

Edmondsley Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114001
Local Authority	Durham
Inspection number	325923
Inspection date	10 February 2009
Reporting inspector	Gianna Ulyatt

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	162
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Lynda Carr
Headteacher	Mr Eric Dodd
Date of previous school inspection	12 July 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Edmondsley Durham County Durham DH7 6DU
Telephone number	0191 371 0443
Fax number	0191 371 0443

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

They evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following aspects:

- the impact that changes to staffing in Key Stage 1 have had on outcomes
- the promotion of community cohesion.

The inspectors gathered evidence from analysing the views of parents as expressed in their questionnaires, from lesson observations, looking at pupils' work, evaluating assessment information, scrutinising documents and discussions with the headteacher, staff, pupils and one governor.

Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but the inspectors found much evidence to confirm that the school's own evaluations, as recorded in its self-evaluation form, are justified and these have been included in the report.

Description of the school

The school is smaller than average and is situated in a village which was a former mining community. The school draws pupils from outside the immediate area as well as the village; overall, the socio-economic background of pupils is average. An above average proportion of pupils are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. Most pupils have a White British heritage. A small minority come from other backgrounds and none have English as an additional language. Early Years Foundation Stage provision is part-time in the Nursery and full-time in the Reception class.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school which is rightly held in high esteem by the local community and beyond. Inspirational leadership by the headteacher is well supported by the deputy headteacher and senior team; they are united in their ambition to ensure excellence in teaching and learning. Standards have been consistently high over a number of years; nevertheless, the school is not complacent and is continually looking at ways to improve the education it offers. Rigorous self-evaluation of all aspects of school's provision is part of the established culture and new initiatives are welcomed and supported through progressive leadership and management. This explains why the school's approach to community cohesion is so organised and effective, through close links with local schools and strengthening of pupils' multi-cultural awareness. All staff, including teachers, teaching assistants and ancillary staff, contribute to the close family ethos that permeates all aspects of school life. Parents' overwhelming support for the school is evident in the high return of questionnaires and the high number of glowing comments in them.

Pupils thrive in this carefully planned learning environment. Achievement is outstanding due to inspirational teaching and a consistent approach that is completely focused on pupils' individual learning needs. As a result, pupils have a very good work ethic and show pride in their achievements. When children start school in the Nursery, their skills and abilities are broad ranging but overall, at the level expected for their age. They make very good progress and, by the end of Year 6, standards are exceptionally high. In this very inclusive school, with strong adult support alongside the expertise of external agencies, pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve exceptionally well. Results in the national assessments for 7 year olds in 2008 showed standards to be broadly average. Recent staffing difficulties in Key Stage 1 have been resolved and the current year groups are on track to meet ambitious targets. Provisional test results show that 11 year olds in the 2008 cohort reached their challenging targets. Overall, pupils achieved best in English and science with almost two-thirds reaching the higher level in the tests. In mathematics, one-third achieved at the higher level. School data show that the current year group is on course to achieve equally well in English and science and better results in mathematics.

Pupils have very clear views about why they enjoy their education. They particularly appreciate the strong relationship they develop within their classes. They know they are well cared for and say they have 'proper conversations' with their teachers. Behaviour is exemplary. Pupils work hard, but do not feel under pressure. They enjoy the challenge of being independent learners at school and the variety of homework set for them. They show high levels of confidence in lessons and freely offer ideas, knowing these will be truly valued. From the pupils' viewpoint, they achieve so well because they evaluate their own work, check the work of their classmates and know exactly what the next learning targets are. Pupils have a deep awareness of ecological issues. They grow and eat their own vegetables, actively promote recycling and are involved in developing the school grounds. Pupils are proud of the many awards they have gained, including the 'Eco Schools Green Flag'. They know that a balanced diet is important and many take part in the range of sport activities. Pupils show care and concern and a very good understanding about worldwide issues and raise money to sponsor the education of an African child. Their excellent personal development gives them the skills needed to become caring, tolerant and responsible members of their school, town and global community, and prepares them very well for their future lives.

Pupils learn so successfully because teachers have very high expectations. As a result, pupils are well motivated and display high levels of concentration. Teachers have very good subject knowledge. They allocate time to teaching pupils an extensive vocabulary and encourage pupils to formulate and discuss their own ideas with classmates. Pupils are very well supported by able teaching assistants who are always on hand. Therefore, pupils grow in confidence, secure in the knowledge of the good progress they are making. Pupils are competent with information and communication technology. They develop new skills and use their knowledge to extend their own learning. Pupils enjoy a very broad and varied curriculum which matches their interests and needs. They say there is so much to do that everyone gets the chance to learn new skills in, for example, sport, art, singing and French. Pupils especially enjoy visitors to the school and the variety of school outings, including to an outdoor adventure centre, all of which widen their horizons. Pupils receive very high levels of care because systems and procedures to protect and safeguard them are rigorous and adhered to well. Staff are very vigilant and well informed. Consequently, pupils feel very safe in school and know how to be adventurous, but careful at the same time.

The school's leadership rigorously monitors all aspects of the school's provision. The school is proactive in promoting professional development and links performance closely to school improvement. The school has a very accurate knowledge of its strengths and of areas in need of development, supported by very effective whole-school systems that enable subject leaders to scrutinise outcomes in their areas of responsibility. The school then uses this knowledge to produce comprehensive action plans that are very well matched to the needs of the school. Good teamwork pervades throughout the school to improve learning for all pupils. A major strength of the school is the detailed and accurate information staff receive from the recently upgraded assessment systems. This means pupils are well challenged and no one gets left behind. Leaders have worked extremely hard to create attractive, natural outdoor play areas for pupils to enjoy. Governance is strong and plays a full and active part in the school's strategic leadership. Governors challenge and support the work of the school extremely effectively to ensure it is well placed to continue to provide an excellent education for its pupils.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding. Having entered the Nursery with skills and abilities expected for their age, children achieve very well in all areas of learning. Nearly all children reach average standards by the end of the Reception class and most exceed this standard. Parents are very pleased with the school's provision and the information they receive. This includes guidance on the work they will encounter and how they might help their child at home. Children in both the Nursery and Reception classes grow rapidly in confidence due to the strong focus given to their personal development. Children are very confident in contributing their ideas and behave exceptionally well. They move about the room, outside areas and the school safely and with great consideration for others. Children and adults enjoy outstanding relationships that establish security and enjoyment within the Early Years Foundation Stage. Adults plan together to ensure that children make very good progress in all areas of learning and that their welfare is promoted extremely well. Leadership is inspiring and the inclusive approach to management ensures that the work of the team is very good. Effective planning results in the very good use of the accommodation and resources. This includes use of the exceptional outdoor areas to extend children's learning through opportunities to explore and investigate, giving them a very good understanding of the world about them.

What the school should do to improve further

- There are no points for development that do not already feature in the school's action plan.

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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?	1
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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

Achievement and standards

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

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	1
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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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**

10 February 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Edmondsley Primary School, Durham, DH7 6DU

Thank you so much for making Mr Watson and me so welcome in your impressive school. You are very friendly and courteous. It was a pleasure talking with you in the playground, in lessons and in the staffroom. I was very impressed with your confidence and with the way you listen to the views of others. I was delighted to see the excellent way you behave in school and outside.

My discussion with older pupils led me to understand that you enjoy being in a small school because everyone knows everyone else and the school is like a big family. You told me that you feel very safe because everyone looks out for each other. It was lovely to see older pupils playing with younger ones. This helps them feel really cared for. You certainly know how to stay healthy and many of you enjoy the range of sport clubs on offer. You also show great kindness towards the child in Africa who relies on your generosity for his education. Your interest in ecology is exceptional and I am not surprised that you have won several awards. Well done! You are certainly a very good example to pupils in other schools in the area.

Your school is outstanding because teachers know exactly what you are capable of and they push you just a little further. This is why the test results are so high, year after year. It was a pleasure to see you listening carefully, concentrating and trying your very best in lessons. I like the way you use exotic words to explain your interesting thoughts and ideas. It was good to see you acting out stories before writing them. No wonder your writing is exceptional! You are very confident and know that teachers and assistants are always there to help you if you get stuck so no one gets left behind. Teachers mark your work in a very helpful way and you also mark your friends' work. These activities certainly help you focus on the best way forward. Many of you proudly showed me how much your work had improved since September. I hope you continue to work as hard as you can so you are ready for the senior school.

I know you have made many good friends at school. I hope you keep up the friendships and continue to enjoy your education.

With very best wishes

Gianna Ulyatt

Lead inspector