



Greenhead Church of England First School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 122284
LEA Northumberland
Inspection number 281217
Inspection dates 25 May 2006 to 25 May 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Geoffrey Cooper

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

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|------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|
| Type of school | First | School address | Greenhead |
| School category | Voluntary aided | | Brampton |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 9 | | Cumbria CA8 7HB |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed | Telephone number | 01697 747347 |
| Number on roll | 36 | Fax number | 01697 747347 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body | Chair of governors | Mr Alan Sharp |
| Date of previous inspection | 1 January 2000 | Headteacher | Mrs Ann Gamble |

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Greenhead First School is a very small rural school with the distinctive characteristics of a Church of England foundation. Pupils join the school from a very mixed but well-balanced social background. Attainment on entry varies a great deal from year to year but is a little below average overall. The school is popular locally and, in the last two years, seven of its pupils have been admitted to years other than the Reception year. The proportion of pupils entitled to a free school meal is average, as is the proportion of those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. However, the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational need has been higher than average in recent years. All pupils come from a White British background and all speak English as their first language. The school is in the process of federating with a nearby school. From September 2006 one headteacher will lead the two schools.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Overall effectiveness is good. This inspection judgement confirms the school's view of itself. It gives good value for money. Consistent strengths are found throughout this happy and successful school.

The headteacher has established a clear vision for the school. Combined with effective management procedures, this ensures that pupils achieve well in both their academic and personal development. Among its significant strengths are: well-established procedures for the care, guidance and support of pupils; the very good use of subject expertise to enrich and extend the curriculum and learning; and good teaching that makes the most of pupils' positive attitudes and good behaviour. These factors go together well to make sure pupils make good progress. Overall, the standards achieved are average with a particular strength in mathematics. Standards in writing are not as strong. Important changes have been introduced to raise writing standards and are having a positive effect. In the Foundation Stage, provision is good and children make good progress.

Since its previous inspection, the school has made good improvements that have raised standards in science and information and communication technology (ICT). Its capacity to improve further is good. There is scope to make even better use of pupils' skills in literacy and of their growing ICT skills to support learning and raise standards in a range of subjects.

What the school should do to improve further

- Maintain the pace of current initiatives to raise standards in writing and to improve presentation of work.
- Ensure that pupils use their skills in literacy and ICT well in other subjects of the curriculum.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good overall. Starting from a point typically below average, children make good progress. By the time they are ready to enter Year 1, they are well on the way to achieving the goals set for children of their age. Continued good progress to the end of Year 2 sees pupils achieve standards that are about average, with a particular strength in mathematics. Writing is a little below average. Handwriting is sometimes untidy. Changes have been made to timetables and curricular emphases to improve standards, with some success. Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 3 and 4 and leave with standards that are average. Previous strengths in mathematics and a relative weakness in writing are still evident, although pupils' writing reveals imaginative extended prose and interesting poetry. Targets set for pupils challenge them to achieve well overall in basic skills.

Achievement is improving as a result of the higher rate of progress in practical mathematics, science and ICT. Children in Reception were fascinated as they studied snails under the digital microscope, and pupils in Years 1 and 2 enjoyed using the interactive whiteboard to confirm their investigations. Good teaching in science encourages pupils to work and think as young scientists. More recently, specialist teaching of French and religious education has further enhanced achievement. However, pupils are less confident to discuss how they use their literacy skills in history and geography or make the most of their ICT skills in everyday tasks. Planning takes good account of the different ages and abilities within each class, whilst still making sure that all pupils are effectively stretched. Pupils in Year 1 were quick to point out, 'We're Year 1 and we are doing Year 2 work'. At the same time, the school offers good support to pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This enables these pupils to make good progress and to overcome quite complex barriers to learning.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. Pupils' good behaviour and attitudes contribute well to their good overall achievement. Relationships are exemplary. Pupils are orderly and responsive and clearly enjoy their lessons. They are quick to explain what the school does and what they must do, to keep them safe. Enthusiastic discussion reveals they know a great deal about staying healthy and appreciate the lessons that enable them to achieve so well in swimming and other physical activities. They know how the balance of the school dinner provides for healthy eating, although some packed meals do not support national and local healthy-eating initiatives. Most pupils attend well but attendance is currently lower than the school's usual high standard. The school's Christian ethos comes across strongly in assembly and pervades all the school does. In a very mono-cultural environment, the school does a great deal to promote a broad cultural understanding. Pupils make a good contribution to the community through their constructive discussions on school issues, their fundraising and other activities. They are well prepared for the next stage of education and acquire the early skills that equip them well for adulthood.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good, particularly in science and ICT where formerly they were weak. Exemplary relationships are evident throughout the school. The mutual respect between adults and pupils ensures that no lesson time is wasted. Lessons are well focused and purposeful. This stems from clear planning and sharing of what needs to be learned and achieved. Pupils' good application, even when occasionally they are kept listening too long, supports their learning well and gives impetus to their progress. Teachers are effectively complemented by support staff. Pupils express their

appreciation of this: 'We get lots of help; as much as we need'. The good use of teachers' subject knowledge and of the expertise of outside specialists enhances learning. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported so that they make the progress of which they are capable. A good feature of lessons is that teachers make it very clear to pupils what they are looking for when they mark work. The marking is diligent and usually gives guidance about what needs to be done to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. It meets national requirements and responds to recent initiatives, but lacks balance in some respects. It gives additional time for physical activity and for teaching French. Ample time is devoted to teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. Since the previous inspection, the school has significantly improved its work in science and ICT. These features have raised overall standards and achievement. Shortcomings in the use of literacy and ICT skills across the curriculum represent a missed opportunity to spread this improvement further, especially to history and geography. Discussion with pupils shows their understanding of these subjects is sketchy. The good use of the subject expertise of staff and visitors significantly enriches the curriculum and learning. Pupils develop a deeper understanding of their studies and their community through lively out-of-school activities. The curriculum provides well for different year groups in the same class and for the range of abilities within the school. In particular, the school is adept at catering for the needs of those with specific barriers to learning. It also effectively supports the developing personal, social and emotional needs of all pupils through health education.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school gives good care, guidance and support for pupils' progress, personal development and well-being. Because staff are exemplary role models, pupils get very good support for their personal needs. Pupils say that they have great confidence in the adults who work in school. Staff know pupils extremely well and strongly support their social and learning needs. Procedures for health and safety and for child protection are well established and rigorous. Regular checks on academic progress ensure that staff know how well individuals are doing against national expectations and how well they are improving against personal targets. Arrangements for reporting to parents are good, both through formal procedures and through the regular informal contact that is maintained. Pupils who find learning difficult are well supported and make good progress. The school manages the integration of new pupils very well.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good overall. Parents and pupils agree that the school is a happy, secure learning environment. The headteacher's clear sense of direction is expressed in the prominently displayed mission statement and aims. The school's high values are fully supported by staff. A sensible management regime makes the vision work for all pupils and staff. Taken together, leadership and management create an effective environment for learning where pupils are happy and feel secure. The combined endeavours of the headteacher and all staff ensure that pupils make good progress and achieve well.

Staff have good support through observations of their work and individual discussions about their development that result in professional targets and training opportunities. Good self-evaluation ensures that the school accurately understands its strengths and what to do to remove any weaknesses. It has made good progress as a result of action taken to resolve the issues raised by the previous inspection. Development planning is secure and puts the school in a good position to improve further.

The governors are very committed and have good strategies for gathering first-hand information about the school. They have been deeply engaged in consultations about the future federation of schools. Parents and pupils have played a full part in this process. Effective relationships with other schools and outside agencies ensure that provision meets the needs of all pupils.

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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? | 2 | NA |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being? | 2 | NA |
| The quality and standards in foundation stage | 2 | NA |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 2 | 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? | 2 | NA |
| The standards ¹ reached by learners | 3 | NA |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 2 | NA |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress | 2 | NA |

Personal development and well-being

| | | |
|---|---|----|
| How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners? | 2 | NA |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 | NA |
| The behaviour of learners | 2 | NA |
| The attendance of learners | 3 | NA |
| How well learners enjoy their education | 2 | NA |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices | 2 | NA |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles | 2 | 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? | 2 | NA |
| How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners? | 3 | NA |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported? | 2 | 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? | 2 | NA |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 2 | NA |
| How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review | 2 | NA |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can | 2 | NA |
| How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money | 2 | NA |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities | 2 | 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

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Greenhead Church of England First School

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25 May 2006

Dear Pupils

Thank you for your warm welcome during my recent visit to your school. The way you get on with each other, with the adults who work with you and with visitors is very strong and powerful. Well done!

You are doing well in lessons. You told me so yourselves, and your parents agree. It was interesting that you told me your favourite subjects are mathematics, science and ICT. You do well in these subjects. It was very revealing that not many like writing, and this is an important matter for your school to put right. You behave well in lessons and listen closely to what is being said. You also answer questions well and make a good contribution to lessons. School takes good care of you and makes sure you know what you need to learn next. Your answers to my questions about healthy living and staying safe were quick and sensible. Your school is a happy place where everyone respects each other, both pupils and adults. This helps you to learn well.

There wasn't much work to see in history and geography and your understanding of history and geography is not strong. I have asked your school to get a better balance across subjects and to use writing more in these two subjects. There was a good deal of interesting ICT in lessons. However, it was disappointing to find very little evidence of this in your work books. Again, your school is asked to find more ways in which you can use your ICT skills to support your wider learning, because these skills are improving very well.

I was sorry to leave your school because you had made me feel part of it. I wish that I had seen the Ascension Day balloon rise after your service in church. You will remember that for the rest of your lives. Thank you again for your welcome.

Yours sincerely

Geoff Cooper

Lead inspector