

Stanhope Barrington C of E Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114217
Local Authority	Durham
Inspection number	311518
Inspection date	27 November 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	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	112
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr John Williams
Headteacher	Mrs Lynne Bainbridge
Date of previous school inspection	1 February 2004
School address	Westcroft Stanhope Bishop Auckland County Durham DL13 2NU
Telephone number	01388 528218
Fax number	01388 528218

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Stanhope Barrington is a smaller than average primary school set in a small rural town in West Durham. The area has seen a significant decline in employment in recent years and suffers from rural deprivation. All children are of white British heritage. The children's attainment when they first start school is lower than that typical for their age. Fewer children than average are entitled to free school meals and the proportion of children with learning difficulties and disabilities is also below average. There is a new Sure Start children's centre attached to the school which is also managed by the headteacher. The school holds Sports Activemark and the Basic Skills Award. The school has experienced staffing difficulties, and disruption to the learning environment owing to refurbishment of the building and new construction over the last two years.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: achievement and standards, particularly in mathematics, the quality of teaching and learning, and leadership and management with a particular focus on the effectiveness of monitoring of the work of the school. Evidence was gathered from the school's documents including the self-evaluation form, national published assessment data, the school's own records of pupils' progress and its plans for further development. All classes were observed by the inspector accompanied by the headteacher. Discussions with the headteacher, staff and pupils were held, and the parents' questionnaires were examined.

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 with outstanding features. Stanhope Barrington offers a warm, caring ethos underpinned by Christian values in which children are valued as individuals. As a result, they settle quickly and make good progress in both their academic and personal development.

School provides a good education for its pupils and gives good value for money. The systems for monitoring and evaluating the school's work have improved and are rigorous and robust enough to identify areas of weakness. Pupils who are in need of extra help are well supported because of the refined ways in which information about pupils is collected and analysed. Pupils particularly appreciate the school's 'Better Reading' programme and say that it has helped them become more confident readers.

Good teaching and a good curriculum, enriched by a wide range of extra clubs and activities, ensure that pupils are well provided for. All pupils achieve well, including those with learning difficulties and those in the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception Years). Standards are broadly average in Key Stage 1. In 2007, the results of national assessments for pupils in Year 2 were average in reading and just below average in writing and mathematics. Standards are above average and rising in Key Stage 2 and high proportions of Year 6 pupils exceed the standards expected for their age. The Year 6 test results show that pupils make particularly good progress in English. However, in mathematics, standards could be higher still in mental skills and problem-solving.

Pupils' progress is good because teaching is consistently good. Planning is thorough and underpins all lessons effectively. It is regularly reviewed to ensure a wide range of learning opportunities although pupils would benefit from greater emphasis on mathematical problem-solving and mental work. Pupils enjoy lessons because they experience enthusiastic teaching. Teaching assistants are knowledgeable and support the children well, which results in positive and productive relationships in class. Pupils know what is expected in lessons and what they need to do to improve their work. They are gaining experience in assessing each others work and, by the time they reach Year 6, they demonstrate independence in both the organisation of their work and their ability to express their views confidently. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Pupils' personal development is outstanding because the care, guidance and support provided by the school are excellent. Shy, hesitant nursery children are transformed into mature and articulate pupils by the end of Year 6 because their enjoyment of learning and their health and safety are priorities for the school. Consequently pupils have a good understanding of how to stay healthy and safe. Stimulating experiences, such as taking part in a real Hindu festival, add greatly to their understanding of other cultures. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary; they have positive attitudes to their work and make an excellent contribution to the running of the school by taking up jobs on the school council or as buddies for younger children. Pupils are confident that they are listened to and talk eagerly about the 'Adventure Trail', for which they helped to raise funds.

Although pupils' attendance is broadly average, the school constantly emphasises the need for good attendance and works hard to discourage parents from taking their children out of school in term time.

Leadership and management at all levels are good because well-focused and concise improvement plans provide clear accountability. Subject and phase leaders make a strong

contribution to school improvement. The management of the school has much improved since the last inspection. The school has recovered from its former staffing difficulties and the appointment of a new deputy headteacher has had a positive impact on standards, staff team building, and sporting activities. As a result of the improvements, the headteacher is now enabled to fulfil her vision for the school in the community and to make further improvements. The new children's centre, combined with a recent and radical refurbishment of the school, is appreciated by parents. A typical comment by parents is that 'school is brilliant, cheerful and welcoming.'

During the upheaval caused by the building work, the school's track record of good academic achievement and personal development has been maintained. School and home have benefited from new initiatives to support both parents and children. These initiatives have strengthened home-school links considerably since the time of the last inspection and they are now good. Governors, many of whom are newly appointed, are supportive and committed to raising standards. The school's own evaluation of its effectiveness is accurate and the rising standards indicate that the school has a good capacity to make further improvements.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The foundation stage is good because it is well led and managed, ensuring that the children make good progress.

When children join the Nursery their skills are generally lower than is typical for their age, especially their communication and personal skills. Children are reluctant to speak, hesitant and shy. A lively and stimulating curriculum and warm and caring relationships between adults and children ensure that the children settle quickly into the routines and enjoy learning. By the time they start Year 1 most children achieve the goals set nationally for their learning. Their progress in communication, language and personal development is particularly good because the staff provide excellent opportunities for children to get along well together, share responsibility and develop their independence. Teachers and nursery nurses work well together to ensure good teaching and learning. The way in which they record children's progress is excellent and results in activities which are well matched to learning needs.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide more practice in mental mathematics and problem-solving.

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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	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	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	1
The attendance of learners	3
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 the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
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	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	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

28 November 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Stanhope Barrington C of E Primary School, Durham,

DL13 2NU

Thank you so much for making me so welcome when I visited your school recently. I enjoyed talking to you and your teachers and finding out about what makes your school a good school with some excellent features.

You are all doing well at school and making good progress. This is because you are well taught; you know what you need to do to improve your work and most of all because you all work hard. You are all making good progress in English but you need to have some more practice in mental mathematics and solving problems.

You and your parents told me that you enjoy school. You say you like the recent redecoration and are pleased that you are all back in your own special classrooms. I think this is a caring school which reflects its strong Christian values. The adults work hard to make sure that you are healthy, safe and secure. I was very impressed with how smart you look in your uniforms and how very well you behave. You get on happily with one another and all the staff.

The headteacher takes great care to watch what works well in the school and makes changes if things do not work as well they should. As a result of this you have some changes this year including new members of staff. They are working hard to make sure your work is of the highest standard and that your parents feel welcome in school. Your parents say they enjoy joining in cookery, computer and football activities with you.

You can help your school become even better by making sure that you continue to try your very best in everything you do. I really loved the puppets!

I wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mary Sewell

Lead inspector