

New Hartley First School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122224
Local Authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	359192
Inspection dates	28–29 September 2010
Reporting inspector	Barbara Hudson

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	3–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	130
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Miss Mary Nichols
Headteacher	Mr Anthony Wright
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 10 lessons taught by six teachers. An inspector held meetings with two groups of pupils, the Chair and vice-chair of the Governing Body, staff and parents and carers. They observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' books and documentation related to safeguarding, pupils' attainment, teachers' assessments and development planning. Inspectors analysed 40 completed parents' and carers' questionnaires as well as completed questionnaires from pupils and staff.

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

- How high Years 3 and 4 pupils' attainment is and how well they progress.
- How well children in the Nursery and Reception classes achieve.
- Whether boys and girls make the same amount of progress across the whole school.
- How well the leadership team evaluates the work of the school.
- How well the school is addressing community cohesion.

Information about the school

New Hartley is small for a first school. Most of the pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The school has been awarded a number of national awards, including Financial Management in Schools Standard and Healthy schools.

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

New Hartley is a good school. Pupils are very happy and thrive in a very friendly purposeful community. Children make an excellent start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The quality of teaching here is outstanding and this enables children to make excellent progress. Children are provided with rich learning experiences, so that by the time they start Year 1 their skills are well above those expected for their age. In Key Stages 1 and 2, good teaching builds on pupils' excellent start. Pupils' progress is good and by the time they leave Year 4, they are consistently attaining significantly above that expected for their age, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics. Boys and girls make very similar amounts of progress even though girls usually attain slightly higher standards than boys. Lessons are characterised by the clarity of instructions and explanations, and work that is well matched to each pupil's ability. Teachers' marking of pupils' work in literacy and numeracy is excellent, but this high standard is not reflected in other subjects. Pupils appreciate the wide range of clubs, visits and visitors, that enhance their learning and which contributes to the school's good curriculum. Teachers, however, miss too many opportunities to provide pupils with high-quality, exciting, relevant tasks within which they can apply their literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology (ICT) skills across the curriculum. The good quality of care, guidance and support ensures that pupils feel safe, their attendance is high, and that they behave well and are very well looked after. Pupils work and play together very harmoniously and have strong moral values. Their cultural development is less strong.

The very effective headteacher has carefully led, managed and developed the staff and governing body teams so that the school is a harmonious and inclusive community in which every child and adult is valued. All staff and members of the governing body are involved in the school's self-evaluation process, which has led to a clear and very accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Leaders and teachers rigorously check pupils' performance. Where targets have not been met, decisive action is taken to remedy the situation. Leaders do not, however, effectively evaluate the progress of different groups of pupils. This means that they do not have a detailed knowledge of how well different groups of pupils achieve. Parents and carers are very supportive of the school. The staff work effectively to ensure that pupils are provided with equal opportunities to develop and progress as well as they can. The school promotes community cohesion well but does not effectively evaluate the impact of the school's work on pupils' attitudes.

The rigour and clarity of the school's self-evaluation and the subsequent actions that have been put into place to make improvements, have ensured that the school has made good progress since the last inspection. The school's plans for improvement, together with the determination and clear sense of purpose of staff and governors, ensure that the capacity for sustained improvement is good.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that pupils' progress in Key Stages 1 and 2 is outstanding rather than good, by:
 - providing more innovative opportunities for pupils to practise their literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology skills across the curriculum
 - using the excellent practice evident in the marking of pupils' literacy and numeracy work in other subjects
 - improving the school's analysis of pupils' progress so that leaders and managers are in a better position to identify and target which groups of pupils are making good rather than outstanding progress.
- Improve the school's evaluation of pupils' understanding of community cohesion and pupils' cultural development, by ensuring that there is a more formal system to evaluate the impact of the school's work on pupils' attitudes and values.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Having entered the Early Years Foundation Stage with broadly expected skills, pupils enjoy learning, make good progress and leave Year 4 with attainment that is significantly higher than expected for their age. This represents outstanding achievement. Pupils readily join in lessons and work hard for all staff. They listen carefully to instructions and explanations and persevere with their work until they have successfully completed the task. The vast majority of pupils answer questions thoughtfully. When they are provided with opportunities to work with a partner or in small groups they do so cooperatively and most consider another person's opinion. These very positive characteristics underpin the good progress that they make to attain high standards. The very good support provided for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, or who are more vulnerable than most, enables them to make good progress, with the vast majority reaching the expected level of attainment by the end of Year 4.

Pupils are happy, polite and well behaved so that lessons proceed purposefully and in a good atmosphere. They feel safe and secure and are confident that they can easily approach a member of staff if they have a problem or concern. Pupils of all ages get on extremely well together and willingly help around school. They enjoy contributing to decision making, particularly through the school council and take great pride in representing the school in sports and community events. Pupils show a good appreciation of the need for a healthy lifestyle and the importance of a balanced diet. Their outstanding basic skills, combined with their excellent attendance and punctuality, equip them exceedingly well for future learning and life. Pupils develop into thoughtful, socially adept and well-balanced individuals, with a strong sense of right and wrong.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	1
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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ 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 good in Key Stages 1 and 2. Lessons are purposeful, well planned and tasks are very well matched to the pupils' abilities. On more than one occasion, pupils were heard to say, 'I had to think hard to do that'. Class teachers work closely and very productively with other adults to support and challenge pupils. What pupils have to do is explained clearly and thoroughly. Pupils, however, have few opportunities to discuss new work in detail with a partner or small group in order to put forward their own ideas or ask questions. Nevertheless, both teachers and learning assistants are good at picking the most opportune time to ask a pupil a question to move their thinking and learning on. This is based on their good knowledge of individual pupil's prior learning. Teachers' marking of pupils' literacy work is excellent, because teachers clearly explain to pupils what they do well and how they can improve their work. Marking in pupils' numeracy books provide them with clear targets for improvement. This helps pupils to make good progress and attain consistently high standards in writing and mathematics. In other subjects, teachers' marking is restricted to identifying where things are correct or incorrect.

The good curriculum meets the needs of the pupils well. Teachers provide pupils with many opportunities to extend their learning experiences through a wide range of visits and visitors to the school. Pupils' sporting, artistic and musical development is enhanced in lessons and by the many before-school, lunchtime and after-school clubs. These are frequently run by specialists from a range of external providers. Teachers make

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appropriate links between different subjects of the curriculum, but these are not fully exploited to provide learning experiences where pupils can practise and further develop their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills.

Pupils feel that they are cared for well. Staff know pupils very well and go the extra mile to support those who are vulnerable or experiencing difficulties in their lives. Secure links with outside agencies ensure additional help is available for pupils who may need it. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is organised effectively. Procedures for ensuring pupils attend school regularly are excellent. Effective target-setting helps pupils make good progress. Well established and effective arrangements ensure that pupils move through the school and transfer to middle school smoothly at the end of Year 4.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher is excellent in promoting a shared ambition and determination that all pupils will have maximum benefit from their schooling. Over the last three years, he has successfully worked with all staff and the governing body to capitalise on their strengths, and to provide them with opportunities to further develop their skills and interests for the benefit of the pupils. Rigorous evaluation of the work of the school ensures that all staff and the governing body are clear about its strengths and areas for improvement. Successes are celebrated and leaders and managers, including members of the governing body, work very effectively together to ensure that improvements are continually made to enhance pupils' learning experiences. Rigorous performance management, including robust checks on the quality of teaching, have helped teachers to refine their practice. An excellent example is that last year, the teaching staff focused on improving the way they ask pupils questions and this is now a strength that was reflected throughout this inspection. Individual pupil's attainment and the degree to which they are on track to meet their targets, is very well monitored and evaluated.

The governing body provides strong support for leaders and is confident to challenge the school's performance. It has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school because of its active involvement in the evaluation of the school's work. The governors are prudent financial managers.

The school's partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents and carers feel included in their child's education. Excellent partnerships with other schools, colleges, universities and external providers and organisations, all contribute significantly to the well-being and experiences of all pupils. Good safeguarding procedures follow the recommended best

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practice and it is evident that the school emphasises safety to pupils in lessons and within the curriculum. The school tackles discrimination and promotes equality of opportunity well. It effectively promotes community cohesion, but does not evaluate the impact of the school's work on pupils' attitudes. The very good outcomes for pupils and the effective use of resources ensure there is good value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Excellent induction procedures, that fully involve parents and carers, ensure that children happily enter the Nursery and settle exceptionally quickly. They are supported outstandingly well, by very experienced staff, in both their learning and to ensure that all their welfare needs are met. Children enter Nursery with broadly average skills for their age. They make excellent progress in all areas of their learning, but especially in reading, writing, number and their personal, social and emotional development. Their progress is keenly observed and carefully recorded, which enables staff to plan interesting tasks which are well matched to children's needs. Children also initiate their own learning effectively, suggesting developments to and extensions of the activities in which they participate. Parents and carers are kept well informed about their child's progress and welfare, and are given very helpful guidance about how they can support their children's learning and development at home. The Early Years Foundation Stage coordinator leads a very strong team excellently and ensures that improvements are implemented effectively. Excellent provision and leadership ensure that the vast majority of children enter Year 1 having well exceeded the expected levels in all areas of learning.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

Most parents and carers hold very positive views and are very pleased with their children's education. Twenty eight percent of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire they were asked to complete prior to the inspection. In addition, an inspector met a small group of parents and carers during the inspection to hear their views. A hundred percent of respondents said that their children enjoyed school, teaching is good and the school meets the particular needs of their child. In all other areas there was a very high proportion of positive returns. A very small minority raised concerns about behaviour, the way the school is led and managed and the extent to which their views are taken into account. The inspection team found pupils' behaviour to be good and judges that the school is very well led and managed. Parents and carers are welcomed into the school and when the issue of whether their views are taken into account was followed up by inspectors during a meeting with a group of parents and carers, they felt they could make suggestions that were valued and sometimes acted upon.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at New Hartley First 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 40 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 130 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	29	73	11	28	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	22	55	16	40	1	3	1	3
My school informs me about my child's progress	14	35	23	58	1	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	14	35	24	60	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	21	53	19	48	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	14	35	24	60	1	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	13	33	26	65	1	3	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)	13	33	25	63	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	16	40	24	60	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	10	25	22	55	6	15	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	10	25	24	60	5	13	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	12	30	21	53	5	13	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	21	53	18	45	1	3	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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 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. 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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



30 September 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of New Hartley First School, Whitley Bay, NE25 0RD

Thank you very much for the friendly welcome you gave me when I inspected your school recently. It was good to see that the Key Stage 2 pupils were so positive about their school when they filled in their questionnaires. I enjoyed chatting with you and appreciated the honest way in which you answered my questions. I am sure you will be delighted to know that I judge your school to be good. This means that it has lots of good features, some are excellent and there are some things which need improving.

The best things about your school are:

- the excellent start you get in the Nursery and Reception classes
- the good teaching that helps you attain very high standards in reading, writing and mathematics
- how well you are looked after
- the very good way in which the school is run.

Even in good schools there are some things that can be improved. To help with this your headteacher agrees with me that:

- teachers in Years 1 to 4 need to help you to make outstanding rather than the good progress you make now
- a system to evaluate how much you know about people who live in different parts of the United Kingdom and other parts of the world needs to be introduced.

Thank you again for helping me with the inspection. I wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Barbara Hudson

Lead inspector

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