are good. The headteacher has recently reviewed the subject leaders' role but they are not yet involved effectively enough in the monitoring of lessons. The school's self-evaluation is satisfactory but planning for improvement does not take sufficient account of assessment data and the tracking of pupils' progress. The governors provide satisfactory support and governance is satisfactory.

The school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection, notably in pupils' standards in science and in boys' writing. These recent improvements clearly show that the school has the capacity to move forward. It provides satisfactory value for money.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

The quality of provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. The Foundation Stage (Reception) has been subjected to a radical review and has now addressed the issues from the previous inspection. Children enter Reception with attainment which is typical for their age. They settle in quickly and make satisfactory progress. Nearly all children reach, and a few exceed, the nationally agreed early learning goals by the start of Year 1. Personal development is good because there are many opportunities for children to work together. Teaching and learning are good because children learn quickly through a wide range of thematically linked activities. A good example of this was the 'bear' theme which provided a central focus for learning through a series of linked activities. There are many child-initiated activities which support the development of independent learning and the children's achievement is closely monitored. Children are well cared for, kept safe and taught in a stimulating environment. The children make a sound start to their education. Parents are welcome partners in their children's learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise the teachers' expectations of what the more able pupils can achieve.
- Ensure that the marking of pupils' work enables pupils to understand what they need to do to improve.
- Improve the effectiveness of the school's management by making better use of assessment data in its planning for improvement.
- Extend the work of the subject leaders in the monitoring of teaching and learning.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and improving. Standards are average. Children join the Reception class with skills and knowledge which are typical for their age. Most children make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage and reach the expected standards by the time they join Year 1. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2 and achieve average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards in Key Stage 2 are average. Although the school meets its statutory targets for Year 6, some of the higher ability pupils could achieve still higher standards in mathematics and English if more was expected of them. Standards in science are above average because the school has successfully focused on improving the teaching of practical science. Following the 2006 results, the school put in place strategies to improve standards in boys' writing. Consequently, the 2007 results clearly indicate improvement in standards in both key stages. The 2006 national tests demonstrated broadly satisfactory progress from Years 2 to Year 6 and the 2007 results indicate that standards have improved but remain satisfactory overall.

Effective teamwork between teachers and well qualified support staff ensures that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported in smaller groups and they make satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupil's personal development is good. They know what is right and wrong and are keen to care for each other. By the time they leave school, they are mature, articulate and confident. Pupils say they enjoy school but wish lessons could be 'more fun'. They are keen to take responsibility and work hard as school councillors, house captains, playground buddies and sports leaders. Children say they feel safe and know whom to ask for help if they need it. They are well aware of how to stay healthy and are keen to take up the extra sports on offer, especially the football coaching. Pupils attend school regularly, are punctual, and behave well in lessons and around the school. They have positive attitudes to their learning and good relationships with all staff. Pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They are regularly involved in fund-raising events and enjoy opportunities to play carpet bowls with adults from the area. Pupils are adequately prepared for adult life with satisfactory standards in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT).

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall and lessons are often good. Relationships are good and pupils have positive attitudes to learning. Pupils make satisfactory progress because lessons are underpinned by thorough planning. In some lessons all pupils are presented with challenging work. A good example of this was seen during the inspection in a Year 6 literacy lesson about the use of emotive language, which made good use of drama and enabled the pupils to make good progress. However, this is not always the case. Aspirations for the achievement of the more able pupils are sometimes not high enough and the work set for them lacks challenge. Again, the marking of pupils' work does not always help them to understand what they need to do to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school offers a broad and balanced curriculum and the majority of pupils make satisfactory progress and achieve average standards in the basic skills. The curriculum meets statutory requirements and there is a clear focus on raising standards in literacy and numeracy. The curriculum is enriched through a good programme of visits and visitors, which helps pupils to understand the wider community. There is a broad range of clubs and sporting activities, the most popular being football and the choir. The use of ICT is satisfactory and is helping pupils develop their skills. The focus on raising achievement in science and in boys' writing has been successful. The range of strategies to support children with learning difficulties ensures that they are making satisfactory progress.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support for children are satisfactory. The school looks after its pupils' welfare effectively but academic guidance needs improvement. Although there is a tracking system in place, the information is not used effectively by teachers to set challenging targets to be shared with children and their parents.

The general level of care and concern for all children is high and this is acknowledged by parents. Procedures for safeguarding pupils and keeping them healthy are all in place. The monitoring of health-related issues is satisfactory. Child protection procedures are sound and full risk assessments are undertaken before any school visit. Parental concerns are adequately addressed by school although relationships with a few parents could be further fostered to support their children's learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. A decline in achievement and standards in 2006 generated additional support and guidance from the local authority. Senior leaders now have a good understanding of what needs to be done and acknowledge there is still more to

accomplish. The school development plan clearly identifies the areas in need of improvement. These are correctly focused on raising achievement but plans do not take sufficient account of assessment information to set suitably challenging targets for improvement. The role of subject leaders appointed this term is not yet fully developed, especially with regard to their work in the monitoring of teaching and learning in their subjects.

Governance is satisfactory. The governors are supportive of the school and have a clear understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. They are beginning to challenge the school and to make staff accountable for the children's achievement. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

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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?	3
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?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

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

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	3
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	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
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?	3
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	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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

27 September 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of East Stanley School, Durham, DH9 0TN

Last week my colleague and I visited your school to see how well you are doing. Thank you to those of you we spoke to during the inspection, especially to the school council members who told me their views on the school.

We believe your school provides you with a satisfactory education. This means the school does most things well enough but there are some things it could do better.

We thought your school had a lovely family feeling about it. You work well together and have good attitudes to each other and your lessons. You told me you enjoyed school although you would like some of your lessons to be 'more fun'. The teachers and staff care for you and make sure you are safe.

To help you to do better we think that the school should:

- watch more of your lessons and look at your books regularly to make sure you are making good progress
- mark your work so that it shows you what you need to do to improve it
- make sure that your work matches your ability so that you can make even more progress.

On behalf of us both, I send you best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mary Sewell

Lead inspector