



Chollerton Church of England Aided First School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 122272
LEA Northumberland
Inspection number 281212
Inspection dates 23 March 2006 to 24 March 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Graeme Clarke

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

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Type of school | First | School address | Station Road |
| School category | Voluntary aided | | Barrasford |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 9 | | Hexham, Northumberland NE48 4AA |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed | Telephone number | 01434 681572 |
| Number on roll | 31 | Fax number | 01434 681572 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body | Chair of governors | Mr Jim Bullock |
| Date of previous inspection | 1 January 2001 | Headteacher | Mrs Susan Wildsmith |

| | | |
|----------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| Age group 4 to 9 | Inspection dates 23 March 2006 - 24 March 2006 | Inspection number 281212 |
|----------------------------|---|------------------------------------|

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one additional inspector.

Description of the school

The school serves a wide rural area in the North Tyne valley with a mix of social and economic advantage and disadvantage. Attainment on entry to the school is broadly average. Its roll has fluctuated over recent years, and is currently very much smaller than schools found nationally. All children are of white British heritage. A very small number are entitled to free school meals. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. The school is part of a network of small schools and a local community of schools. It has the Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark.

Key for inspection grades

| | |
|---------|--------------|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding |
| Grade 2 | Good |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate |

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

The school provides outstanding education. The headteacher and governors methodically evaluate the school's work. They judge most aspects accurately, but modestly describe teaching quality and children's attainments. Children begin Reception (Foundation Stage) with broadly average abilities. Outstanding teaching leads to children's excellent progress in class 1 (Reception to Year 2). They reach above average standards by the end of Reception, and last year attained very high standards in Year 2 tests, except at the highest level of writing. Outstanding teaching in class 2 (Year 3 and 4) sustains children's very high achievement in English and mathematics. Year 4 children attain very high standards.

Personal development and well-being are outstanding. The school promotes outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Children benefit from excellent care, support and a very rich curriculum. In turn, they thoroughly enjoy school and attend well.

Outstanding leadership and management very successfully promote the school's Christian ethos and the belief that every child does matter. The school successfully dealt with matters raised at the last inspection. The headteacher is not at all complacent and is now addressing concerns about writing that stem from recent tests, and supporting pre-school children's language and social development. Although it costs more per child to run a small school than a larger one, taking children's starting points into account, together with their progress and attainment by Year 4, the school gives excellent value for money. The capacity for further improvement is excellent.

What the school should do to improve further

Strengthen the work being done on writing throughout the school to build on the good standards already attained, especially by higher attainers.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Children make excellent progress, achieve very well and attain very high standards. Children enter the reception group with widely ranging abilities and many have communication, literacy and social skills below average. Children make excellent progress by the time they enter Year 1, and are above average for their age at the end of Reception. They continue to make excellent progress and achieve very well in their mixed-age class. Although writing was close to average at the highest Level 3 in last year's Year 2 tests, children attained very high results in reading and mathematics.

The school adds very good value to children's knowledge and understanding in Key Stage 2, where they sustain excellent progress. In the Year 4 tests taken in 2005, almost all children did as well as, or better than, expected on the basis of their Year 2 attainments, and results were well above average.

All children presently in school, boys and girls and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make exceptional progress and achieve highly. Children read at levels well above those expected for their age and some write very good stories. Their pop-up story books of The Little Alien's First Christmas are quite exceptional.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The school's provision ensures that children's personal development and well-being are outstanding. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development too are excellent. An outstanding and superbly led assembly and act of collective worship stimulated children to reflect on changes in people's lives and contribute some very perceptive questions and comments. Children are effectively taught to show sensitivity and to respect other people's lifestyles, for example in their discussions with a Muslim about Islam. Children greatly enjoy school, which is reflected by good attendance, excellent relationships and impeccable behaviour throughout. One said, 'This is a great school where you make friends easily'. Newcomers settle into school very well. Children justifiably feel safe. They are very aware of the importance of healthy living and take part enthusiastically in physical activities. Children make a good contribution through their support of charities and to their own community through the school council, which was influential in establishing outdoor play equipment. Many take part in exciting opportunities which broaden their horizons. For example, all were involved in The Wind in the Willows production on stage in the village hall. Children's very good language, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills prepare them well for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Outstanding teaching throughout the school leads children to make excellent progress. Reception children make rapid progress: they displayed some high-order mathematical and social skills working together on classifying shapes. Teachers use assessment information very well to plan activities which build on what children already know so each makes as much progress as possible. Teachers and assistants give invaluable help and emotional support so children with additional learning needs are drawn into the lesson and achieve successfully. Children achieve much because teachers pass on their enthusiasm for learning and organise challenging activities that make learning fun. Importantly, teachers use time well and manage children's learning very efficiently. New interactive whiteboard technology captures children's interest and effectively supports learning, for example in Year 2 with work on right angles and 3- and 4-sided shapes. Children are taught well to evaluate the quality of their work together, and how to improve, as in the colourful use of adjectives in descriptive writing in Years 3 and 4. The school successfully includes parents in their children's learning. One commented, "I needed help to help my child with her maths homework. I received my

own personal lesson, which helped me to understand. I can now provide parental help at home”.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

Children benefit greatly from the school’s outstanding curriculum. Well-planned activities ensure the National Curriculum is in place and, along with many extension opportunities, they make a vital contribution to children’s enjoyment and achievement. Expert support staff enable children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to take part fully and achieve very well. Enrichment and challenging activities help gifted and talented children to achieve very well. An excellent programme of personal, social and health education enables children to become good learners and fosters excellent relationships, respect, politeness and good manners. A wide range of activities, in and after school time, including sport, music, dance and drama, and more recently French, enriches the experience of the many children who take part. Educational visits and shared activities planned jointly with local small schools add to the richness of children’s experience.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. In this school, every child does matter. Governors ensure that up-to-date procedures for child protection are known to all staff, and that these are regularly reviewed. The school rigorously assesses and manages the risks children face on visits and out-of-school activities. Teachers diligently create profiles of each child’s academic and other accomplishments and use them to set challenging targets for improvement. All staff are very concerned to ensure that every child feels valued and supported. They look after and support children very well when dealing with their concerns. Children say that, “Everyone is kind and they care”. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive effective support and the school ensures that links with outside agencies and parents are very successful. Parents speak very warmly of the quality of care their children receive. One commented on how well their child’s emotional welfare is constantly provided for.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The school’s strong Christian ethos, and very positive climate for learning that children thrive in, stem from its outstanding leadership and management. Governors gain a very perceptive grasp of the school’s work from their very effective process for gathering information at first-hand about the quality of its provision. They make a major contribution to the school’s development, for example by ensuring that action plans for improvement are implemented to good effect. Teachers enhance this process by building on each other’s strengths to manage learning effectively. The governors and headteacher work well together to evaluate the school’s work. Although their

judgements are mostly accurate, they do hide their light under a bushel and understate the quality of their teaching and the high level of the children's accomplishments. Parents questioned agree strongly and unanimously that the school is well led and managed. The school has successfully addressed issues raised at the last inspection. Children make very good use of ICT facilities for presenting their work and research, and they use the new interactive whiteboards in classrooms well. The headteacher shows commendable leadership and determination that the school should not rest on its laurels, but should improve more and more. She has ensured good progress on action to tackle the writing issue that emerged from last year's tests in Year 2. Of special note is the exceptionally successful Chatterbox Club, which aims to improve pre-school children's communication and social skills. Parents and their children take part wholeheartedly. The capacity for further improvement is excellent.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Inspection judgements

| | | |
|--|-----------------------|--------------|
| <i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i> | School Overall | 16-19 |
|--|-----------------------|--------------|

Overall effectiveness

| | | |
|--|-----|----|
| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 1 | NA |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being? | 1 | NA |
| The quality and standards in foundation stage | 1 | NA |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 1 | NA |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | Yes | NA |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection | Yes | NA |

Achievement and standards

| | | |
|--|---|----|
| How well do learners achieve? | 1 | NA |
| The standards ¹ reached by learners | 1 | NA |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 1 | NA |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress | 1 | NA |

Personal development and well-being

| | | |
|---|---|----|
| How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners? | 1 | NA |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 1 | NA |
| The behaviour of learners | 1 | NA |
| The attendance of learners | 2 | NA |
| How well learners enjoy their education | 1 | NA |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices | 1 | NA |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles | 1 | NA |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community | 2 | NA |
| How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 2 | NA |

The quality of provision

| | | |
|---|---|----|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs? | 1 | NA |
| How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners? | 1 | NA |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported? | 1 | NA |

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

| | | |
|--|-----|----|
| How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners? | 1 | NA |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 1 | NA |
| How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review | 1 | NA |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can | 1 | NA |
| How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money | 1 | NA |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities | 1 | NA |
| The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected | Yes | NA |

| | |
|---|-----|
| The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy | |
| Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily | Yes |
| Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise | Yes |
| Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse | Yes |
| Learners are educated about sexual health | Yes |
| The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe | |
| Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements | Yes |
| Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place | Yes |
| Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism | Yes |
| Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them | Yes |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution | |
| Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships | Yes |
| Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them | Yes |
| Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community | Yes |
| The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being | |
| There is provision to promote learners' basic skills | Yes |
| Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams | Yes |
| Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form | NA |
| Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy | NA |

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Alexandra House

33 Kingsway

London

WC2B 6SE

T 0207 421 6800

F 0207 421 6707

Ofsted helpline

08456 404045

Mrs Susan Wildsmith

Chollerton Church of England Aided First School

Station Road

Barrasford

Hexham

Northumberland

NE48 4AA

25 March 2006

Dear Children

I really enjoyed visiting your lovely school when I came to see how well you are doing. Thank you for helping me when I came into your classrooms and your assembly to see you at work. You were always very polite and helpful. I was very impressed with the work that you do. I really liked looking at some of your writing – the pop-books about The Little Alien's First Christmas were really quite superb. I was also very impressed with the maths those of you in Class 1 were doing. I especially liked the assembly that Mrs Broadbent led. I could see that she made you think, and do you know, she made me think hard as well. I liked the photographs of your Wind in the Willows production in the village hall. I enjoyed talking to you when I met those of you on the school council and some of you at lunch-time. Also, I think the Chatterbox Club run by Mrs Davey is exceptionally successful. You and your parents really enjoy taking part in it.

What I liked about your school:

Yours is a very, very good school with a very friendly atmosphere. You are being taught very well and you make enormous progress with your work. You are really well behaved, have good manners, and work hard. You are safe and happy because all the adults in the school look after you very well. Mrs Wildsmith, the other teachers and all the staff are very proud of you. Mrs Wildsmith is an exceptionally good headteacher. She, the governors and staff all want to help you to do even better, so please listen to what they say and you won't go far wrong.

What I think could be improved:

I've talked with the governors and Mrs Wildsmith and I've told them that you reach above average standards for your age in writing and hope that you continue to improve your writing and try very hard.

With best wishes to you all

Graeme Clarke (Lead inspector)