

# Evergreen Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	134663
<b>Local Authority</b>	Durham
<b>Inspection number</b>	341492
<b>Inspection dates</b>	19–20 July 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Ann Muxworthy

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	129
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Sue Stubbs
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Tracey Hutchison
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	27 March 2007
<b>School address</b>	Warwick Road Bishop Auckland County Durham DL14 6LS
<b>Telephone number</b>	01388 459721
<b>Fax number</b>	01388 459722
<b>Email address</b>	evergreen@durhamlearning.net

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Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester M2 7LA

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 15 lessons and observed 12 teachers. They also held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at school policies, curricular guidance, the school improvement plan, minutes of governing body meetings, external reports, and scrutinised pupils' progress records. Inspectors took into account the findings from the 55 parental questionnaires and from questionnaires completed by staff and pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at:

- whether all groups of pupils achieve well
- whether the provision for pupils to feel safe, their knowledge of how to be healthy and their personal development has improved since the last inspection
- has assessment, an area for improvement at the last inspection, been successfully addressed
- is leadership effectively driving improvements.

## Information about the school

Evergreen primary school is a small school which caters for young people with moderate, severe and profound learning difficulties. An increasing proportion of pupils have a diagnosis of autistic spectrum disorder, and currently all pupils have a statement of special educational needs. Pupils attend from across the county of Durham and many other neighbouring counties. Some have experienced significant disruption in their education prior to joining the school. Most pupils are White British and all pupils are known to take free school meals, as a result of a local authority initiative. There is a tiny proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language. A new headteacher was appointed in September 2009.

The school has gained numerous national awards which include Healthy Schools, Anti-bullying Award and the Activemark.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

Evergreen Primary is a good school. The commitment of all staff successfully supports the school's mission statement 'to strive to create a safe, healthy, caring and enjoyable environment where everyone is respected and valued.' Parents and carers are highly appreciative of the school's caring ethos, with comments such as, 'The school does a brilliant job as they treat each child as an individual, with respect, and all staff are approachable and pleasant.'

Pupils love coming to school and say they feel safe. Pupils' excellent personal development makes an enormous impact on their learning. For example, pupils' excellent behaviour and consideration for each other makes classrooms happy, engaging and encouraging places in which to learn. Their interests, involvement in school decision-making and attitudes prepare them well for the next stage of their education and the world of work. Pupils have many opportunities to explore their understanding of their immediate community and have engaged well with other schools with pupils from different backgrounds.

The rigorous tracking of achievement by staff has ensured that pupils make good progress overall, with some making outstanding progress in their learning. The well-planned creative curriculum, and excellent care, guidance and support allows accelerated progress for the majority of pupils. There is a good range of assessment used in teaching to gauge pupils' understanding. However, this is not always matched closely enough to the needs of some pupils.

Children make good progress in their learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children's needs are met well because the teaching staff have a good understanding of how to encourage them to develop their skills. A great deal of effort is made to ensure that transition to school life is smooth and involves parents and carers and agencies appropriately. Outdoor provision is spacious, but is not yet used to full advantage to develop children's language, although plans are in hand to do so.

The effective leadership of the new headteacher and her dedicated governing body communicates enthusiasm, sense of purpose and the school's caring ethos extremely well to pupils, parents and carers. Leaders are committed to raising achievement and continual improvement through high expectations of pupils, an exciting curriculum, and an impressive range of activities to help to support healthy lifestyles. Self-evaluation is good and has a clear process that ensures participation and reflection by staff and governors. Partnerships effectively provide exciting and extended learning opportunities to give pupils real experiences, leading to their increased confidence and willingness to participate in a variety of social settings. These factors give the school good capacity for

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continued and sustained improvement.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the quality of assessment, by:
  - ensuring that it is finely tuned to identify the progress of all groups of pupils
  - giving enough opportunities for pupils to reflect on their own
- learning.
- Improve the opportunities for learning in the outdoor area for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils enjoy their learning and their behaviour in lessons is often outstanding. They make good, and for some exceptional, progress when measured against their individual starting points. Progress is nearly always better than might be expected, given their learning difficulties or in comparison to children with similar needs.

Pupils appreciate the help and support provided by adults but respond well when encouraged to be independent. For instance, pupils in Key Stage 2 worked well at sorting Smarties onto a graph, applying their growing knowledge of number and data. Engagement of pupils is high as they enjoy their activities and are prepared to be challenged to succeed. By the time pupils transfer to secondary school, they have had good opportunities to apply their skills and abilities in a range of situations. Pupils' achievement is good and for some it is outstanding.

Pupils are happy and friendly towards each other and staff, are helpful and listen well to one another. They have an excellent understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle through the school's well-planned programme of personal, social and health education. Pupils across the school have a strong sense of school community. The pupils' voice, through the school council and the unusual food council, leads to shared decision making. They actively raise funds for a range of charities and engage well with local schools in team sporting activities. Good attendance and well developed communication and social skills prepare them well for the future. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and the current work on 'rights and responsibilities' is having an excellent focus on developing pupils' understanding of moral issues. They have a strong sense of spirituality in their interactions with others and respect their feelings and views. Pupils develop a good understanding of art, sport and other cultural activities that have shaped their community and can recognise similarities and differences with other communities.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	*
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

### How effective is the provision?

Teaching is consistently effective in ensuring that pupils are engaged and motivated to learn. Teaching assistants make consistently strong contributions to teaching and learning, for instance, through practising skills with pupils in small group activities and individual programmes. Teachers and teaching assistants use a broad range of assessment which enhances and extends pupils' learning. However, assessment of learning, for some pupils, could be improved to better gauge their understanding.

In engaging lessons, teachers use their good specialist skills and knowledge to inspire and challenge pupils to achieve their best. The routine use of information and communication technology, with the expectation of pupils using it, and stimulating classroom resources, provides engaging opportunities for learning. The school has a wealth of information about pupils and comparative performance data, which is used effectively to ensure that the planning, recording and reporting of each pupil's progress are as ambitious as possible.

The curriculum is good and provides real and unforgettable experiences that spark pupils' imaginations. It positively promotes self-esteem and develops pupils' key skills, which contribute to their good development and well-being. Through effective partnerships, specialist coaching and after-school clubs pupils share experiences on

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

\* In some special schools inspectors do not make a judgement about attainment in relation to expectations of the pupils' age.

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sports, healthy living and musical events. They gain a good understanding of working life through their enterprise activities. The recent introduction of French in the curriculum has pupils impressively following instructions and naming animals.

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. The school has created a friendly, yet challenging setting that successfully promotes learning and enjoyment equally. Transition is extremely well-supported through excellent partnerships and judicious preparation. The highly effective collaboration of staff, parents and carers and agencies ensures that pupils, especially those whose circumstances make them vulnerable, are cared for very well.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The new headteacher has developed a focused strategy for improvement, based on accurate assessment of the school's strengths and weaknesses. This is embraced well by the leadership team. Staff at all levels of leadership have contributed effectively to the school's development. They are proud to be part of the school and have high expectations of themselves and of pupils. The use of subject specialists and partners supports good quality teaching and informed monitoring.

Governors have been instrumental in building a new leadership team who support their commitment to driving school improvement. They have a diverse range of skills and expertise, which provides good engagement in, and knowledge of, the work of the school. Governors discharge their statutory responsibilities conscientiously. Consequently, safeguarding is addressed with rigour and statutory requirements are met. School leaders act responsibly in their regard to pupils' and staff safety, and careful and effective risk assessments help keep accidents to a minimum.

Engagement with parents and carers is outstanding. Strong partnerships with local schools, health professionals and the wider community make a good contribution to the achievements and well-being of pupils. Staff liaise well with partners and agencies to ensure effective support for pupils and their families.

The school is unfaltering in its commitment to the 'individual rights of the child' and this secures outstanding equality of opportunity. Outcomes for different groups are monitored with care in order to ensure that there are equally positive and well-planned activities to encourage enjoyment and participation. The school successfully increases its understanding of the wider community, both within Durham and beyond. Staff and

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resources are well deployed to support pupils' needs and the school offers good value for money.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children learn well in the Early Years Foundation Stage setting because they are well cared for and have individualised learning programmes, which are matched appropriately to their needs. Consistently good quality interactions assist in the development of language and opportunities to heighten children's sensory experiences and to develop their skills and understanding. The indoor environment is welcoming and well-equipped to support learning activities. Outdoor provision is spacious and plans are in hand to ensure that language-rich opportunities for some groups of children are matched to the same quality of provision indoors. Adults are good role models for children. Children are valued, as are their opinions, and are encouraged to make choices. The strong relationships enhance good social development and staff diligence secures safe practices.

Parents and carers are involved from an early stage in transition into the school and children are grouped to ensure seamless transition into Key Stage 1. The good leadership strives to keep improving the provision and shares best practice within and beyond the school. Accurate and precise assessments are undertaken and are used well to plan learning experiences.



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*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

Most parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were extremely positive about the school's provision and the outcomes it achieves. The quality of teaching, pupils' enjoyment of school and feeling safe were rated particularly highly. One comment stated, 'We are extremely happy with the teaching and whole-school experience and we feel our child could not be in a better educational setting.'

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Evergreen Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 55 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 129 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	47	85	8	15	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	47	85	8	15	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	43	78	12	22	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	39	71	15	27	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	44	80	11	20	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	41	75	13	24	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	41	75	13	24	1	2	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	41	75	12	22	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	45	82	10	18	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	42	76	13	24	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	40	73	15	27	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	44	80	11	20	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	46	84	9	16	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



21 July 2010

Dear Children

Inspection of Evergreen Primary School, Bishop Auckland, DL14 6LS

Thank you so much for being so friendly and helpful when we inspected your school. We enjoyed meeting you and thoroughly enjoyed seeing your lessons and other activities. Your DVD on bullying was very creative and will help other children understand it is better to be friends. You have been very active doing lots of sport and some of you have won trophies for your school.

You told us how happy you are in school and we can see why. We found out that Evergreen is a good school. This is because your headteacher, staff and governors work extremely hard to make sure your school is the best it can be. You make good progress and become confident young people; you are right to care for your school. We were delighted with the many exciting activities you do in and out of school and having a food council is impressive. We think you are making good progress in your lessons. However, there are some things that could be better. We have asked your teachers to give you more opportunities to think for yourselves about what you have learnt. We have also said we would like the young children in your school to have more to do when they are playing and learning outside.

We also found out that your school takes excellent care of you and helps you make friends and get on together. We were particularly impressed with how you get to visit other schools and meet other children. You are good at having ideas to raise money and this is helping you think of others and preparing you for when you leave school. We wish you continued success.

Yours sincerely,

Ms Ann Muxworthy

Lead inspector

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