

# Easington Colliery Primary School

## Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 114210         |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | Durham         |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 338315         |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>        | 9–10 June 2010 |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Alison Thomson |

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>                 | 4–11   |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 422  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body   |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Mr D Raine   |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Mr H Weightman   |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | Not previously inspected                                     |
| <b>School address</b>                      | Whickham Street<br>Easington Colliery<br>Peterlee<br>SR8 3DJ |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 0191 5270293   |
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 20 teachers and 24 lessons, and held meetings with the governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and analysed 101 questionnaires from parents and carers, 103 from pupils and 22 from staff. The team also looked at documents and policies including those relating to the safeguarding of pupils, all the data the school had collected about the pupils' progress and at the school's records of its monitoring of the quality of teaching.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- Current attainment and progress, especially in Key Stage 2.
- How effectively teachers use assessment information to help pupils to improve their work in lessons, and to what extent pupils are involved in checking their own learning.
- The effectiveness of the monitoring and evaluation by middle leaders.

## Information about the school

This is a much larger than average primary school. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is higher than average. Almost all pupils are White British and speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is much higher than average, although the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is average. The school has many awards including National Healthy School Status and the International School Award. Separate childcare provision shares the school site, but this is not managed by the governing body and 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?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

### Main findings

Easington Colliery Primary School is providing a satisfactory and improving standard of education. This is done in a very caring environment that results in many aspects of the pupils' personal development being good. Parents and carers, pupils and staff are very positive about all aspects of the school. Typical comments from parents and carers are, 'The school has a friendly, happy environment' and, 'My son loves coming to school, he has actually said that it is super there.'

Following a period when standards declined there have been many improvements in the last year. As a result, there have been gains in pupils' achievement and in their personal development. The standards that pupils attain at the end of Year 6 have improved significantly and are now broadly in line with the national average. This represents satisfactory progress across the school. Some groups of pupils, who were previously underachieving, such as older pupils, now make satisfactory progress in line with their peers. The curriculum is good, being more creative with themes such as 'Pirates' and 'Stig of the Dump'. These have stimulated the pupils' interests well and the impact is seen in their good behaviour, eagerness to learn and improved confidence.

Teaching is satisfactory. Some teaching is good, but there is not enough of it. The good teaching has good pace, activities well matched to individual pupils' needs and learning is checked well. However, this practice is not consistent. In particular, there are not clear enough success criteria by which learning can be gauged. In addition, pupils, particularly the most able, are not always challenged enough or given enough opportunities to assess for themselves how well they are doing.

The headteacher and deputy headteacher have the full confidence of the staff, pupils and the vast majority of parents and carers. The school is committed to raising standards and other outcomes for pupils, and self-evaluation is mainly accurate. Middle leaders play a valuable part in school improvement, but their effectiveness is not monitored and evaluated well enough. Likewise, the management of teaching and learning lacks a systematic approach to tackling the areas for development in teaching. The determination, drive and commitment of all staff, along with the improvements already made, mean that the capacity for further improvement is satisfactory.

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

- Ensure all teaching is good or better to accelerate pupils' progress by:
  - increasing the level of expectation and challenge in lessons, particularly of the most able pupils

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- introducing basic literacy and numeracy skills into as many lessons as possible
- providing clear success criteria so that the learning of individual pupils can be checked easily
- involving pupils more in assessing how well they are doing so that they can always tell if they are doing 'a good job'.
- Further raise attainment through more rigorous and effective monitoring and evaluation, which:
  - examines the effectiveness of middle leaders
  - has a more systematic method of following up on areas for development in the quality of teaching.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****3**

Pupils enjoy school. This was seen to very good effect during an assembly where they most eagerly awaited to see which house had gained most points over the previous month. Pupils are polite, confident and considerate of each other, leading to their good spiritual, moral and social development. They have a good understanding of other cultures through the school's international status. They support each other well in lessons and also through roles such as mentors where they look after younger children. They play a large part in the wider community which values their involvement, for example with the local church. Pupils accurately rate behaviour as good and say that any misbehaviour is dealt with well. Their attendance has improved and is now average. This, along with their sound basic skills, contributes to their satisfactory preparation for their future economic well-being. Pupils have a strong voice through the enthusiastic school committee and are proud of their involvement in initiatives such as 'new games' for the playground. When asked what they would change about the school, one pupil replied, 'I can't think that I would want to change anything.'

Inspection evidence confirmed that, while learning and progress are satisfactory overall, there are some lessons where it is better than this. For example, in a Year 6 lesson on forces, pupils eagerly timed the speed of different boats they had made and showed good understanding of terms such as upthrust and gravity. Pupils were seen collaborating particularly well in a Year 2 mathematics lesson where they worked together to identify patterns and relationships using sets of coins. However, in lessons where learning and progress are not so good, it is not always clear to some children what it is they should be learning. In addition, some pupils find the work easy and finish it very early. In the majority of lessons seen the attainment of the children was judged to be broadly average. Previous underperformance in some areas, such as in Key Stage 2, has been addressed. The learning and progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with their peers, due to their good support in lessons and in small group sessions.

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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>3</b> |
| Taking into account:  |          |
| Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>   | 3        |
| The quality of pupils' learning and their progress  | 3        |
| The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress                      | 3        |
| <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> |
| <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>3</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?

Strengths of teaching include good relationships, subject knowledge and behaviour management with the result that pupils make satisfactory and increasingly good progress with their learning. There are pockets of good practice to share across the school to raise the quality of teaching and rate of pupils' progress. Some teachers focus too much on their delivery, rather than on pupils' learning, not checking well enough how individual pupils are progressing. Teaching assistants are generally well directed and provide effective support for pupils with behaviour difficulties, and additional learning needs, so they make satisfactory progress, relative to their lower starting points. There is some informative marking with indicators for improvement that help pupils to progress and to meet their targets, although this is not consistent across subjects or across the different year groups.

There has been good development of the curriculum. Planning increasingly identifies important links between different subjects and how learning in one subject contributes to progress in others. There is recognition that more opportunities can be created to promote literacy and numeracy skills across the whole curriculum. The curriculum is

<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.

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securely adapted to meet the needs of those, who benefit from one-to-one or small group support. There are an increasing number of good enrichment activities and the pupils talked enthusiastically about their residential visits and of learning about other cultures from visitors to the school.

Pastoral care and support for pupils and their families are particularly good. This is helped greatly by the work of the Family Liaison Officer who evaluates the effectiveness of her work well. Staff know their pupils well and the school works successfully to overcome individual barriers to learning so that pupils, particularly those whose circumstances have made them most vulnerable are enabled to learn. If pupils are troubled they have immediate access to on-site, confidential counselling in the 'Place2Be'. There is a wide range of external expertise available such as behaviour support and speech and language therapy when needed. Monitoring of welfare-related aspects including attendance and behaviour is good and is helping to secure improvements.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>The quality of teaching</b>   | <b>3</b> |
| Taking into account:<br>The use of assessment to support learning  | 3        |
| <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 is dedicated and passionate about the school. He is supported very well by the deputy headteacher and increasingly so by middle leaders. Staff commitment to making pupils' time in school as enjoyable as possible has contributed to the changes to the curriculum. These changes are impacting well on the pupils' personal development and, increasingly so, on their achievement. The self-evaluation of teaching tends, at times, to be overgenerous because it does not take sufficient account of pupils' learning and the use of assessment to promote it.

Parents and carers agree strongly that the school takes account of their views and provides them with good help to support their children's learning, for example through family workshops. Safeguarding procedures are good, with clear policies and secure risk-assessment systems. The promotion of community cohesion is good. Within school, locally and internationally it is particularly good, but links with schools of a different socio-economic and/or cultural make-up in the United Kingdom are at an early stage of development. There is a wide range of very effective partnership involvement, including the work with other local schools on the introduction of a more creative curriculum. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory because, although pupils' attainment is rising, more able pupils, in particular, are not always provided with challenging enough work.

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Pupils have satisfactory understanding of discrimination as the school does not tolerate discrimination at all. Governors support and challenge the school well, but at present they are not sufficiently involved in evaluating their own performance. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>  | <b>3</b> |
| Taking into account:<br>The leadership and management of teaching and learning   | 3        |
| <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>3</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>3</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>3</b> |

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children get off to a sound start in the Reception class. They settle in quickly and are keen to learn. Children enjoy their learning, play together well and are well behaved. Many children join with the expected skills for their age, but a significant number have less well developed language and literary skills. Overall they make satisfactory progress and at the end of Reception reach the levels expected for their age in most areas of learning, although their levels of attainment remain below what is expected in communication, language and literacy, especially in reading. However, they are given good real life experiences to develop their mathematical skills and were seen enjoying 'catching fish' to help them practise subtraction.

Adults provide well for children's welfare. There are well-established routines to promote their personal and social development, such as tidying up and hand washing. There is a good balance between activities chosen by children and those led by adults. Adults generally support children well and their explanations are clear. Children's physical development is good as the school makes good use of the outside space available. Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are satisfactory. Adults work well together as a team and regularly assess what the children know,



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understand and can do. Some of these assessments have, in the past, been over-optimistic.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>                   | <b>3</b> |
| Taking into account:   |          |
| Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage                          | 3        |
| The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage                       | 3        |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 3        |

## Views of parents and carers

About one quarter of the parents and carers returned the questionnaire. They were overwhelmingly positive about all aspects of the school's work. For example, most felt that the school keeps their children safe and takes account of their suggestions and concerns. In addition, most felt that the school helps them to support their child's learning. This was something that the inspectors felt the school was doing particularly well.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Easington Colliery 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 101 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 422 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements  | Strongly Agree |    | Agree |    | Disagree |   | Strongly disagree |   |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|---|-------------------|---|
|   | Total          | %  | Total | %  | Total    | % | Total             | % |
| My child enjoys school  | 52             | 51 | 34    | 34 | 6        | 6 | 1                 | 1 |
| The school keeps my child safe  | 61             | 60 | 30    | 30 | 2        | 2 | 2                 | 2 |
| The school informs me about my child's progress   | 59             | 58 | 32    | 32 | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school   | 64             | 63 | 26    | 26 | 2        | 2 | 2                 | 2 |
| The teaching is good at this school   | 66             | 65 | 27    | 27 | 2        | 2 | 1                 | 1 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning  | 59             | 58 | 34    | 34 | 2        | 2 | 1                 | 1 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle   | 45             | 45 | 44    | 44 | 4        | 4 | 1                 | 1 |
| 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) | 46             | 46 | 41    | 41 | 2        | 2 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs  | 54             | 53 | 37    | 37 | 3        | 3 | 1                 | 1 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour  | 51             | 50 | 35    | 35 | 4        | 4 | 3                 | 3 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns   | 51             | 50 | 40    | 40 | 4        | 4 | 1                 | 1 |
| The school is led and managed effectively   | 63             | 62 | 27    | 27 | 2        | 2 | 0                 | 0 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school   | 65             | 64 | 24    | 24 | 3        | 3 | 3                 | 3 |

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 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      | 51  | 45   | 0            | 4          |
| Primary schools      | 6   | 41   | 42           | 10         |
| Secondary schools    | 8   | 34   | 44           | 14         |
| Sixth forms          | 10  | 37   | 50           | 3          |
| Special schools      | 32  | 38   | 25           | 5          |
| Pupil referral units | 12  | 43   | 31           | 14         |
| All schools          | 9   | 40   | 40           | 10         |

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 to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 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. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## 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 pupil's 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.**



Dear Pupils

Inspection of Easington Colliery Primary School, Peterlee, SR8 3DJ

Thank you for welcoming the inspectors to your school recently. We enjoyed talking with you, looking at your work and seeing how well you learn in class. We worked very closely with your headteacher and deputy headteacher and also spent time talking to your teachers and governors and looking at your work.

Yours is a school that is getting better. It is a very happy environment where most of you behave very well and enjoy being there. You develop well and achieve satisfactory results in your work. You told us that you feel very safe in school and that the adults in school care about you a great deal. We agree with you that they look after you particularly well. Your parents and carers told us that they are very happy with all aspects of the school and that they appreciate the help that the school gives them to help you with your learning. Your headteacher, teachers and governors work together well as a team to keep improving the school. We have asked your headteacher and teachers to help you achieve even more highly by:

- giving you work that you really have to think about
- bringing literacy and numeracy work into as many lessons as possible
- checking more often during lessons how well you are learning
- always making it clear to you what it is that you should be able to do in lessons so that you can tell if you are doing a good job
- making sure that when other adults are observing your lessons they look more closely at what you are learning.

You can help by telling your teacher if it is unclear to you if you are doing a good job with each of your activities.

We would like to wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Alison Thomson

Lead inspector

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