



# Ox Close Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 114091  
**LEA** Durham  
**Inspection number** 279309  
**Inspection dates** 10 January 2006 to 11 January 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mrs Christine Graham

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Ox Close Crescent
<b>School category</b>	Community		Spennymoor
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		County Durham, DL16 6RU
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01388 814860
<b>Number on roll</b>	236	<b>Fax number</b>	01388 810757
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs Pam Sneath
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	1 June 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Joy Frost

<b>Age group</b> 4 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 10 January 2006 - 11 January 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 279309
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector.

## **Description of the school**

Ox Close Primary School is in Spennymoor County Durham. It is of average size and is very popular with parents. The school is oversubscribed and has a waiting list. Few pupils leave the school before the end of Key Stage 2. Most pupils are from white British backgrounds and the number of pupils eligible for free school meals is very low. The school does not have a nursery but works very closely with the nursery school on the same site. Children enter nursery with attainment in line with national averages. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is relatively high and has risen significantly since the last inspection. This is due to more effective identification of pupils who may need additional help and also because the school is seen as a place where pupils receive good support. The school has attained Artsmark Gold, Activemark Gold, The Healthy Schools Award, Basic Skills Awards, Investors in People and very recent awards which recognise the good quality of information and communication technology ICT.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Ox Close Primary School is a good school. All children make good progress and the support given to pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is particularly good. Standards are above national averages by the end of Key Stage 2 and are continuing to rise. The progress made by more able pupils is sometimes not as good as it could be because there are too few opportunities to develop learning skills and the quality of marking does not always give sufficient advice on how to improve. The school knows it must involve learners more in target setting and assessment. The headteacher and senior leadership team provide effective leadership. The impact of their work can be seen in the much improved standards and progress of pupils during recent years and also in the good range of learning opportunities provided. This is a school that knows itself well. Self-evaluation processes are good and the school has a clear view of what has been achieved and what needs to be improved. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress because of the very good links made with the neighbouring nursery and the good teaching they receive in school. Behaviour is good and pupils enjoy their education. Capacity for further improvement is good. The school provides good value for money.

not applicable

### What the school should do to improve further

- Increase pupil involvement in self-assessment and target setting.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Achievement and standards are good. Children start school with standards in line with national expectations. The school has good links with the neighbouring nursery school and builds well on the work done there. Pupils make good progress in the reception classes due to good teaching and very effective use of support staff. Learning is exciting and well matched to the needs of individual pupils. Most enter Year 1 having achieved the Early Learning Goals. The mixed Reception/Year 1 class makes good provision for those pupils who are not yet ready for more formal teaching and learning. Pupils who may need extra help are identified at an early stage and receive appropriate and effective support from school staff and outside agencies.

Pupils in Key Stage 1 make satisfactory and sometimes good progress. Teachers plan interesting and exciting activities and support staff are effectively deployed to provide help where it is most needed. The support given to pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is especially good and as a result many of these pupils attain high standards as they move through the school. Guidance on improving work is not quite as detailed for the more able. As a result, the number of pupils attaining higher levels in assessments at the age of 7 is relatively low in mathematics and writing.

Attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 is good and has improved greatly in recent years. In 2005, pupils exceeded the targets set for them. Results in national tests at the age of 11 are very high in science and good in mathematics and English. There are significantly less Level 5s achieved in English than in other subjects. All pupils make good progress by the age of 11.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Personal development and well-being are good with some strong features. Pupils are polite, well mannered and helpful. The school expects pupils to behave well. As a result, relationships between all members of the school community are good. Pupils have drawn up their own code of conduct for behaviour in the playground. This, coupled with the 'Buddy' system, means that bullying is rare and pupils show consideration for the needs of others. As they move through the school, pupils acquire strong moral and social values. Attendance is good. There is no unauthorised absence. Pupils take very good care of the building and appreciate the resources they are given.

Pupils are encouraged to adopt healthy attitudes. Very good work has been done with parents to ensure that more children benefit from the meals that are offered. This has resulted in many more children staying for school lunch. There are a wide range of sporting activities on offer. These are sometimes offered as part of the taught curriculum and sometimes as extra-curricular clubs. There are a number of planned opportunities throughout the day when pupils exercise.

There are good links with the local community. Both churches in the area work with the school to deliver religious and spiritual teaching. The school fundraises for charities and raises funds to support school events. The school council has made some well considered decisions about improvements to the school grounds.

There are currently too few opportunities for children to be involved in decision making in class and to develop independent learning skills. As yet, most children are not sufficiently involved in evaluating for themselves the progress they have made and the areas they need to improve.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching is good and has improved considerably in recent years. The impact of this good teaching can be seen in the much improved achievement of pupils. In the best lessons, teaching is exciting and pupils are given work and support which are accurately matched to their needs. In these lessons, pupils are given ample opportunities to develop new skills and extend their thinking. Well targeted questions challenge pupils and help teachers know what has been learnt. Teachers give pupils opportunities to extend their thinking and detailed marking tells them how to further improve. Pupils are given opportunities to evaluate and improve their work before it is marked.

The school has rightly identified a need to improve the quality of learning. As a result of their efforts, good early work has resulted in a much more cohesive curriculum which allows pupils to understand the links between subjects. Pupils enjoy this way of working and thus work hard.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good throughout the school. It meets the needs of all groups of learners. ICT is a particular strength; however, further resources are needed in other areas to support learning. The school website enhances the curriculum and offers opportunities for parents to learn with their children at home. The curriculum is considerably enriched by the many clubs and extra-curricular activities available and by the very good range of subjects offered in school. These include sporting activities, work in the arts and the very good opportunities for pupils to learn musical instruments. The curriculum is becoming more creative with good links between subjects. In some classes, work is based on a novel which extends language skills across many subjects and helps to make the work more interesting, especially for boys.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Communication is a strength of the school. Parents know what is expected of their children. They are expected to work in partnership with the school and are kept fully informed about all aspects of school life. The school provides good support for all pupils and additional support where it is needed. Pupils know that home and school are working together.

Child Protection arrangements are good as are systems for ensuring pupils are safe and happy at lunchtimes and playtimes. These are frequently adjusted in response to pupils' concerns. Pupils are given appropriate support and guidance which helps them to not only attain high standards in their work but also develop as thoughtful human beings. Pupils report that they would like to be more involved in target setting.

A very high number of parental questionnaires were returned. These show that parents are very pleased with the quality of education their children receive and that they acknowledge the hard work of the headteacher and staff.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership is good with some outstanding features, notably the leadership of the headteacher. She provides outstanding leadership which has resulted in high standards and good provision. Clear policies and guidelines ensure that all members of the school community understand and maintain her standards. She is well supported by the effective deputy headteacher. Together with the senior teachers, they have established secure leadership at all levels. Expectations are communicated clearly and school

self-evaluation is accurate and very thorough. The school knows its strengths and areas for development. Under the leadership of the headteacher, the school has built on existing good practice and has added considerable value to the development of each child.

Opportunities for staff development are good. Many staff have leadership roles and are given adequate opportunities to develop the skills needed to be effective in their work. Coordinators have an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses of their subjects and work well with all staff to bring about further improvement. The school has successfully developed the potential of all staff and is well placed to deal with periods of change.

The governing body has recently undergone considerable change with the appointment of several new governors. Training for new governors is good and they are provided with a mentor to support them during their early time in post. Governors regularly visit school and are fully involved in the decision making processes. However, they do not as yet monitor the impact of their decisions on pupil attainment. Although they offer good support to staff, they do not yet have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for development.

Capacity for further improvement is good. The school provides good value for money.

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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	NA

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

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Mrs Joy Frost

Ox Close Primary School

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DL16 6RU

12 January 2006

Dear Children

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. We really enjoyed our visit.

Your parents told us that you attend a good school and we agree with them. Children at your school achieve very good results. Your teachers teach you very well and make you work hard. They also give you lots of opportunities to try new things in music and art which I know you enjoy. You know a great deal about how to stay healthy and safe and you get lots of exercise which helps to keep you fit. Your school looks after you very well and provides lots of support at times when you might need a little extra help. Your behaviour is very good and you show a lot of care and consideration for others. You look after your school very well and appreciate all the things the teachers do for you. You told us you are very proud of your school and we agree with you. It is a school to be proud of.

Mrs Frost is a very good headteacher. She works hard to make sure you learn as much as possible. Together with the other teachers, she tries to make your learning interesting and fun. Some of you told us that the lessons you enjoy most are those when you can decide how to organise your work. You enjoy lessons where work is practical and you can see how well you are learning. Mrs Frost is going to ask your teachers to give you more lessons like that. You also said you would like to be more involved in setting your own targets. We think that is a good idea and I'm sure that will happen soon.

We did notice that some of you always waited for teachers to tell you what was wrong with your work and how to improve. We think you should be checking your work yourselves and improving it before the teacher marks it. Some of you are also a little lazy and make careless mistakes in your work, for instance, forgetting to use capital letters. We know you can do better than this and would like you to try a little harder to get everything right.

Thank you for talking to us and helping us to find out about your school.

Best Wishes

Mrs C E Graham