

Seaham Trinity Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	134657
Local Authority	Durham
Inspection number	334681
Inspection dates	9–10 July 2009
Reporting inspector	Joan Elton

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)	397
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	Mr Malcolm Wilkinson
Headteacher	Mr Ray Bushby
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Princess Road Seaham County Durham SR7 7SP
Telephone number	0191 581 3047
Fax number	0191 5818793

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a new school, larger than the national average, which opened in September 2008, as a result of the amalgamation of two infant schools and one junior into a new building. It is in an area of social and economic hardship. The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage, and of the small number of minority ethnic pupils none is at the early stages of learning English. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is higher than the national average as is the percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school's Early Years Foundation Stage unit contains Nursery and Reception children. The school runs a breakfast club during term time.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school. It is improving rapidly and already has some good features. Parents are very supportive of the new school and its headteacher because they recognise their children feel valued, make progress and have access to many opportunities. They are most impressed with facilities and how quickly staff have created, 'a loving and caring environment.' Much progress has been made in one year to establish the new school and to ensure the necessary procedures are in place to provide a safe, well organised environment, where pupils grow in confidence and achieve. The headteacher, staff and governors share the same vision for the school and work well together.

Children enter Nursery with skills well below those typical for this age group. Current standards for Year 6 pupils are broadly average in English, mathematics and science. School data and inspection evidence indicate that most pupils have made satisfactory progress since September. Pupils' personal development is good and this is reflected in their positive attitudes to learning and their good behaviour. Pupils really enjoy coming to school; they enjoy the visits to churches and museums, the after-school clubs and practical, interactive and exciting lessons. Their knowledge of healthy and safe lifestyles is secure; they enjoy responsibility and community involvement, contributing to the school newspaper, and running the fruit tuck shop. Pupils' understanding of diversity has been enhanced by work on relationships, partnerships with nearby schools, links with the church, the introduction of French to the timetable and links with Gerlingen, Seaham's twin town.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Pupils know what they are expected to learn. Relationships are good and most pupils make satisfactory progress, including those pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, who are well supported by teaching assistants. Some good and outstanding lessons were observed during the inspection. In these, accurate assessment information matched work to pupils' needs, teaching was lively and sustained pupils' interests and pupils were active and engaged. In satisfactory lessons, the pace was slower, the more able were unchallenged and pupils were more passive. The school is currently engaged on a complete review of its curriculum. Planning has been revised to inject excitement into learning so that all pupils are motivated to learn. Pupils enjoy working on the new range of cross-curricular themes and projects, and their independent learning is developing. The school promotes a good standard of welfare for its pupils to ensure they are safe, happy and secure. The headteacher and staff are vigilant and respond quickly to situations, which arise in a new building, frequently reviewing procedures. Academic guidance is satisfactory. The school has systems in place to assess and track pupils' progress. Although this information is used by some staff to plan teaching programmes that accurately match pupils' individual needs and ensure challenge, this good practice is not yet consistent enough across the school.

Overall, leadership and management are satisfactory. The dynamic leadership of the headteacher, the hard work of staff and the support of governors have established the school on a firm footing for improvement. Pupils from the three schools have settled well together and new relationships have been formed. Staff have developed common systems and are learning from each other and there is a strong team spirit among them. The curriculum is being revitalised and pupils are enjoying more direct experiences. There is greater parental and community involvement in the school. The leadership team have correctly identified priorities for development and have clear plans on how these will be achieved. The school is now highly

focused on raising achievement and shows good capacity for future progress, while currently providing satisfactory value for money.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

When children enter Nursery their skills are well below those typical for this age group. Due to good provision, children make good progress and enter Year 1 with below average skills. Leadership and management are good and much has been achieved. Staff work well as a team, planning is secure and teaching meets children's needs and interests. Rigorous systems of welfare have been established and the curriculum is well balanced between activities initiated by children and those led by adults. As a result, children have settled well and feel happy and safe. They know which foods keep them healthy, are encouraged to drink water and enjoy physical activities. Staff have created an attractive and stimulating environment, both indoors and out. Activities are imaginative and staff are effective at extending language and thinking when working alongside children. Staff listen well. They incorporate children's ideas into stories and encourage them to expand answers. Occasionally, opportunities to consolidate basic skills are missed and children are not as active in practising and using their skills as they could be. Personal, social and emotional development is given priority. As a result, children benefit from well established procedures and good modelling of courtesy by the staff. Children are taught how to use equipment safely; handwashing procedures are followed and children move in an orderly fashion about the school. As this is a new building, staff evaluate all procedures regularly and adjust their practice to ensure the safety of children at all times.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the consistency of teaching and learning by ensuring all lessons have pace and suitable challenge for the more able pupils.
- Ensure every opportunity is taken in the Early Years Foundation Stage to consolidate and extend children's basic skills both in sessions led by teachers and children's independent activities.
- Ensure all staff collect accurate information about pupils' progress and use it to develop programmes of learning to match pupils' individual needs.

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

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

There are no previous national test results to report because this is a new school. At the end of both key stages, standards are broadly average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Progress across the school since September has been satisfactory for pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those, who are more able, gifted and talented. Teachers' assessments show that standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 are broadly average. School tracking data and inspection evidence indicate that standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6 are also broadly average.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development, including pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils know what they should eat to stay healthy and enjoy the many opportunities for exercise, including cycling to school. They know how to keep safe in a variety of situations and are confident that if they do have a problem they can approach staff to sort out problems confidentially. The school council is very clear in its purpose of listening to all pupils and making their voice heard. Pupils are rightly proud of the changes they have initiated, organising the plant sale, for example, and improving the toilet facilities. Pupils are actively encouraged to take on responsibilities, with older pupils trained as playground leaders to support younger pupils. The behaviour of pupils in and out of class is good and school rules are regarded as fair. Attendance is satisfactory. There is active involvement with the local community including a gardening club for parents and children and projects with Sunderland football club. Pupils raise funds for national and local charities. They have a good awareness of global issues and are keen to express their concerns for the rainforest. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and leave for secondary school with sound basic skills and good personal qualities.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Some good and outstanding lessons were seen during the inspection. The best lessons have a clear focus and a good pace because teachers have a clear understanding of what pupils need to learn and challenge them constantly. In the satisfactory lessons activities are not as well matched to the needs of pupils and pace is slower because teachers talk for too long. Overuse of worksheets also limits learning. In good lessons, teachers interact frequently with pupils, helping them develop key personal and communication skills.

Teaching assistants work closely with class teachers and make a positive contribution to pupils' learning, particularly those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Most teachers mark pupils' work conscientiously, but clear pointers for improvement are not always evident and there are few opportunities for pupils to respond to teachers' comments. Assessment and tracking data is not always used well enough in planning lessons. Too often, all pupils are given the same work. As a result, more able pupils do not receive appropriate challenge and their progress is sometimes limited. The school is aware of strengths and areas to develop within teaching and learning and is developing a range of strategies to improve the overall quality and consistency of teaching.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Pupils are provided with a satisfactory and rapidly improving curriculum. All pupils enjoy an early introduction to French. Due attention is paid to literacy and pupils have regular opportunities to read and write in subjects across the curriculum. Mathematics is not as well planned and does not sufficiently promote problem solving skills. All pupils have regular opportunities to develop computer skills. The good personal education programme ensures that pupils have a secure awareness of healthy lifestyles, recognise potential dangers they may

face and understand important issues which affect them and others. A recent project by Year 4 on the history of Seaham, improved writing skills significantly and pupils made a successful short film of their research. This activity was a powerful tool for learning and enjoyed by everyone. Additional activities including visits and visitors enhance pupils' learning and broaden their horizons. Many parents help with after-school clubs. These are enjoyed by all.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Although care, guidance and support of pupils are satisfactory overall, the pastoral care and support for pupils are good. Arrangements for child protection, health, safety and risk assessment are in place and all safeguarding requirements are fully met. Pupils' good relationships with adults make them feel safe and staff know their pupils well. Parents have confidence in the headteacher, who responds quickly to concerns. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are identified and supported through effective partnerships between staff, parents and external agencies. The work of the Place2be team, enhancing the emotional well-being of pupils, is outstanding. It has helped in the development of trust between school and parents. Pupils' progress is regularly monitored and tracked. The school is aware of the need to improve the accuracy of its assessment data and to update it more frequently. Academic guidance offered to pupils, through teachers' marking for example, is not yet consistently effective across the school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher has a clear vision for the future of the school and has very high aspirations for its pupils. He sets a clear direction for raising achievement and communicates this well to staff and governors. In a very short period of time and ably assisted by his hard working deputy, the headteacher has successfully built a strong leadership and management team, sufficiently skilled and reflective to ensure the school's continued progress. The school has a secure understanding of its strengths and priorities for improvement. For example, the school is well aware of the need to make improvements to the systems for monitoring and tracking of pupils' progress and the way the information is used by staff. Staff have received appropriate training, and are now well placed to develop the rigorous monitoring and tracking systems necessary for improvement. Good relationships have been established with parents and priority has been given to securing the pupils' personal development and welfare. Governance is satisfactory. Governors have only been in post for four months but have organised themselves into appropriate committees, with several governors active in school life. They have helped the school make a good contribution to community cohesion by encouraging the school's involvement with the town's twinning arrangements and by involving the local community in the school. Together, the headteacher, staff and governors have worked very successfully to launch a new school and to accurately evaluate its work. Based on what has been achieved in one year and the detailed preparations for the next, the school has good capacity for improvement and currently provides satisfactory 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?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	NA
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?	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/or disabilities make progress	3

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	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	3

The quality of provision

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

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	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

11 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Seaham Trinity Primary School, Durham, SR7 7SP

Thank you for the welcome I received during your recent inspection. I was most impressed with your friendliness and natural good manners. Please thank your parents for their questionnaires. Their views were very helpful.

Your school is an improving one. It is satisfactory with some good features. It promotes your personal development and welfare well. Staff take good care of you. They teach you about safe and healthy lifestyles, help you to participate in community projects and ensure you leave with effective basic skills. Staff plan some stimulating projects for you and I know you enjoy these experiences. You are positive about your learning and behave well both in lessons and about the school. Staff have tracked your progress during the year and nearly all of you have made satisfactory progress. Headteacher, staff and governors have worked very hard to establish a new school and one, which runs smoothly.

I have asked your school to do three things to help your future progress.

- To make your teaching and learning consistently good or better by ensuring lessons sustain your attention and that you receive work that challenges you.
- To ensure basic skills are practised throughout all activities in Nursery and Reception.
- To ensure all staff collect accurate information about your progress and use it well to develop their teaching so that you all make as much progress as possible.

Your headteacher, staff and governors are very keen for the school to make further progress. They have been very successful this year.

My very best wishes to you for the future!

Yours faithfully

Joan Elton

Lead inspector