

Tweedmouth Community Middle School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122348
Local Authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	359229
Inspection dates	19–20 October 2010
Reporting inspector	Paul Hancock HMI

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

Type of school	Middle deemed secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	9–13
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	311
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Barbara Davenport
Headteacher	Mr Chris Durie
Date of previous school inspection	11 June 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. They observed 18 part-lessons, which involved a total of 15 teachers and held meetings with members of the governing body and staff. The inspectors met and talked with pupils in lessons and around the school. They observed the school's work and looked at 120 questionnaires completed by parents and carers and others from pupils and staff. Pupils' work and school documentation such as safeguarding information and records of pupils' progress were examined.

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

- How successfully the judgement of being a good school has been maintained.
- Achievement and progress in English and mathematics, particularly that of boys and girls working at higher levels.
- The extent of improvement in assessment practice and how well lessons fully challenge all groups of pupils.

Information about the school

Tweedmouth middle is located on a river estuary close to the border with Scotland. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average and the percentage with a statement of special educational needs is above average. Nearly all pupils speak English as their first language and there are very few from minority ethnic groups. The school gained specialist status for Business and Enterprise in September 2010 and has achieved national Healthy School status.

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

Tweedmouth middle is a good school which has moved forward since the previous inspection. The school took swift action to rectify a dip in test results in 2009 and the impact can be seen in rising attainment and higher quality teaching. Governance and capacity to improve are good and the school's evaluation of its own performance is accurate.

Systems for monitoring and evaluating the school's work ensure accountability. There is more to be done, for example, in holding leaders fully to account for individual progress in all subjects. School improvement is driven by good leadership and management and resources are well-deployed to achieve good value for money. The school has recently acquired specialist status and is on track to meet targets.

Inspection evidence confirms that achievement, progress and learning are good. Pupils say they particularly enjoy learning in lessons when work is well-matched to their individual needs. The quality of learning is significantly enhanced by pupils' well above average attendance and good behaviour. They quickly learn to take responsibility for learning, for example, developing their thinking when engaged in project work. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because they are provided with good support and learning which is pitched at the right level.

Attainment is average and the school is steadily securing further gains across all year groups. The number of pupils gaining higher levels in English and mathematics has improved in 2010 and results are above the local authority average. Action to ensure attainment is always above average is a high priority for the school and the strategies to improve the achievement of the most able pupils are having a positive impact. The proportion of good quality teaching has increased and there is capacity to make further improvement. Assessment practice is steadily improving. The school recognises more can be done to ensure assessment practice is always consistently good across all year groups and the information is well used to improve pupils' work. Care, guidance and support are good and pupils say they feel safe in school.

The local community makes a positive contribution to the good curriculum, which is enriched through visiting speakers and specialists, such as sports coaches, musicians, and drama groups. The school's strategy to promote community cohesion is good and includes the involvement of national and international communities. For example, during the inspection, a visiting headteacher from an exchange school in Uganda worked with pupils to increase their understanding of different communities and cultures.

Pupils' sense of spiritual, moral, social and cultural responsibility is well-developed and partnerships to promote learning are good, partly as a result of close working between local schools, sports clubs, and extended services. The extent to which pupils adopt

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healthy lifestyles is good and most pupils walk or cycle to school. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers are very happy with their children's experience at school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment further by:
 - improving the rate of progress in English and mathematics, particularly for the most able pupils
 - holding leaders and managers to account fully for individual progress in all subjects.
- Increase the proportion of good and better teaching, by:
 - ensuring that assessment practice is always consistently good across all year groups
 - sharing best practice.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils' learning and progress are good because they listen carefully in lessons and enjoy learning when the work captures their interest. They respond well to practical tasks and ask questions when they do not understand. Lesson plans help learning to be challenging and are routinely reviewed.

Attainment is average and rising following a dip in national test results at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are achieving well and making good progress. Inspection evidence confirms attainment in English and mathematics, particularly for the most able pupils is higher. The school knows there is more to be done and is making the right changes to increase the rate of progress in English and mathematics by using more challenging targets. Monitoring individual progress in the foundation subjects is inconsistent and leaders at all levels are not always held fully to account.

Attendance is high as a result of good team work with partners to resolve any problems. Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. Pupils say they feel safe in school and they understand what constitutes a healthy diet and lifestyle. They regularly take part in physical and sporting activities and make a good contribution to school and community life, for example, supporting a local leukaemia charity run. Cultural development is good, partly as a result of links with other countries and pupils' sense of spiritual, moral, and social responsibility is well developed.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
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	2
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?

The quality of teaching is good and improving. The school knows that increasing the proportion of good or better teaching is central in the drive to continue raising achievement and improving progress. The most successful teaching provides a good balance between group work and independent research. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and used well to inspire pupils. Good working routines are established and teachers check pupils' understanding frequently. The teaching is less successful when the work is insufficiently tailored to challenge pupils of all abilities. Targets are not always clearly understood which results in pupils working less confidently and learning more slowly.

Assessment practice is steadily improving but there is still some way to go to make it consistently good across the year groups. The marking of pupils' work is sometimes not regular enough and pupils are not clear what they should do to improve their work. The good curriculum is enhanced by staffing arrangements that make sure pupils are taught by specialists wherever possible.

Good partnerships with health and other agencies make a strong contribution to the personal development and well-being of vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Good care, guidance and support help pupils to be confident learners and they are provided with appropriate information and advice. Pupils say they settle in quickly when they start at the school due to the effective transition

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arrangements. The recently acquired specialist status of the school is helping pupils to develop a range of transferable skills and enhance their future economic well-being.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
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?

Leaders and managers have a shared vision and clear understanding of the key priorities for the school. Capacity to improve is good and the key strengths and areas for development are well known as a result of recent self-evaluation. Members of the governing body provide good support and challenge for the school. They are taking effective action to make systems for monitoring and evaluating its work more accountable.

The school's promotion of equality of opportunity is good and all forms of discrimination and barriers to learning are effectively tackled. Safeguarding arrangements meet current government requirements and work with partners ensures the safety of more vulnerable children. The engagement of the school with parents and carers is good and their views are fully taken into account, for example, through questionnaires. The school's promotion of community cohesion is good because it engages with extended partnerships and a range of groups beyond the immediate community. Resources have been well used to improve the learning environment and value for money is good.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Views of parents and carers

The responses from almost all parents and carers showed that they agreed that the school is well led, keeps children safe and they are happy with their child's experience at the school. A very small number of parents and carers were concerned about behaviour, bullying and the progress of their children. These concerns were investigated during the inspection. Evidence confirmed that behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. Incidents of bullying are quickly dealt with and the school is taking the right action to ensure the progress of pupils is always good.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Tweedmouth Community Middle 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 120 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 311 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	65	41	89	56	5	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	76	48	83	52	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	49	31	92	58	13	8	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	51	32	90	57	8	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	61	38	90	57	2	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	41	26	95	60	12	8	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	47	30	103	65	6	4	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)	50	31	100	63	3	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	50	31	99	62	3	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	42	26	91	57	17	11	3	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	35	22	98	62	12	8	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	45	28	105	66	5	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	64	40	88	55	4	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.



21 October 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Tweedmouth Community Middle School, Berwick-upon-Tweed, TD15 2DJ

Thank you for all your help when I inspected the school with my colleagues. Please would you pass on my thanks to your parents and carers for returning the questionnaires and say we took all their views into account. I thought you might like to know what we thought about your school.

- Tweedmouth Community Middle is a good and improving school.
- You achieve well and make good progress.
- Leadership is good and the school is making the right improvements to help you make progress more quickly.
- The quality of teaching is good.
- You feel safe and are well cared for, guided and supported.

Your headteacher and the staff want to make the school even better.

To help them do this, I have asked if they would:

- make sure attainment is always good
- increase the proportion of good and better teaching.

I know the staff would appreciate your help and I wish you every success in all you do in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Hancock

Her Majesty's Inspector

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