

# Layfield Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	111624
<b>Local authority</b>	Stockton-on-Tees
<b>Inspection number</b>	378326
<b>Inspection dates</b>	12–13 October 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Shearsmith

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>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	159
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Andrew Hogg
<b>Headteacher</b>	Helen Owen
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 June 2009
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed teaching and learning in 15 lessons, taught by seven teachers. They held discussions with groups of pupils, parents and carers, members of the governing body and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at policies, development planning, data related to the tracking of pupils' progress, senior leaders' monitoring of teaching and learning, safeguarding documents, minutes of the governing body meetings and pupils' work. Information from 55 questionnaires from parents and carers, together with those from pupils and staff were analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The progress of pupils at Key Stage 1.
- How well leaders at all levels monitor and evaluate the school's performance.
- How the school promotes good attendance.
- How well the school uses assessment to ensure all pupils' needs are met in lessons.

## Information about the school

The school is a smaller than average-sized primary school. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average and very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well below average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. Since the time of the previous inspection, the school has undergone a number of staffing changes, including the appointment of a new headteacher. The school has the Eco-Bronze Status, Healthy School status, and the Activemark award. There is also a Children's Centre on site which is subject to a separate inspection.

**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 school which provides a warm and welcoming environment. The headteacher has made a good start by identifying areas to improve and putting in place a range of strategies to improve the school. Her drive and enthusiasm are ensuring that improvements are rapid and focus on improving pupils' outcomes. She is well-supported by a skilful leadership team and an enthusiastic team of teachers who are keen to further improve the school.

Pupils make good progress overall from broadly average starting points. Their achievement by the end of Year 6 is good as they attain above-average levels and, in 2011, high levels. The rate of progress overall has steadily improved over the last three years. Most pupils, including children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities also make good progress due to good intervention and support, particularly at Key Stage 2.

The quality of teaching is good. It is improving with examples of outstanding practice in each key stage. Teachers plan lessons that interest pupils and involve them actively in their learning. In most lessons, tasks are matched appropriately to the differing abilities of learners, although there is not always sufficient challenge to take pupils to the next level in their learning or to enable them to be independent. Pupils work well because tasks are clearly explained. However, they are not always given enough information to know exactly what they have to do to improve their learning. The use of marking to identify for pupils their next steps is also inconsistent. The curriculum is enriched well by first-hand opportunities for visits and visitors to the school that contribute to pupils' enjoyment of school. Pupils behave well in and around school and show respect towards one another.

Through accurate self-evaluation, leaders and the members of the governing body understand well the school's main strengths and areas for development. This has resulted in successful action taken to improve standards at Key Stage 2 and to significantly improve attendance, with plans in place to secure further improvements. There is a united drive to support school developments and this ensures the school has good capacity for further improvement. Community cohesion is only satisfactory as there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to understand their own and other cultures.

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

- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching and learning to be consistently at least good by:
  - improving marking and feedback to ensure that pupils know exactly what to do to improve and are then given time to effect improvements
  - improving the use of success criteria in lessons to ensure pupils are appropriately challenged
  - increasing opportunities for pupils to learn independently.
- Improve pupils' understanding of their own and other cultures by:
  - giving pupils more first-hand cultural experiences
  - providing them with access to more national and international experiences.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

<b>2</b>
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Pupils are enthusiastic learners. Their positive attitudes towards learning and their good behaviour have a positive impact on their achievement. Pupils' current work confirms that they are making good progress from their average starting points on entry to the school. Attainment in the current Year 6 is continuing to improve; a literacy lesson on autobiography writing was outstanding with high standards evident in pupils' writing. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make the same good progress as that of their peers. As a result, pupils' achievement over time is good. Pupils feel safe, secure and valued. They have a good appreciation of what it means to live a healthy life. They enjoy physical education lessons and a number take part in the good variety of after-school clubs provided at the school. Pupils contribute well to their school community, being involved for example, in caring for the youngest children and helping the school to make decisions through the school council. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural experiences are good. In Year 1, pupils are fascinated as they discover more about the world around them and spirituality is strong. Above-average basic skills, improving attendance and sensible, caring attitudes to learning and each other, prepare pupils well for the next stage of their education.

### *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>	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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</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

<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>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers have good classroom management skills and their knowledge and understanding of the subjects taught are good. Teachers' lesson-planning is conscientious and carefully shows how the needs of different groups are to be met. Although clear success criteria are consistently shared with pupils, they are not used sufficiently well to challenge pupils' learning. Pupils are also not given sufficient opportunities to learn independently and assess their own learning and improve their work. Marking and feedback to pupils is inconsistent across the school; in outstanding lessons, pupils are given clear guidance and time to improve. The best lessons are structured to promote independent learning and provide appropriate challenges for all pupils and the effective use of success criteria. An information and communication technology (ICT) lesson, about creating a bedroom and then costing it out, enabled pupils to make outstanding progress in their learning.

The good curriculum provides pupils with many opportunities to extend their learning experiences through a wide range of visits and visitors to the school. Teachers make appropriate links between different subjects of the curriculum and this is contributing to the year-on-year improvement in pupils' attainment. The good quality of care, guidance and support ensures that pupils feel safe, work and play together very harmoniously and have strong moral values. Secure links with outside agencies ensure that additional help is available for pupils who may need it. Attendance has improved significantly due to a range of strategies, including an effective reward system. However, parents and carers are not always supportive in terms of ensuring that pupils do not have extended periods out of school. There is good support for pupils moving classes and on to secondary schooling with strong links with a range of partners to support pupils' on-going learning and well-being.

*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>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides strong leadership and a clear direction for school improvement. The leadership team is effective and there is a strong sense of purpose to bring about further improvements. Actions already taken by the headteacher are bringing about improvements showing a good capacity to improve.

Systems for tracking pupils’ progress are used well to ensure that those pupils at risk of underachievement are identified and appropriate actions put in place. The school promotes equal opportunities well and its procedures for tackling all forms of discrimination are effective.

Members of the governing body are regular visitors to the school and, therefore, understand its strengths and main priorities for improvement. They are highly-supportive of the school and evaluate the impact of actions taken by leaders to improve learning and progress. Procedures for safeguarding are satisfactory with due regard given to pupils’ security and well-being. The headteacher is strengthening this aspect of the school’s work. Although the school knows itself well, community cohesion is only satisfactory as pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to experience different aspects of their own and other cultures. The school engages well with parents and carers through a growing range of strategies. The school is extending its range of partners further to support pupils’ learning beyond the classroom with the headteacher putting a strong emphasis on promoting the school in the wider community.

*These are the grades for the 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>2</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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Teaching and learning are good in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children enter the nursery with broadly average skills for their age. They make good progress in all areas of their learning due to the good provision both in and out of the classroom. Reception children are part of a Year1 class and additional provision is made to ensure they have access to outdoor provision and child-initiated learning. Good induction procedures, that fully involve parents and carers, ensure that children enter the school happily and settle exceptionally quickly. Children show a very good understanding of the needs of others and how to contribute to their own safety. Good use is made of the outdoor area with a good balance between those activities led by adults and those chosen by the children themselves. Good leadership ensures that children’s progress is carefully observed and recorded, which enables staff to plan interesting tasks which are well-matched to children’s needs and interests. Occasionally, children are not sufficiently challenged to accelerate their progress

when initiating their own learning. Children are well cared for and in a rich, safe and warm environment that promotes children’s well-being and good progress.

*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 in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

**Views of parents and carers**

The response rate from parents and carers to the questionnaire was much smaller than the national average for primary schools. Those who did respond were generally positive about the work of the school in most aspects. The inspection evidence endorses these positive views. Inspectors investigated all concerns expressed by parents and carers and found that the school had addressed or was in the process of addressing any issues particularly, where parents and carers were concerned about homework.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Layfield 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 159 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	33	60	21	38	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	28	51	26	47	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	16	29	36	65	0	0	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	19	35	29	53	2	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	25	45	25	45	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	18	33	31	56	2	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	23	42	29	53	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)	19	35	26	47	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	18	33	31	56	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	15	27	31	56	1	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	18	33	30	55	2	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	17	31	30	55	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	24	44	27	49	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 2010 to 08 April 2011 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 2010/11 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**



14 October 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Layfield Primary School, Yarm, TS15 9TF**

Thank you for being so friendly and helpful when we inspected your school. We enjoyed the time we spent with you and were pleased to see how well you behave.

Your school is good and provides you with a good range of interesting experiences that enable you to make good progress in your learning. Adults care for you well and you told us this makes you feel safe in school.

We have asked your headteacher and the people who work with her, to do the following things to make your school even better:

- improve the way teachers mark your work so that you understand the next steps in your learning
- improve the quality of teaching and learning giving more opportunities for all of you to work independently and providing you with more challenge in your work
- improve your understanding of a range of other cultures and cultural differences.

You can all help by continuing to work as hard as you can and attending school regularly. Thank you for helping with this inspection.

Yours sincerely,

David Shearsmith  
Lead inspector

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