

East Herrington Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108785
Local Authority	Sunderland
Inspection number	356426
Inspection dates	11–12 January 2011
Reporting inspector	Clive Petts

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	473
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Peter Chapman
Headteacher	Mrs Alison Hodgson
Date of previous school inspection	17 January 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. Inspectors visited 19 lessons and observed 17 class teachers. They held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils, analysed 174 questionnaire responses from parents and carers and looked at questionnaires from staff and pupils. The inspectors also looked at development plans, pupils' progress and attainment data, documents relating to the safeguarding of pupils, school policies and procedures, scrutinised pupils' current and past work and spoke to the School Improvement Partner.

The inspectors reviewed many aspects of the school's work and looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The quality of teaching and learning and its effectiveness in accelerating pupils' progress and raising achievement for all pupils in Years 1 to 6, particularly in mathematics.
- The extent to which leaders and managers at all levels are demonstrating the capacity to sustain a consistent pattern of improvement.

Information about the school

This is a much larger-than-average primary school situated on the outskirts of Sunderland. Nearly all pupils are of White British heritage and very few speak English as an additional language. A lower-than-average number of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. A below-average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities with an average number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs. The school extends its services in that it provides before- and after-school care. The school has gained the Investor in People, International School and Activemark Gold awards.

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

This is a good and continually improving school as a result of the outstanding clarity of purpose, vision and ambition of the headteacher. She is effectively supported by an incisively led and knowledgeable governing body. Consequently, there is a positive climate for pupils' learning and development in the school. A very large majority of parents and carers are positive in their support and all appreciate how safe their children are kept. One comment, 'There are fantastic opportunities in school to enrich their learning beyond my expectations,' sums up the views of most parents.

Most children start school with skills that are broadly typical for their age, although with a wide range of abilities and needs. By the end of Year 6, pupils achieve well with attainment typically above average. Staff have worked hard to eradicate any differences in the achievement of groups of pupils. Positive action by senior leaders has improved writing skills considerably, but they recognise that mathematical skills could be applied more systematically when solving problems. Information on pupils' progress is accurately collected and carefully checked and this has had a positive impact on raising achievement. Yet this information is not always exploited enough to shape tasks to meet individual needs and abilities and provide extra demands. Pupils enjoy their learning because teaching is rarely less than good. However, opportunities are occasionally missed to adopt fresh, lively approaches which invigorate learning and provoke pupils' thinking. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress, because their needs are accurately identified and intervention and support well targeted. Pupils demonstrate an exceptional understanding of the benefits of a healthy diet, keeping active and being safety conscious. Pupils' good and often exemplary behaviour in lessons reflects their strong sense of right and wrong. They display an admirable ability to reflect selflessly on the personal circumstances that affect themselves and others, both in the school and the local community. For example, they worked tirelessly to fund-raise to provide walking aids for a classmate, and younger children thoughtfully joined in the baptism in school of a family member from the local church.

Senior leaders have brought about many important improvements since the last inspection, such as eradicating the inadequate nursery provision and driving up attainment. Concerted action by all staff has improved teaching skills, which are now good. Nevertheless, expectations of what pupils can achieve could be even higher; for example, teachers' advice for improvement is not always used by pupils. Self-evaluation is open, honest and accurate. Middle leadership has been improved and progress information is used with increased accuracy to identify what the school does well, plan for the future and set robust targets to judge the quality of learning. The governing body provides much expertise and essential challenge. Consequently, the school has a good and strengthening capacity for continued improvement.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the rate of pupils' progress to boost achievement and attainment in Years 1 to 6 by:
 - increasing the use of imaginative approaches to inspire and excite pupils and increase the level of demand in their work
 - ensuring assessment information is consistently used to accurately match activities and tasks to meet the varied needs and abilities of pupils
 - making certain all activities allow pupils to apply their skills to solve mathematical problems
 - ensuring pupils promptly and consistently act on their guidance for improvement.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils respond well to the good teaching and learning they receive and were seen enjoying their lessons and making good progress. Increasingly, the use of themes to link subjects together is energising learning, enabling pupils to confidently exchange their views and ideas, for example, by imagining the plight of young evacuees during the Second World War. The pupils' good progress, as they move through the school, results in above-average attainment by the end of Year 6. The school's own information confirms the overall above-average attainment and that this is being effectively sustained. However, although achievement in mathematics is good, there remains scope to expect more of pupils, ensuring they apply their skills more systematically in all problem-solving activities. Personalised support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities enables them to achieve as well as their peers.

Pupils get on extremely well together, show initiative and willingly undertake responsibilities around the school. There is a very strong focus on respect and consideration for the feelings and situations of others, for example, joining Niall's Mile, a Sunderland Football Club Foundation charity event. This successfully supports their very good personal development. Their positive attitudes are reflected in the enjoyment of their work, for example, the vibrant atmosphere created as pupils start to sing walking towards the assembly hall. They are polite, helpful and happily work together, listening to each other, exchanging views during debates and being considerate. All attend school regularly. Consequently, pupils are well prepared for their next stage of learning.

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

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Good teaching ensures that pupils are motivated and engaged. Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent and subject knowledge a strength, so that explanations are well thought out and confident. In the best lessons, active approaches ensure that learning is varied, carefully matched to the needs and abilities of individual pupils. Probing questions are used to challenge understanding and prompt thinking. In other lessons, assessment information is not always used to continuously tailor activities to meet the broad range of ability and variety of interests. Expectations of the quality of pupils' work, for example, layout and presentation including handwriting, are not always high enough.

The curriculum is a good match to the needs and interests of pupils. Themes are increasingly used in an imaginative way to promote learning. Pupils enjoy the excellent enrichment activities that are available to them. They speak enthusiastically about their participation in music, singing, sport and their challenging residential experiences in the Lake District.

The good care, guidance and support which pupils receive are a strength of the school. Staff can point to real successes in helping pupils overcome difficulties and challenging episodes in their lives to once more enjoy learning and make good progress. Parents and carers appreciate the excellent arrangements which allow them to stay and help the youngest children settle into routines. Provision is also extended before and after school, for families who require it. Pupils, whose circumstances make them vulnerable, are

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helpfully supported and considered by staff and classmates. Good use is made of support agencies to give the pupils the expert help and support they need.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The clear-cut vision and high aspirations of the headteacher have created a friendly, welcoming ethos which permeates the whole school. The mutual care and trust is evident in the sensitive and highly effective management of teaching and learning. Staff support each other really well. Positive action to tackle and eliminate underperformance and underachievement has been successful, ensuring pupils achieve well. Consequently, almost all teaching is good with achievement and attainment rising over time. Nevertheless, not all opportunities are exploited sufficiently in lessons to adopt approaches which bring learning to life and are always thought provoking. The strengthening of the middle leadership team is adding to the rigour and sharpness of monitoring and evaluation, although their full impact is yet to be seen. The positive engagement of parents and carers can be seen in their increasing involvement in their younger children's learning in Nursery and Reception. The excellent range of links with the local community helps enrich learning and adds to the strong sense of community, for example, singing in the Salvation Army carol service. The governing body play a full part in the shaping of strategic direction of the school and are increasingly confident, refining their approaches to quality assurance. The school adopts good procedures for safeguarding and risk assessment. They meet government guidelines and include high-quality checks on all adults. Community cohesion is promoted well with a developing range of international links providing valuable first-hand experiences of the global diversity that exists, for example, sponsoring individual children in Haiti. The school promotes equality of opportunity well. The rising achievement and attainment demonstrates the school's ambition to ensure that all pupils are equally involved and able to fulfil their potential.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle quickly and confidently into nursery routines, because the busy atmosphere is happy and friendly. Parents and carers appreciate the opportunity to join their children in their learning. Children make good progress and achieve well. Most gains are made in their personal and social development, especially in Nursery. The increased focus on linking sounds and letters is helping to accelerate the progress of speech and language skills, particularly in Reception. This was demonstrated to good effect when children were asked to write a letter to Santa telling him what presents they liked best. Learning is enhanced by making good use of themes, for example, making a banana sandwich for Marvin the monkey and searching for pictures of animals hidden outside. However, there remains scope for making learning even more thought-provoking, particularly for younger children once they have happily settled. Regular observation and checks of children's progress are systematically completed, although staff comments in observation and assessment notes do not always focus on specific skills. The 'Special Books' record the children's learning and development really well with some excellent contributions from parents and carers and from local community experiences. Welfare requirements are exceeded and high levels of care and support are provided for the well-being of potentially vulnerable children. Children respond particularly well to the praise and encouragement they receive. As a result their behaviour is often exemplary for their age. Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and increasingly confident and assured.

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

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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

A very large majority of parents and carers are very pleased with the education the school provides. They speak highly of the enjoyment their children gain from school life and all feel that the school keeps their children safe. Inspectors entirely endorse these views. A few parents and carers expressed concerns about how the school deals with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors judged behaviour to be good and saw some exemplary behaviour in classrooms and in assemblies. They observed teachers dealing with minor incidents of inappropriate behaviour very effectively.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at East Herrington 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 174 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 473 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	94	54	77	44	3	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	100	57	73	42	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	78	45	96	55	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	79	45	89	51	5	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	97	56	77	44	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	85	49	80	46	7	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	82	47	84	48	8	5	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)	73	42	90	52	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	81	47	87	50	3	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	57	33	89	51	10	6	5	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	61	35	90	52	9	5	2	1
The school is led and managed effectively	67	39	94	54	3	2	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	92	53	78	45	2	1	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 all 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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



13 January 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of East Herrington Primary School, Sunderland, SR3 3PR

I want to thank you all for the very friendly welcome that you gave the inspectors when we visited your school. We thoroughly enjoyed our time talking to you all.

East Herrington is a good school which is always improving. We were impressed by your good and often exemplary behaviour. The staff make certain that you are well protected. You obviously feel safe and confident because of this. You really do understand the benefits of a healthy lifestyle and keeping active and fit. We were very struck by the consideration you show for each other and the excellent links you have with the local community. The good relationships the staff enjoy with your parents and carers add much to your learning. You all make good progress and, as a result, your skills are above average. Your school is taking positive action to enable you to continue to improve and this can be seen in your rising standards, for example, in your writing.

We have asked your headteacher, staff and the governing body to look at extra ways of helping you to achieve even more. We want them to demand more of you in lessons and use more lively approaches to inspire you to achieve even more. For example, we have asked them to make sure that you apply your mathematical skills more frequently to solve problems. We have also asked the school to make certain that activities are planned to meet your individual needs and interests and you always correct your work after marking. We also want you to make sure you do not make the same mistakes again.

You can play your part by working as hard as you can and continuing to attend regularly. Thank you for helping with this inspection.

Best wishes for your future.

Yours sincerely

Clive Petts

Lead inspector

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