

Lanchester Endowed Parochial Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131168
Local Authority	Durham
Inspection number	328558
Inspection dates	1–2 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Tom Grieveson HMI

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	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	246
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	62
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Canon Peter Waterhouse
Headteacher	Mrs Jane Davis
Date of previous school inspection	1 October 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Front Street Lanchester Durham County Durham DH7 0HU

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	1–2 October 2008
Inspection number	328558

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school serves the village of Lanchester in the north of Durham County although due to the school's popularity, the proportion of pupils attending the school from outside the village is increasing. The school is average in size but the number of pupils on roll has declined in recent years because fewer pupils of school age live in its immediate vicinity. There is a well established Traveller population and these pupils are well integrated into the life of the school. The school population is almost exclusively White British. Free school meal entitlement is rising but remains below average. A similar increase in the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is also evident but the proportion is also still below that seen nationally. The school's nursery offers places to children from a wide geographical area with most returning to their own local primary schools at the end of the year.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Lanchester Endowed Parochial Primary School provides its pupils with a good education. It does some things particularly well. Aspects of pupils' personal development, for example, are exemplary including their behaviour, their enjoyment of learning and their contribution to the school and wider community. The very high number of parents who made their views known were overwhelmingly positive about the provision which the school makes and the outcomes their children achieve.

Pupils make good progress at each key stage. Their overall attainment is above average and in some years, significantly above average. However, this masks differences between the performance of different cohorts and subjects. At Key Stage 2 standards declined in mathematics and science in 2007 compared to the previous year. Intensive efforts to improve matters have reversed this position; standards in reading, mathematics and science are now much higher although further improvements in writing standards are still required.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Their attitudes to school and the manner in which they approach and enjoy their studies are excellent. They listen to their teachers, take pride and responsibility in their work and engage well with their peers. Relationships between adults and pupils are a particularly strong feature of the school. Pupils receive good pastoral and academic support. Health and safety matters are dealt with efficiently. This evokes confidence and security in pupils and greatly helps them in their work. Pupils' progress is tracked accurately and written feedback is clear and insightful although it does not always provide them with sufficient guidance on how to improve and reach their targets.

Teaching and learning are mainly good. They are underpinned by secure assessment information which is used effectively by most staff resulting in an appropriate match of tasks to pupils' learning needs. Consequently, in the majority of lessons pupils are engaged and challenged and this successfully supports their progress. The needs of more able pupils, however, are not always catered for well enough. On occasion, a lack of challenge or recognition of pupils' capabilities results in limited progress. The curriculum is well balanced with an appropriate priority given to developing pupils' basic skills while providing effectively for their differing needs and interests.

Leadership and management are good. The school's strengths and weaknesses are well known and understood, leading to well targeted and effective priorities for improvement. The headteacher, ably supported by staff and governors, has tackled the school's weaknesses with determination and skill. Consequently, the significant investment in improving the curriculum and tackling aspects of under-achievement are resulting in most instances in improved pupil outcomes. Progress since the previous inspection has been good.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Most children enter the Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge which are broadly in line with expectations although a large minority are very able. Almost all make good progress, with most attaining above or well above average as they enter Year 1. Staff strive hard to promote children's personal development and secure their well-being. Children are confident in their surroundings and show sustained application and interest in activities. They play harmoniously together enjoying each other's company. Their behaviour is excellent. Purposeful interaction

between adults and children extends learning and supports their progress well. The curriculum is well balanced with an appropriate range of activities on offer, including good use of the outdoor learning space.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the consistency with which the needs of more able pupils are catered for in lessons to enable all to achieve in line with their capabilities.
- Improve standards and achievement in writing.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards at Key Stage 1 have been consistently above average and in some years they have been significantly above. The majority of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress and achieve in line with their targets.

Standards at Key Stage 2 have also been above or well above average over time although they were lower in 2007 in mathematics and science than the previous year. Intensive efforts to raise standards in the core subjects have occurred, including significant investment in staff training and modifications to the curriculum. Inspection evidence from school assessment records, pupils' workbooks and from lesson observations confirms that mathematics and science standards have risen markedly. The large majority of pupils of all abilities met their targets in reading, mathematics and science although not in writing, where further progress is required if all pupils are to achieve as well as they should. In addition, while the majority of more able pupils do well, their needs are not met well enough in all classes and this impedes their progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good and aspects are outstanding. Pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is reflected in their overall contribution to school life. The large majority demonstrate maturity and responsibility towards their work and each other. Pupils speak and listen well. They offer thoughtful contributions in lessons because they listen attentively and take time to give considered responses to questions and comments offered by teachers and other pupils. Good relationships and exemplary behaviour are much in evidence both in lessons and around the school. Pupils are proud of their school and keen to talk about its merits and their extensive engagement with the local community. Pupils willingly take responsibility through organising extra-curricular activities and assemblies and acting as 'Buddies' in support of other pupils. The school council also makes a significant contribution by representing the views of all pupils. They benefit from knowing their opinions are valued and acted upon and council representatives can point to a range of initiatives which have resulted from their constructive suggestions. Pupils say they feel safe and well supported. They are very aware of the needs of their peers, and demonstrate consideration and understanding. Pupils have a good knowledge of the factors which contribute to a healthy lifestyle and this is reflected in their choice of meals at lunchtime and the take up of fruit during break. They willingly take opportunities to develop leadership and self study skills displaying excellent commitment when working in teams and this prepares them extremely well for their future lives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and has benefited significantly from development work undertaken by senior leaders and key subject coordinators. Effective use of assessment information by teachers ensures that in most cases work is well matched to pupils' needs. Tasks engage and challenge pupils to improve and good questioning techniques by teachers provide suitable opportunities for pupils to demonstrate what they know and can do. Most teachers plan their time well to engage and interact with pupils to support their learning. Written feedback in pupils' books is overwhelmingly good with clear and definitive comments about how well pupils have achieved. Guidance to help pupils improve further is less consistent, although there is some very good practice in this respect upon which the school can build.

In a few lessons, pupils lack opportunities to demonstrate independence in their work or take responsibility. This restricts opportunities, for the most able in particular, to show initiative and to apply their own ideas when undertaking tasks. Input from teaching assistants is mostly good but their time is not always used as effectively as it should be resulting in missed opportunities for pupils to receive timely and focused support with their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Pupils benefit from a broad and balanced curriculum which matches their needs, aspirations and capabilities. Much has been introduced in recent years to improve and extend opportunities for pupils. There is a significant emphasis on developing pupils' basic skills and many planned opportunities for them to practise these in other curriculum subjects. The curriculum for more able pupils is however not challenging enough.

The school provides a wide range of options within and beyond the statutory curriculum, including foreign study, residential and day visits. Pupils benefit from pursuing particular themes through creative weeks and the extensive range of extra-curricular activities on offer. These are appreciated and enjoyed by the children and strengthen their enjoyment of school. In addition, the curriculum is used very effectively to promote children's spiritual, physical, social and emotional well-being.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school places high priority on the care and welfare of pupils. All responsibilities with respect to safeguarding are securely in place and regularly reviewed. Staff demonstrate exemplary care and concern for pupils and provide a secure basis from which they can pursue their studies. The school works effectively with other partners such as the local authority's anti-bullying service and is particularly successful in supporting the school's Traveller population. Attendance rates are average although the school is working hard to improve matters. Overall attendance is adversely affected by some parents taking their children on holiday during term time. The large majority of pupils attend regularly and arrive promptly.

The school has extensive assessment and tracking procedures to monitor pupils' progress and attainment. Pupils are assessed regularly each term and this information provides clear evidence of progress and enables staff to intervene where under-achievement is identified. Pupils have a secure knowledge of their targets but are not always clear about how they can improve further.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher, senior leadership team and governors have established high expectations and a secure focus on raising standards as the core of the school's work. This is securely underpinned by strong spiritual and pastoral support for pupils. Through very effective leadership the headteacher has gained the trust and confidence of the school community. She works effectively with senior staff and subject coordinators and together they demonstrate a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. There has been good investment in training and new resources which has led to improvements in teaching and learning and the curriculum. It has also provided the basis for the higher standards and improved rates of progress which have been achieved.

Governors demonstrate excellence in their support and challenge to the school. Their monitoring systems are robust and they have insightful knowledge of the school's performance and an equally clear view of where improvement is required. The school expends significant energy in working with the local community and providing experiences for pupils of the wider world. Its overall contribution to community cohesion is good.

The substantial investment made to improve the school environment since the previous inspection and the acquisition of important learning resources demonstrates that spending decisions have been carefully aligned to school improvement priorities. The school has good capacity to improve further and provides 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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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/or disabilities make progress	2

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?	2
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
The extent to which 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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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?	2

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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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	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**

3 October 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Lanchester Endowed Parochial Primary School, Durham,
DH7 0HU

On behalf of Mr Fisher, Mrs Keddle and myself, thank you for the welcome you gave us when we inspected your school recently.

We thoroughly enjoyed speaking with you about the school and your work. You are clearly proud of your school. You were all excellent ambassadors. Well done.

Lanchester Endowed Parochial Primary is a good school. It does many things very well including the way it supports you all to work hard, enjoy your learning and demonstrate excellent behaviour. We also consider that you make an excellent contribution to your school community and the wider community in which you live.

We have judged all aspects of your school's work as good. Mrs Davis and the teaching staff work exceptionally hard and have made great efforts to improve your learning and the standards you achieve. Their work is being successful because most of you are achieving, and in some cases exceeding, your targets. We also consider the work of the governors to be excellent. They know your school well and strive hard to help the staff to make the improvements which are necessary to make your school even better.

There are two matters which we want the staff and governors to concentrate on in particular and you might consider how you can help them. First, we would like the school to improve the progress which you all make in your writing so that you can attain higher standards. Second, we would like the staff to make sure that the activities which very able pupils undertake meet their needs as much as possible.

I know that you will continue to try hard and support Mrs Davis and the staff in their work. Please accept the inspection team's best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Tom Grieveson

Her Majesty's Inspector