

Warkworth Church of England First School

Guilden Road, Warkworth, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE65 0TJ

Inspection dates 1–2 April 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils' achievement is good. They typically have attainment which is above the expectations for their age by the end of Year 4 and make good progress from their starting points.
- Teaching is good overall. It is occasionally outstanding, especially in information and communication technology (ICT) and in the school's woodland classroom where pupils are engaged in a range of exciting, investigative activities.
- Pupils know exactly what skills they are learning and what they need to do to succeed. Work is well matched to the learning needs of different groups of pupils.
- The school offers sensitive care and support and provides extremely well for pupils' highly developed spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They care extremely well for one another and say they feel very safe. Attendance is above average.
- The headteacher and the governing body have a very clear understanding of the school's strengths and relative weaknesses. They have clear systems to check how well the school is doing. They have put plans in place which have now resulted in improved teaching and ensured pupils make good progress.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils are given too few chances to apply their skills in writing and mathematics in imaginative, creative, problem-solving activities across a range of subjects.
- In some instances, when teachers mark work, they do not give pupils clear advice about how they can improve their work or time to act upon that advice.
- Targets for pupils' progress and attainment in the school-development plan are not rigorous or specific enough.
- The headteacher's teaching commitment does not allow her sufficient time for reflection and innovation or to share the outstanding practice in teaching that is already in school.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was conducted in two days by one inspector.
- The inspector held meetings with staff, groups of pupils and the Chair and all members of the Governing Body. The inspector also spoke on the telephone with the school's local authority education development adviser.
- The inspector looked at a range of evidence including: the school's improvement plan; the school's data relating to pupils' progress; the work in pupils' books; and the school's documentation relating to safeguarding.
- The inspector observed teaching and learning in nine lessons taught by six teachers and made a number of short visits to lessons. In addition, the inspector listened to a group of pupils in Years 1, 2, 3 and 4 read.
- The inspector conducted one joint observation with the headteacher. The inspector also observed the headteacher reporting back to the teacher on her findings regarding the quality of teaching, learning and pupils' achievement in the lesson.
- The inspector took into account the 44 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), spoke informally to parents and received two letters from parents.
- Eleven staff completed questionnaires and the responses were analysed.

Inspection team

Gordon Potter, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- All pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children that are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- There are morning, lunch-time and after-school clubs which are run by school staff and external coaches.
- There are four classes: one for pupils in the Reception Year; one for pupils in Year 1; one for pupils in Year 2; and one for pupils in Years 3 and 4. The headteacher teaches in the class for pupils in Years 3 and 4 on a 0.6 basis.
- The teacher of the Year 1 class has been unavoidably absent throughout the current school year.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is outstanding, to further raise standards and rates of pupils' progress, especially in writing and mathematics, by:
 - offering pupils more exciting opportunities to develop their skills in writing and mathematics in imaginative, creative, problem-solving activities across a range of subjects
 - improving consistency in the quality of marking so that pupils have a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve their work and time to act upon any advice given.
- Increase the impact that leaders at all levels have on pupils' attainment and progress, by:
 - ensuring targets for pupils' progress and attainment in the school-development plan are specific and rigorous
 - providing more time for the headteacher to reflect and to innovate for improvement and to share the outstanding practice in teaching that is already in school.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The abilities of different year groups vary in this very small school. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children make rapid progress from starting points that are typically in line with those expected for their age. As a result pupils are well prepared for their learning in Key Stage 1.
- While there is some variability related to the abilities of different year groups, standards at the end of Year 2 are typically above average. Pupils currently in Year 2 are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Standards at the end of Year 4 are typically above national expectations for nine-year-olds in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils currently in Year 4 are making good progress and are on track to attain standards that are above the expectations for their age.
- While progress is good and ensures that pupils have attainment which is above age-related expectations, it is not outstanding. This is because pupils are offered too few opportunities to practise their mathematical skills in real-life situations or to write creatively and imaginatively in English and other subjects. However, they make excellent progress in ICT because their lessons are highly engaging and ensure they become highly competent in a range of important ICT skills.
- The most able pupils in school have been clearly identified and work is targeted to help them attain standards which are above the expectations for their age in mathematics and English.
- While the proportions of pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs are above average, they are few in number in this small school. Likewise there are very few pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium. As a result it is not possible to make meaningful comparisons about their attainment without identifying them.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are very highly skilled at teaching and supporting these groups of pupils in their learning. As a result they make the same good progress as other pupils in the school. This demonstrates that the school spends the pupil premium funding effectively and clearly shows the school's commitment to promoting equal opportunities and tackling discrimination.
- Inspection evidence shows that progress in reading is good. This is a result of a consistent focus on reading and the development of pupils' knowledge of how letters are linked to sounds to help them to read words they are not used to. There is a highly effective focus in all classes on helping pupils to understand and enjoy books and read more often in school and at home.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good over time in reading, writing and mathematics in all classes and for all groups of pupils. It is outstanding in ICT where pupils are extremely clear about the skills they are learning and work rapidly to extend their skill. It is also outstanding in the woodland classroom where pupils are excited by a range of stimulating, investigative and creative activities.
- Work is well matched to the learning needs of pupils of different ages and abilities, and lessons have a range of activities. Pupils clearly know what skills they are learning and what they need to do to succeed in their work. They are given time to get on with challenging activities.
- For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 were engaged in writing about how Jesus felt during Easter Week. They were clear about the skills they were learning and encouraged to talk about and plan their ideas. They were then helped to think about how they could improve their writing. As a result they made good progress.
- However, progress in English is good rather than outstanding because pupils have too few opportunities to use their creativity and imagination to produce a longer piece of work in English and across other subjects.
- In mathematics, pupils in Year 1 were helped to extend their understanding of how to solve word problems through having clear explanations and activities which helped them to see how they could spend money and work out their change. The work was challenging but they were

able to develop their understanding of the steps to take to succeed in their work and they made good progress.

- However, progress in mathematics is good rather than outstanding because pupils have too few opportunities to apply their mathematical skills in real-life problem-solving activities.
- Pupils' work is marked regularly and pupils know how well they are learning. However, pupils do not always receive clear advice about how they can improve their work. They are not always given time to act upon any advice that is given. As a result they are making good rather than outstanding progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils say that behaviour is good in their lessons, around school, during assemblies and in the dinner hall. The inspector agrees. In lessons where pupils are fully engaged in their work, their behaviour is outstanding. On occasions though their attention wanders when teaching is less engaging.
- Pupils are extremely polite to adults, keen to talk about their school and show great respect for one another. They enjoy their small school where they are all friends together. Older pupils look after younger children and 'buddies' help pupils play safely and enjoyably together.
- Pupils show maturity and enjoy taking on responsibilities, especially as Head Girl and Boy, Sports Representatives and 'Head Buddy'. They develop social skills through the many opportunities to learn together, in the woodland classroom, school clubs and the sports activities they do with pupils from other schools. The school council offers ideas to improve the playground and raises money for charities.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Parents and pupils are certain that pupils are safe and happy in school. There are rigorous procedures to ensure that this is indeed the case with all adults offering highly effective and sensitive care to pupils. Pupils know they can turn to adults for help and be certain that problems will be dealt with.
- Pupils feel extremely safe. They are very aware of different forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying and homophobic bullying. They say that there is no bullying and they are able to solve problems between themselves or by asking older pupils to help them.
- The school's records show that instances of poor behaviour are extremely rare. The very few pupils who find it difficult to behave well are extremely well managed by staff and their behaviour has improved rapidly.
- Attendance is above average. This is because pupils feel extremely safe and enjoy their lessons. They particularly enjoy the many extra activities and visits the school provides for them. They are very proud of their school and work very hard at all times.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has a very clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and demands high standards. She has created strong teamwork and high morale through sensitive and encouraging leadership so that all staff are eager to lead initiatives that have improved school effectiveness.
- As a result the school is a calm, caring and safe environment which allows focused learning to take place and which enables teachers and pupils to thrive and give of their best.
- The headteacher regularly checks the quality of teaching. She understands what constitutes good teaching and judges it accurately. She is extremely clear in her feedback to teachers who respect and welcome her advice and act upon it. This is closely linked to ongoing training for teachers and brings about good teaching across the school.
- It is not yet outstanding because the headteacher's teaching commitment does not allow her even more time to reflect on school effectiveness, share the outstanding practice that exists in school and plan further initiatives that will help the school improve even more rapidly.

- The headteacher has refined the way she uses data to measure and evaluate pupils' progress and ensures that other teachers have the same understanding. The school improvement plan has appropriate areas for development and there are clear procedures to check its impact regularly and systematically. However, targets for pupils' attainment and progress are not rigorous enough and this contributes to holding back progress to some extent.
- Salary progression has been used well to improve teaching and raise standards because teachers are very clear that they will only be rewarded when their pupils have done as well as, or better than, they should have done.
- The primary school sports funding has been used effectively to develop competitive sports, to use coaches to develop expertise in teaching physical education and to introduce new sports such as archery and golf. Pupils say they enjoy their lessons, including the dance lesson seen during the inspection, and teachers welcome the focus on developing their skills alongside the coaches. These are contributing well to pupils' physical development and well-being.
- While the school focuses on developing pupils' basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics, it also provides many exciting opportunities for pupils to learn through additional activities, including the learning that takes place in the school's woodland classroom and the recent science and engineering week. However, this innovative approach does not always transfer into everyday activities and some opportunities are missed to promote the pupils' imagination and creativity in writing and problem-solving in mathematics.
- The school welcomes the support and advice it receives from the local authority on legal issues and from its education development partner on matters of education. This has helped to improve the quality of teaching and learning and provided clear advice during the recent extension of the building.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors offer highly effective support and robust challenge to the school. The Chair of the Governing Body is a recent appointment but he has already used his professional expertise to assist the headteacher in reviewing school effectiveness and planning for further improvement. He offers clear, extremely well-informed leadership. Indeed, all governors are very knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the school because they have areas of responsibility which they regularly check through a programme of school visits. They have clear systems to check closely the school development plan, the quality of teaching, the achievement of pupils and the curriculum. In addition they understand the arrangements to check the teachers' performance and any rewards for good teaching. The budget is extremely well managed. As a result a deficit related to the necessary extension of the building has been quickly overturned. Governors receive clear information about how the pupil premium funding and the new primary school sports funding are allocated and are very knowledgeable about their impact. They ensure that the school fulfils its statutory responsibilities for safeguarding. All staff have been vetted and are trained appropriately to keep pupils safe and free from harm. As a result teaching, pupils' achievement, behaviour and safety, and leadership and management are good.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	122301
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	443799

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	5–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	81
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Hoborough
Headteacher	Jacqui Carrick
Date of previous school inspection	29 April 2010
Telephone number	01665 711369
Fax number	Not applicable
Email address	admin@warkworth.northumberland.sch.uk

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