

East Boldon Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108692
Local Authority	South Tyneside
Inspection number	309769
Inspection dates	6–7 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Nigel Cromeey-Hawke

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	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	232
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Norma Robson
Headteacher	Mrs Margaret Parker
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2004
School address	North Lane East Boldon Tyne and Wear NE36 0DL
Telephone number	0191 5362030
Fax number	0191 5196601

Age group	7–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

East Boldon is an average sized junior school in a semi-rural setting with lower than average social deprivation. The majority of the pupils are of White British heritage. Nearly all pupils have English as their first language. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and statements of educational need is broadly in line with the national average and the proportion of students receiving free school meals is below average. Attendance is high and the school population is very stable. The headteacher has been in post for two years. The school has the Healthy School Standard and Sports Activemark award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school with outstanding features in the areas of standards, curriculum and pupils' personal development and well-being.

Pupils enter the school with knowledge, understanding and skills that are well above those typical of their age. This good start is built upon so that by the time they leave, standards are well above average. Their achievement is good. This is because of the very positive attitudes of pupils to their learning, the excellent curriculum and the good teaching within the school. There is an appropriate focus upon key literacy and numeracy skills which pupils use well in other subjects. Well planned interventions and support from other adults ensure that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve highly in English and mathematics in national tests. Significant work since the last inspection has resulted in information and communication technology (ICT) playing a major part in learning across the curriculum. Whilst standards are high, the progress made by all pupils does not quite reach the same heights. The school has developed assessment and tracking systems and has abundant data available but occasionally does not use this as effectively as it might to plan challenging work. As a result, some pupils do not achieve as highly as they could.

Teaching is good, especially within English, maths and science but more varied in other subjects. Lively French lessons across the whole school are generating interest in languages and other cultures while teaching in music and PE is a major contributor to the pupils' personal development and well-being. In some lessons however, the consolidation and extension of learning for the more able pupils, lacks rigour. Pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour are very good and they respond enthusiastically to their learning. An outstanding curriculum provides them with a wealth of learning opportunities that stimulates their interest and raises their understanding of the richness and diversity of the modern world. Pupils obviously enjoy school, feel safe and know how to be healthy. They use every opportunity to play their part in the life of the school, even acting as 'Eco Wardens' to turn off unwanted lights. They are active in the community and confident that the knowledge and skills gained at school will serve them well in the future.

The leadership and management of the school are good. Since taking up post two years ago, the headteacher has moved the school forward, especially in relation to the curriculum and pupils' personal development and well-being. She has had to manage staffing reductions and, very well supported by her committed and able staff, has made sure there has been no drop in standards. Senior leaders and subject coordinators are becoming increasingly effective at managing their areas of responsibility, especially in English and mathematics. The school's own evaluation of its work is generally good, but at times it is insufficiently focused upon the teachers' success in providing the right level of challenge for able pupils. Governors are highly supportive of the school but also keen to keep it on its toes. They make regular visits to lessons and report their findings to the full governing body.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that all teachers use the data available to provide the right level of challenge in lessons, particularly for the more able pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards in the school are considerably higher than the national average and pupils achieve well. Pupils enter and leave the school with standards well above those typical for their age. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards are exceptionally high in English and consistently high in mathematics and science. Results in the national tests have been consistently above or well above average over recent years. Pupils' achievement is good. This is attributable to their very positive attitudes to learning, an excellent curriculum and good teaching. However, on occasions, progress could be more brisk for some pupils, for although there are good tracking and assessment systems in place, the data is not always used rigorously to plan challenging work. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make outstanding progress because of the excellent support they receive.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are outstanding. Their mature and thoughtful behaviour makes a major contribution to successful learning. They have very good relationships with one another and work well together in lessons. Pupils feel safe in school and say there is very little bullying. They rarely need guidance from staff on how to conduct themselves and act very responsibly in following every day routines. Year 6 pupils are 'paired' with Year 3 pupils and show a real awareness and consideration for the needs of others. Pupils say they enjoy coming to school because, 'teachers make lessons fun'. They appreciate the wide range of additional activities which add enjoyment to their learning. Attendance is well above the average. Pupils make a valuable contribution to the school community through the school council and Eco Wardens. They are involved in the wider community by participating in festivals and competitions. They have a very good understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and make healthy choices for eating. Given the high standards that pupils reach and their excellent personal skills, pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. At its best, good planning identifies progressively more challenging learning objectives using a variety of teaching techniques and learning activities that fully engage pupils. Behaviour is good and attitudes to learning very positive. Good questioning ensures pupils use prior learning to build upon their understanding, helped by skilful support from adults in the classroom. Teaching is lively and resources such as interactive whiteboards are used to make learning interesting. However, on some occasions, teaching lacks challenge and despite the outstanding curriculum some pupils do not develop sufficient independent learning skills. Assessment is used with particular effect in English, mathematics and science but is less well used in other subjects. In some lessons the consolidation and extension of learning fails to challenge more able pupils. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported and their achievement is excellent.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The outstanding curriculum motivates pupils and promotes their enjoyment of learning. A strong focus on using basic skills across the curriculum and the very effective use of the national strategies in English and mathematics help pupils achieve high standards by the end of Year 6. Teachers are skilled at modifying the curriculum to take account of individual needs, especially for vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. A wide range of clubs, activities and visits enrich the learning experience and extend opportunities to acquire new knowledge and skills. For example, visiting teachers and coaches considerably enhance provision in French, music and physical education for all pupils and particularly for the gifted and talented. The curriculum is very effective in providing opportunities for pupils to exercise responsibility and develop into confident learners. Innovations such as the Young Leaders Award encourage pupils to monitor an aspect of the school's work and influence its development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care guidance and support is good. Safeguarding and child protection procedures, risk assessments and health and safety checks are all fully in place. Pupils say they feel safe and cared for in school and the large majority of parents agree. There are good relationships at all levels and pupils are confident that any concerns they may have will be quickly addressed. The school has high expectations of behaviour and pupils respond well. Established routines and procedures contribute to a well ordered, safe and secure learning environment. Effective links with external agencies ensure vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive very good support. Pupils have clear targets for writing and mathematics, although some lack sufficient challenge. The very good marking in English contributes to the high standards and good progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. Since taking up post two years ago, the headteacher has introduced new practices, established challenging targets, taken difficult staffing decisions and built a cohesive staff team. As a result, pupils' personal development and the curriculum are outstanding and academic standards are well above the average. The headteacher monitors what is going on in the school. Assessment and pupil tracking systems are in place and yield abundant data. However, the school does not yet make best use of information to plan challenging work. The school improvement plan, developed by all the staff, correctly identifies priorities and includes helpful success criteria relating to specific objectives. Progress in the use of ICT, an area for development in the last inspection, has been good. Subject leadership has been restructured and coordinators are taking on increasing responsibility for the management of their responsibilities. Governors have a good understanding of the strengths and needs of the school and have links to subject areas for the purposes of support and challenge. Some parental concerns about the quality of the leadership and management have been judged to be unfounded. The school is currently working to improve relations with parents.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

8 May 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of East Boldon Junior School, South Tyneside, NE36 0DL

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave me and my fellow inspector when we visited your school. You were very friendly, polite and enthusiastic about what you do. You told us a lot of interesting things about your school and you are clearly very proud of it. We spent a lot of time finding out how you learn in your lessons, looking at your work and talking to your teachers and the headteacher. We think that East Boldon Junior School is a good school, with some outstanding features.

These are the main things strengths that we found:

- Standards in national tests are very high in mathematics and science and especially so in English. Well done.
- The curriculum is outstanding in the range and variety of what you are able to learn.
- Your own personal development is outstanding. You all have very positive attitudes to learning and your relationships with others is very good.
- The curriculum and the good teaching and care you receive at the school.
- The school is well led and managed by your headteacher, staff and governors.

We have asked the school to use the information they have about your progress to plan even harder work so that you achieve the very best you can. You can help by telling your teachers how you learn best and if you have any difficulties. You can also help by continuing to attend school every day, behaving well and working hard, as you do at the moment.

Yours sincerely

Nigel Cromey-Hawke

Lead inspector