

# Eslington Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	133397
<b>Local Authority</b>	Gateshead
<b>Inspection number</b>	360503
<b>Inspection dates</b>	29–30 March 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	John Farrow

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>	5–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	34
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr David Kennedy
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Michelle Richards
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15 January 2008
<b>School address</b>	Hazel Road Gateshead NE8 2EP
<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 433 4131
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. Nine lessons were observed and six teachers were seen. Meetings were held with members of staff, representatives of the governing body and pupils. The inspector observed the school's work and looked at documentation, including that relating to safeguarding of students, teachers' planning and pupils' progress. Eighteen parents' and carers' questionnaires were also scrutinised.

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

- The progress of different groups of pupils was examined.
- The school's use of assessment and personal targets to drive progress were evaluated.
- The extent to which pupils develop greater responsibility for improving their own behaviour was explored.

## Information about the school

This school caters for pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Almost all of the pupils on roll have a statement of special educational needs. Pupils are drawn from across Gateshead local authority and currently all are from a White British heritage. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is nearly four times the national average. The vast majority of pupils are boys, with a few pupils looked after by the local authority. The school holds a number of nationally recognised awards including National Healthy Schools status and, most recently gained, the Inclusion Standard Gold Award.

**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

Pupils enter this good school with patterns of challenging or emotional behaviour that have, in the past, created problems and barriers to their learning and well-being. Soon after they arrive, as a result of consistently good teaching, a well-organised and effective curriculum and outstanding care, guidance and support, they settle and begin to thrive. Pupils feel extremely safe and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They gradually learn to take greater responsibility for controlling their own behaviour, which can improve to such an extent that some are able to successfully return to mainstream schools. As a result of their time in this school pupils' lives and those of their families is often transformed. Partnerships with parents and carers are exceptional. Those who responded to the questionnaire overwhelmingly endorsed the positive impact of the school's work on their children's learning and development.

Leaders and managers at all levels of responsibility show a strong sense of teamwork and common purpose. They work together seamlessly and well to secure ambitious outcomes for all pupils with widely differing special educational needs and/or disabilities and abilities, promoting equal opportunities extremely well. Teachers' determined and exemplary use of assessment and individualised learning objectives is highly effective, helping each pupil to work hard and productively and to build swiftly on their previous achievements and skills. This also has a very positive impact on the pupils' confidence and self-esteem. Most pupils enter school working well below those levels expected for their age or underlying ability. By the end of Year 6 attainment is still low in relation to national averages, especially in writing, where historic gaps in pupils' reading skills and their wider vocabulary continue to limit the written work they produce. However, their consistently good and often accelerating rates of progress mean this attainment gap is closing fast and consequently pupils' achievement is also good.

The school has continued to develop well since the previous inspection. For example, its leaders have consolidated a far more rigorous approach to setting and tracking challenging individual progress targets. They monitor its work conscientiously and use the resulting and searching analysis well to inform and drive systematic improvements in its outcomes and provision. The leadership and management of teaching and learning are first-rate. This means that the school's leaders and the governing body have an accurate, well-evidenced, first-hand knowledge and understanding of the school's strengths and the determination and resolve to tackle any weaknesses. Consequently the school has a good capacity for further sustained improvement.

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

- Raise attainment in English by:

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- building on pupils' developing confidence as writers through practising and celebrating their writing skills in all subjects
- refining arrangements to deal with the specific gaps in pupils' reading, knowledge of letter sounds and vocabulary skills that limit the writing they can produce.

## **Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**

**2**

Pupils clearly enjoy coming to a school where they feel exceptionally safe and where they recognise they make good and occasionally outstanding progress. Their good behaviour, sustained concentration and enthusiastic attitudes to learning make a strong positive contribution to this good progress. Typically, in one lesson pupils in Years 2 and 3 were engrossed while creating a sculpture from recycled materials; suddenly one boy exclaimed 'I've connected these boxes together'. His joy was characteristic of others in his class, who were also rapidly developing more age- appropriate speaking, listening and vocabulary skills.

All pupils are proud to be members of this lively and vibrant school community, and enjoy forging caring and sustainable friendships with each other alongside sociable, firm and dependable adults. This is evident from the moment pupils arrive in school, greeting each other warmly and starting the day purposefully during the 'wake up and shake up' exercise session. They soon realise they can 'catch up' with any learning they have missed. Older pupils also said they 'now understand' why they need to make better decisions about their actions and the impact their behaviour can have on others. They learn to think deeply about their own and others' feelings and, with the help of good adult role models, they attempt to integrate such reflections explicitly into their own emerging personal values, for example during morning assembly. As a result, some pupils become swollen with pride when they realise how well they are succeeding, for example after a reintegration placement into a local mainstream school was accelerated rapidly. Pupils' views were summed up when one said he 'liked coming to school because the teachers make learning fun, they always have a smile on their faces, even when I'm feeling angry or upset'.

At the end of Year 6 only half of the pupils reach the expected levels in mathematics and only around a third do so in English. The lower performance in English mainly reflects pupils' weaker skills in writing, which in turn correlates to significant gaps in their reading skills and functional vocabulary. However, they make good progress in relation to all their individual starting points and most reach or exceed their ambitious individual targets, including those associated with becoming more confident and independent writers. Progress is equally good for all groups of pupils including the small number of girls in the school and pupils looked after by the local authority. Attendance is average. Pupils understand how they can help themselves to stay safe, for example when using social networking sites or the internet, and they have a good knowledge of the choices they can make that contribute to a healthier lifestyle.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	4
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>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</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>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

<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

## How effective is the provision?

Teaching is consistently good and sometimes outstanding. Teachers and teaching assistants know their pupils extremely well and use accurate and detailed assessment information very effectively to ensure pupils remain well motivated and suitably challenged almost all of the time. They often use spoken language and a mix of open and closed questions effectively to extend pupils' vocabulary or to check their level of comprehension. Adults establish good working relationships with the pupils, characterised by mutual trust and respect. When things go wrong, as they occasionally do, quiet but firm interventions by skilled staff soon get pupils' learning back on track. In the very best lessons teachers successfully combine their precise knowledge of each pupil's next learning objective with their own sophisticated subject expertise well. This helps ensure pupils are always kept on the 'cusp' of the next learning challenges. Teachers provide pupils with regular, detailed and accurate verbal and written feedback that helps them know how well they are doing and what they need to do next to progress further still. In this way, most pupils soon discover that learning, and even writing, can be fun. Teaching still needs to do more to compensate for the gaps in pupils' knowledge of letter sounds, word-building and everyday vocabulary if they are to achieve their full potential or produce more extended writing. As they grow in confidence the pace of their learning gradually accelerates. Target setting and progress tracking arrangements are particularly well established in English and mathematics where they are helping to narrow the attainment gap still evident by the end of Year 6.

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The curriculum is well organised, imaginative and effective and helps support pupils' progress well. It is sufficiently flexible to be closely matched or adapted to the needs of individual pupils with very specific needs. This is required, for example, when preparing a pupil to gain experience of a mainstream placement. Alternatively it may be needed because of an individual's particularly low starting point or where pupils have significant gaps in their existing knowledge, understanding or skills. Learning programmes are kept under regular review and monitored to ensure a good balance between formal learning activities and those designed to encourage greater creativity. However, pupils do not have enough planned opportunities to develop their vocabulary, knowledge of letter sounds and writing skills in subjects other than English.

The school's leaders have created a secure yet aspirational ethos that supports the learning, enjoyment and personal development of all pupils very well. Care, guidance and support are particularly strong features of the school's work that help ensure pupils make the best of the opportunities it provides. The work of the learning mentor is particularly effective and involves working with staff and pupils to develop highly personalised interventions tailored to individual pupils' needs and sometimes those of their families. The school's effective work with families and a wide range of external agencies, such as the Youth Offending Team or Barnardo's, means that despite some pupils experiencing some challenging circumstances, they continue to make good progress.

*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	1
<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?

School leaders and managers, staff and the governing body share a strong commitment to working together effectively to secure year-on-year improvement. This is evident in every aspect of the life and work of the school. Rigorous and highly effective monitoring and self-evaluation procedures are well established and informed, for example, by a detailed interrogation of pupil progress data. In this case, having developed ambitious target setting and tracking arrangements, school leaders routinely hold each other and the staff to account in order to maintain an upward trend of progression for each and every child, without compromise. As a result, the quality of teaching is never less than good and leaders and managers at all levels continually strive to take whatever steps necessary to drive up its quality still further.

The governing body has the capacity to meet the school's needs and is influential in steering its strategic development. It conscientiously discharges its statutory duties and has helped ensure that policies and procedures are rigorously maintained and fit for purpose. As a result, there is a comprehensive awareness of safeguarding issues amongst

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all staff and recommended good practice is adopted in all elements of safeguarding. The governing body also has a good first-hand knowledge and understanding of the school's work. It does not flinch when it needs to act decisively, either in providing support or challenge to the school's leaders, for example when helping them to resolve complex staffing issues.

The school has established highly positive and successful relationships with all groups of parents and carers, including those who have not previously had a good experience of other schools. In many cases the school staff go out of their way to actively support parents and carers and help them to complement the work of the school by becoming active partners in their child's education and personal development. Senior leaders and the learning mentor also play a particularly effective role managing communications and coordinating support for pupils and families with significant multi-agency involvement. The school places the promotion of equality of opportunity at the heart of its work and the high and ambitious aspirations it holds on behalf of all of its pupils are acted on consistently at all levels. Outcomes are rigorously monitored and demonstrate they are equally positive for different groups of pupils. The school itself is a cohesive community and effective partnering arrangements are in place to promote wider understanding of and engagement with members of religious and ethnic groups beyond the school's immediate community.

*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	1
<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>

**Views of parents and carers**

The parents and carers who returned questionnaires were almost always fully supportive of the school's provision and the outcomes that it achieves. One response from a relatively new parent or carer felt the school could still do more to help them support their child's learning, but was as positive as the rest in all other respects. The inspector concluded that

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relationships with parents and carers are overwhelmingly purposeful and constructive, and has reflected these views throughout the report.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Eslington 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 inspector received 18 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 34 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	15	83	3	17	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	17	94	1	6	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	16	89	2	11	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	15	83	2	11	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	16	89	2	11	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	17	94	0	0	1	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	17	94	1	6	0	0	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)	16	89	1	6	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	17	94	1	6	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	18	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	17	94	1	6	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	18	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	17	94	1	6	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 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](http://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"><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 pupils' 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.**



31 March 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Eslington Primary School, Gateshead NE8 2EP**

Thank you for the welcome you gave me when I came to inspect your school.

This is what I found out.

- Your school gives you a good education and is helping you to achieve well and to develop into successful learners.
- You enjoy going to your school and feel extremely safe there because of the outstanding care and support you get there.
- Your teachers work really hard to make your lessons interesting and very well matched to your learning targets.
- You help yourselves to learn best when you behave well and work hard in lessons.
- You are learning to get on with other people and manage your own feelings and behaviour well.
- The headteacher and those who work with her to run the school are always trying to improve the school to give you the very best education they can.

I have asked the school to make sure they give you more opportunities to develop your skills as writers and to help you build up the vocabulary you need to help you show just how much you already know and understand.

Yours sincerely

John Farrow

Lead inspector

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