

Tritlington Church of England First School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122299
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	380445
Inspection dates	21–22 March 2012
Lead inspector	Irene Cochrane

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	45
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ann Petrie
Headteacher	Elizabeth Donaldson
Date of previous school inspection	13 May 2009
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Introduction

Inspection team

Irene Cochrane

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed seven lessons or parts of lessons, taught by three teachers. She also observed a range of activities for small groups of pupils and the support provided by additional adults within lessons. She talked to different groups of pupils about their learning and scrutinised the work in pupils' books. In addition, discussions were held with governors, staff and a representative from the local authority. A range of documentation was scrutinised, including records relating to pupils' achievement, safeguarding, school-improvement priorities, assessment data and monitoring records. Account was taken of the 18 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, as well as questionnaires from pupils and staff. The inspector took account of the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection.

Information about the school

This rural school is much smaller in size than the average primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average and most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average. Pupils are taught in two mixed-age classes: Reception, Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 and 4. There are currently eight children taught separately in the Nursery. Since the last inspection, there have been significant changes in staffing.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

- This good school has a highly-inclusive approach to meeting the needs of all pupils. Staff know pupils very well in its friendly, welcoming environment and ensure that every child is fully involved in the life of the school. Parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire are overwhelmingly positive about the school. Achievement and teaching are good rather than outstanding, so preventing the school from being outstanding overall.
- From starting points in line with age-related expectations in the Early Years Foundation Stage, pupils make good progress to attain standards that are above the levels expected for their age in English and mathematics by Year 4. Progress varies between classes and cohorts and accelerates in Years 4 and 5 where lessons consistently build on pupils' prior learning.
- The quality of teaching is good. Strong relationships effectively promote confidence and engagement in lessons. Where teaching is most effective, expectations are high and lessons proceed at a good pace, but this is not consistently the case in all classes. Effective use of assessment data plans the next steps for learning well in English, but less so in mathematics. Marking does not consistently tell pupils how to improve.
- Pupils feel safe and are confident that all the adults take good care of them. Behaviour in and around school is good. Pupils say that any instances of poor behaviour are dealt with swiftly and efficiently.
- The leadership of teaching and management of performance are good. School self-evaluation is accurate and action taken is improving the quality of teaching and maintaining standards above those expected at the end of Year 4. The regularly-collated assessment data are not yet used sufficiently to set challenging end-of-year targets in Key Stage 1. There is a strong team ethos among staff and governors to contribute to further developments.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement further by:
 - further developing target-setting, particularly in mathematics so that all pupils know what they have to do
 - improving the presentation of pupils' work
 - provide more opportunities for pupils to develop their problem-solving and calculation skills.

- Ensure that teaching is consistently good or better by:
 - ensuring consistently high expectations and good pace in all lessons
 - ensuring that all staff make more effective use of the assessment data available to set challenging targets in all subjects, particularly in Key Stage 1
 - ensuring consistency in the quality and helpfulness of teachers' marking and feedback.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils enjoy their lessons. They are interested and motivated and keen to participate in the activities provided. They particularly enjoy working together to share ideas and are keen to discuss how they have arrived at their outcomes. Pupils respond readily to instructions and always try their best. Progress increases when they get on swiftly with the task in hand and are set clear timescales for completion of the task. For example, when pupils in Key Stage 2 were set a challenge to write an expressive poem about a dragon by the end of the lesson, they enthusiastically started writing and as a result, made good progress to complete the activity independently.

Children get off to a good start and achieve well in the Early Years Foundation Stage. An increasing number of children achieves above the nationally-expected outcomes at the end of the Reception Year. Progress across Years 1 to 4 is good overall for all groups of pupils. It is most rapid in Key Stage 2 and attainment by the end of Year 4 is above average in all subjects, including reading, which is the strongest subject. Pupils are fluent and discerning readers who enjoy reading a wide range of books. They have a very good knowledge of a range of authors and talk avidly about their favourite choice of books. Successful initiatives to improve teaching and build on pupils' awareness of letters and sounds have ensured that pupils are making better progress across the school.

Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress overall and achieve well because the school identifies their needs accurately and provides effective support.

Parents and carers who completed questionnaires endorse the inspection findings that their children are making good progress. Pupils appreciate that staff make their learning fun and help them to do well in their reading and writing. They are less secure about their targets and how to improve their next steps in learning in mathematics.

Quality of teaching

The quality of teaching is good overall and improving as a result of partnership work with other schools. Common strengths include the many interesting first-hand activities teachers provide for pupils which contribute positively to their enjoyment and active participation. Consequently, pupils greatly enjoy working in pairs or as part of a group and readily respond to instructions. This was observed outdoors when Reception children worked enthusiastically together on an 'egg hunt' to find hidden words and showed resilience until the task was completed.

Relationships between staff and pupils are strong which results in promoting pupils' confidence and involvement in lessons. Teachers provide effective role models in scaffolding the next steps in learning but on occasions, too much time is spent giving instructions and as a result, the pace of learning slows. Teaching is strongest in Key Stage 2, where good use of prior attainment data ensures the pace of learning is quicker, verbal feedback is used more frequently to give improvement points and timescales are set for work to be completed. Pupils have individual targets to help them improve their writing but this is not as well-developed in mathematics, where there are too few opportunities provided for pupils to develop their mathematical skills in calculation and problem-solving activities. There are inconsistencies in marking and feedback of pupils' work so that they are not always clear about the next step in their learning. Additionally, pupils' work is often let down by poor presentation.

The impact of the curriculum is good and has a positive impact on engaging pupils' interests and extending their experiences. There are many opportunities to promote links across a range of subjects such as developing extended writing in history and investigation in science lessons. This helps pupils to apply their skills across a range of contexts and experiences. Teachers effectively promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development throughout the curriculum. This was observed in an RE lesson when pupils worked co-operatively and diligently in small groups to act out the story of Jesus in the market place. They showed highly-effective organisational skills in sharing roles and responsibilities to carry out the task in hand and could demonstrate an astute empathy and awareness of the feelings of everyone involved.

Parents and carers who expressed their views by returning questionnaires agree that their children are well-taught and this was borne out by evidence seen during the inspection.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils enjoy school. They are polite, considerate, and respectful of their surroundings. The responses of parents and carers in the questionnaires were overwhelmingly of the view that the school deals effectively with any unacceptable behaviour and that their children feel safe. Pupils have a clear understanding of what is right and wrong and know that any incidents are dealt with promptly. As one pupil said, 'The headteacher expects a lot from us, that we will not be naughty, but there are 'odd moments'.' They say that bullying of any kind is rare and is swiftly dealt with if it does occur. During the inspection behaviour observed was good and some exemplary behaviour observed in Years 3 and 4. The school has a calm and welcoming environment which contributes to an effective environment for learning.

Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe including issues around e-safety. They appreciate and understand why new fencing was erected on the school grounds and are confident that all staff take good care of them. Attendance is average and the school is aware of the need to work more closely with parents and carers to ensure that all pupils are punctual in arriving at their lessons.

Leadership and management

The headteacher leads by example to provide a clear direction for school improvement. She has the full support of staff and governors who share the same vision. She has introduced a range of intervention strategies to support professional development which is having a positive impact on pupil outcomes such as daily letters and sounds group sessions. Partnership-work with other schools is helping to improve the quality of teaching. The school's capacity for improvement is therefore good. School priorities clearly identify the key areas for development with measurable outcomes and a range of monitoring data is collated to measure pupil progress. The headteacher is aware that it is not used as effectively as it could to sharply focus on setting challenging end-of-year targets, particularly in Key Stage 1.

Governors are actively involved in the life of the school and provide a good level of challenge and support. They have a good understanding of the strengths and developments the school is working towards. Their role in safeguarding and monitoring school priorities is well established and results in safeguarding arrangements meeting requirements. The school has a clear commitment to and effective systems for promoting equality of opportunities for all pupils to be successful. It tackles discrimination firmly. The school takes part in a range of effective partnerships; for example to provide opportunities in sport and partnership working with other schools.

The school provides a good curriculum which is well organised with a strong focus on using pupils interests to plan exciting and engaging activities. There is a structured approach to develop basic skills in literacy, such as the daily group sessions in letters and sounds. A wide range of visits and visitors ensures that pupils have a range of experiences to draw upon and extend their learning experiences. There are effective partnerships with the church and local community which contribute strongly to pupils' spiritual, social, cultural and moral development.

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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



23 March 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Tritlington Church of England First School, Morpeth, NE61
3DU**

Thank you for making me so welcome when I recently visited your school. I enjoyed talking to you about your work and looking at your books. I was impressed with your behaviour and how considerate you are to each other. You told me how much you like school because of your teachers and the interesting activities they plan that makes your learning fun.

You go to a good school. Your headteacher and governors know what to do to make your school even better. Your targets in writing and your homework are helping you to improve, but you told me that you are not always sure about your targets in mathematics in order for you to get to the next step in your learning. You told me that you feel safe and that the teachers help you with your work.

You can still improve further by making sure you get more opportunities to develop your problem-solving and calculation skills and know what you have to achieve the next steps in mathematics. Your teachers need to make sure all your lessons proceed at a good pace and their marking always helps you to improve. They are going to use assessment data to set more challenging end-of-year targets, especially in Key Stage 1.

You can help too, by making sure your work is always well presented and that you continue to come to school as regularly as you can. I hope you can continue to work hard and enjoy coming to school. I wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Irene Cochrane
Lead Inspector

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