

# Whitehouse Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	111549
<b>Local Authority</b>	Stockton-on-Tees
<b>Inspection number</b>	356939
<b>Inspection dates</b>	14–15 June 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Wendy Ripley HMI

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	382
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ms Angela Johnson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Shona Randle
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	30 January 2008
<b>School address</b>	Dunelm Road Elm Tree Farm, Stockton-on-Tees County Durham TS19 0TS
<b>Telephone number</b>	01642 678212
<b>Fax number</b>	01642 678212
<b>Email address</b>	whitehouse.school@stockton.gov.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 15 lessons taught by 14 teachers and one of the school's higher-level teaching assistants. They met groups of pupils, staff, members of the governing body and a local authority officer. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school's self-evaluation form, development plan and analysis of pupil data. Inspectors also looked at the 94 completed questionnaires received from parents and carers and questionnaire responses from the pupils and staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Pupils' attainment, the progress they are making in lessons and the extent to which they enjoy their learning.
- Whether the quality of teaching and curriculum are good enough to bring about improving outcomes for pupils.
- The accuracy and effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation and development planning processes in driving improvement.

## Information about the school

Whitehouse is a much larger-than-average primary school. It has specialist provision for up to 55 pupils with learning difficulties that arise from complex physical and medical disabilities. The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs is well above average although the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. Almost all of the pupils are of White British heritage. There are slightly more boys than are usually found. The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The headteacher has been in post since January 2009 and the Chair of the Governing Body since January 2010. The school holds several awards including Investors in People, Inclusion Quality Mark, Artsmark Silver, Healthy School status, and the Young Leaders Award.

**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

Whitehouse is a good school where pupils achieve well and overall their outcomes are outstanding. Excellent attention is given to all aspects of care, guidance and support and to safeguarding arrangements. At the heart of this school is the first-rate promotion of equality of opportunity for all pupils. A strong ethos of respect and trust and a deeply-embedded acceptance of difference permeate all aspects of school life. This has a significant impact and makes a very strong contribution to the pupils' well-being and excellent personal development. The school's work with families, children and a range of support agencies to sustain the learning, development and well-being of individual pupils with complex physical and/or medical needs is exemplary. Excellent relationships between all members of the school community result in a warm, calm and productive atmosphere that establishes a very good climate for learning and creates a nurturing environment that pupils say makes this school 'a very safe and special place to learn and play'. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe and of healthy lifestyles and make a first-rate contribution to the school and local community.

Pupils are a delight. They are thoughtful and polite, have a very well-developed understanding of right and wrong and show great consideration and care towards others. Pupils' behaviour and punctuality are exemplary, demonstrating their very positive attitudes to learning and eagerness to do their very best. The overwhelming majority of parents is very strongly supportive of the school and have every confidence in it. One parent, echoing the sentiments of many, explained that pupils benefit not only from their academic achievements but through a broader understanding of the wider world.

'The fully inclusive nature of Whitehouse provides a very positive part of my children's development; one that will stay with them for life. This is down to the professionalism, hard work and dedication of the teaching and support staff.'

Children's starting points on entry to the Nursery are well below age-related expectations, especially in their ability to link sounds and letters. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get off to a good start because staff know each child very well and provide a good range of interesting activities. This ensures that most children make good progress and leave Reception working securely towards the goals expected for their age. The new Early Years Foundation Stage leader has ensured that activities are carefully-planned in order to maximise opportunities for children to learn and play. However, strategies for staff to observe, assess and record what children can do and use this information to plan challenging future learning are not very well developed.

Pupils make good progress in lessons. They thoroughly enjoy their learning because of good-quality teaching and the good curriculum that interests and actively engages pupils but does not always challenge the more able. This means that most pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress in Key Stage 1 and

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Key Stage 2. Most attain broadly average standards in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6. Data shows that a small minority of more-able pupils has not progressed as well as they should in recent years. This is largely because assessment and tracking data is not always used consistently enough to build on earlier learning and plan activities that provide sufficient challenge. Nonetheless, the school's most recent assessments indicate an improving picture. A greater proportion of more able pupils is set to attain at the higher Level 5 in English and mathematics when they leave the current Year 6.

The headteacher's leadership is strong and effective. The governing body provides good support and challenge and fulfils its roles effectively. Self-evaluation accurately identifies the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Improvement actions are well-targeted and any weaknesses identified are tackled enthusiastically by all of the staff. Resources are deployed very effectively. The range and quality of specialist equipment available to support pupils with complex physical and/or medical needs is excellent and used to maximum effect. Taking all these factors into account the school has good capacity for sustained improvement.

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

- By January 2012:
  - Ensure that strategies to observe, assess and record in the Early Years Foundation Stage enable staff to gather good evidence of what children can do and use this information effectively to plan suitably challenging future learning.
  - Refine the use of the school's assessment and tracking information so that work is consistently well-matched to the needs of individual pupils and provides greater challenge, especially for more-able pupils.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****1**

Pupils pick up on the staff's high expectations and aspirations and relish opportunities to participate in their own learning, for example, through paired and group work. They are keen to do well, and take pride in their work and want to be successful in all subjects. All pupils spoken to expressed their wholehearted enjoyment of school. As a result, they approach their learning with enthusiasm and sustain focus on their tasks, develop their knowledge and understanding and practise their skills at a good rate. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are provided with outstanding opportunities and are fully included in all lessons and extra-curricular activities. They flourish as a result and make the same good progress as their classmates due to the very good and unobtrusive support they receive from the highly-skilled teaching assistants and the seamless teamwork between the teachers and the support staff.

Excellent care and support help pupils to develop into confident and very responsible young people. Pupils are thoughtful and show great respect and kindness towards others. Older pupils act as good role models for younger ones. Pupils demonstrate an extremely keen awareness of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle by their energetic participation in physical education lessons and after-school sports clubs. Pupils know they are valued and enjoy a strong voice in decisions relating to their learning and well-being. They very enthusiastically promote a broad range of activities to improve the school and the wider community. The school council for example, influences the purchase of resources and has

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a voice on school policies such as the code of conduct. Playground leaders help staff to ensure that all pupils have safe access to play equipment. Pupils have influenced the local council with advice for improving the local environment and traffic management. They have a high profile in local community events and are actively involved in a wide range of charitable work.

Attendance is broadly average, largely due to absences as a result of health-related issues rather than any lack of engagement with school. Pupils successfully apply their well-developed basic skills for a broad range of purposes and are well-equipped with wider skills and personal qualities. Through activities such as the production of the Whitehouse newspaper and making and presenting Whitehouse television on the school website, pupils work well in teams through all year groups, organise activities and take on leadership roles. Pupils have experienced working with people from local industries and services such as the police, fire service and health care professionals. Many of the projects they undertake in class provide them with an understanding of managing money, economics and business appropriate to their age.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

<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

**How effective is the provision?**

The quality of teaching is good. Teachers are enthusiastic and encouraging and have good subject knowledge. Lessons are thoughtfully planned to provide a good range of tasks and activities. Skilful questioning, clear instructions, good timing of activities and a swift pace

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keep pupils alert, motivated and eager to participate. Pupils' understanding is routinely checked during lessons and their progress is regularly assessed and tracked so that any difficulties can be quickly identified and tackled. Highly-skilled and dedicated teaching assistants actively promote pupils' independence. They are very effectively deployed and make a strong contribution working with individuals or small groups of pupils.

Teachers provide good feedback to pupils about their progress and how they can improve their work. In English, the recently-introduced marking and assessment strategy is applied consistently and has helped to underpin the good improvements in pupils' writing and the presentation of their work. School leaders have plans in place to implement this in other subjects in the near future. Information and communication technology (ICT) and specialist equipment, such as discrete microphones and speakers, are put to good use throughout the school. In an English lesson a digital camera was used to photograph pupils' written work at the start of the lesson and again at the end. By placing both images side by side pupils were able to discuss how effectively they thought they had achieved their learning objectives and could see quickly and easily how their use of punctuation and connecting words had improved the quality of their written work.

The curriculum places a strong emphasis on the basic skills of literacy and numeracy, but not at the expense of other subjects, or the pupils' interests. There is an equally strong emphasis on pupils' health as well as their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, which can be seen in the high-quality displays around the school. All staff are involved in planning to develop the curriculum around interesting whole-school themes and to integrate subjects. For example, in a mathematics lesson pupils were working out the time in different parts of the world using atlases to link this activity into their geography topic.

Excellent attention is given to all aspects of care, guidance and support. Staff know every pupil individually and are very quick to identify any difficulties they may be experiencing. Well-targeted actions ensure that pupils receive whatever care or extra help is needed. This is particularly evident in the outstanding support for pupils with complex physical and/or medical needs. Individual support plans and reviews fully include parents and carers and are of very high quality.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<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>1</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher provides a clear direction for improvement. The leadership team has recently been expanded resulting in greater capacity to develop the school's strategies and

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to plan and implement actions. All of the staff and members of the governing body are fully committed to making improvements and raising pupils' achievement. The quality of the school's provision has improved since the last inspection as a result. Whilst all of the adults are involved in planning and accurate self-evaluation, school leaders recognise there is still work to do to ensure planning documentation is more sharply-focused and monitoring and evaluation is more rigorous. They have appropriate plans in place to tackle this issue. The governing body provides good support and challenge and makes a valuable contribution to the life of the school through a good range of scheduled meetings and other activities. Safeguarding and child protection procedures meet current requirements and are organised to the highest possible levels. Health and safety checks and risk assessments are exemplary.

The school works particularly well in partnership with others to provide support and care for individual pupils and their families when needed and to ensure a smooth transition for all pupils to the next phase of their education. The schools has a high profile in the local community and makes a good contribution to it, for instance, through concerts for residents, making the hydrotherapy pool available for mother and toddler swimming sessions and use of the school field by local football teams. The school successfully promotes respect for human rights by developing understanding about differences and valuing diverse experiences from a very early age. The promotion of equality of opportunity underpins everything this school does. This is illustrated by the excellent deployment of specialists and resources for pupils with complex physical and/or medical needs that promotes their confidence and achievements and ensures their inclusion in all school activities. This ensures that this group of pupils successfully overcome some significant barriers to achievement and are valued and respected by all members of the school community.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<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>2</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>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>1</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>2</b>



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## Early Years Foundation Stage

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Significant improvements have been made to the outdoor area since the last inspection. This area now works extremely well to support the journey that children take towards developing their independence. All of the staff contribute well to children's welfare and learning. Nursery and Reception staff plan effectively for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and have a good regard for their safety.

Teaching and learning are good. The good-quality teaching of phonics promotes language development well. Staff give a high priority to children's personal, social and emotional development which supports them well in developing these key skills. A good mix of child-initiated activities, excellent resources and focused teaching encourages children to make good progress. Children enjoy the exciting range of activities available to them in both the indoor and outdoor environments. They particularly enjoy the excellent opportunities for exercise and outdoor play where high-quality resources such as the pirate ship and tractor tyre sandpit, stimulate creative and social development and encourages imaginative play.

There are good partnerships with other services. Leadership and management are good. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader has focused well on providing interesting learning activities and experiences in a warm, supportive inclusive setting. Relationships with staff and children are excellent and there is a shared vision and working practice within the team. However, observation, assessment and recording strategies are not yet sufficiently well-developed to ensure staff can consistently secure good evidence of attainment and progress.

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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

The vast majority of responses received was overwhelmingly positive in its views of the school. Many parents and carers used the questionnaire to say how pleased they were with the school and to outline the contribution it made to the lives of their children. Inspection findings agree with the parents' and carers' views particularly in relation to the outstanding support, care and guidance that the school provides.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Whitehouse 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 94 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 382 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	58	62	34	36	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	64	68	28	30	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	48	51	45	48	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	50	53	41	44	3	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	54	57	39	41	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	46	49	43	46	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	41	44	51	54	0	0	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)	47	50	43	46	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	53	56	40	43	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	45	48	44	47	2	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	40	43	46	49	1	1	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	50	53	41	44	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	60	64	33	35	1	1	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## 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 pupils' 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.**



16 June 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Whitehouse Primary School, Stockton-on-Tees TS19 0TS**

Thank you for making the inspection team feel so welcome when we visited your school. It was a pleasure to see you all so happy and working so hard in lessons. We judged that your school is doing a good job overall and that you achieve well. You told us that you love coming to school because it is 'a very safe and special place to learn and play'. All of the staff take exceptionally good care of all of you and this helps you to develop into confident and very responsible young people. Your behaviour is impressive and you take very good care of one another. You are very tolerant and kind young people who show great respect and understanding for others. You are given plenty of opportunities to make decisions about your school and enjoy doing important jobs such as playground leaders. You have an excellent understanding of how to keep fit and healthy and thoroughly enjoy your after-school clubs and trips and visits.

The staff work well with many people outside school to provide any extra help you might need. Teachers provide you with interesting activities and give you good feedback about how to improve your work. This keeps you motivated and ensures most of you make good progress in your learning and by the time you leave school your attainment is average. You pay lots of attention to your writing and take pride in how you present work in your books and in the many high-quality displays around the school. Your headteacher provides good leadership and knows what needs to be done to make your school even better. Staff and the governing body constantly work hard as a team to improve the quality of your education. Even in good schools there is always something that can be done better so we have asked your headteacher to:

- help staff keep better records about how well the younger children are doing
- check closely how well you are learning and to use this information carefully to plan lots of really challenging things for each of you to learn.

We wish you good luck and best wishes for the future and hope you will keep on being the happy shining stars you already are.

Yours sincerely

Wendy Ripley

Her Majesty's Inspector

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