



Inspection Report

**Better
education
and care**

Unique Reference Number 122293
LEA Northumberland
Inspection number 281222
Inspection dates 2 February 2006 to 2 February 2006
Reporting inspector Mrs Barbara Hudson

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

Type of school	First	School address	Leazes Lane
School category	Voluntary aided		Whitley Chapel
Age range of pupils	3 to 9		Steel, Hexham NE47 0HB
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01434 673294
Number on roll	42	Fax number	01434 673294
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Rev Andrew Patterson
Date of previous inspection	1 November 2000	Headteacher	Ms Su Adkinson

Age group 3 to 9	Inspection dates 2 February 2006 - 2 February 2006	Inspection number 281222
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an additional inspector.

Description of the school

Whitley Chapel Church of England First School is a very small rural school near Hexham. Twelve of the children attend the nursery for mornings only. When the children start nursery, their attainment overall is at the expected level for their age. All of the children are of white British heritage. Ten per cent of children have learning difficulties and/or disabilities; this is lower than average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school, promoting high standards of pupils' achievements and personal development through high quality teaching. The inspection judgement is better than the school's own judgement that it is good. The school provides good value for money when the children's standards, achievements and the high costs of provision for all small schools are taken into account.

The school has significant strengths in all aspects of its work. Children throughout the school achieve very well. The school is very successful at catering for all children, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the higher achievers. Most children achieve standards that are well above average. This is because the teaching is excellent with many outstanding features. Lessons are very interesting and the curriculum is superb, catering exceptionally well for the needs of all children. The quality of provision in the nursery and reception class is excellent. Children achieve very well, becoming very confident learners and standards by the end of reception are above expected levels. The school is excellent at caring, guiding and supporting children and, as a result, their personal development and well-being are outstanding. Leadership and management of the school are excellent. The school has highly effective procedures to evaluate how well it is doing but often underestimates its own quality. The school's recording of the standards and the progress each child makes could be better set out so that a judgement about children's achievement is clearer. Successful action has been taken on the issues raised in the last inspection report and the school has the capacity to improve further. Parents and children justifiably hold the school in very high regard.

What the school should do to improve further

This school has no significant areas for improvement. A minor area is:

- to improve the recording system of the standards and the progress each child makes.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Children achieve very well in this school. When the children start nursery, their attainment overall is at the expected level for their age. They get an excellent start in the nursery and reception class and continue to make excellent progress throughout the school. When they leave at the age of nine, most pupils achieve standards well above expectations. Standards and children's progress in reading are exceptionally high. The school has a comprehensive assessment system for all subjects and this shows children are making very good progress across all subjects, not just in reading, writing and mathematics. The children say that they make lots of progress because lessons are fun, very interesting and they learn a lot.

Teachers have very high expectations of all children, including higher achievers and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Children are set challenging targets that they are confident they will achieve. This is because they feel that the teachers know them very well and would not give them work that is too easy or too difficult to do. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make very good progress because of the caring, supportive and nurturing atmosphere that pervades the school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Children's personal development is outstanding. Children say they enjoy school very much. They are happy, safe and confident in school and attendance is very good. They work very hard in lessons and cooperate exceptionally well with each other and adults. Behaviour, both in lessons and around the school, is exemplary. Children accept and enjoy having responsibilities and diligently complete their tasks. The school council has been influential in the development of the school. A recent example of their work has been the introduction of compost bins to collect waste from the fruit that they are provided with at playtimes. The school council members represent their class's views very well.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is excellent. The school places a particular emphasis on developing Christian values. The children have many experiences to help them understand that many people in England live in an urban, multicultural society. Children are encouraged to adopt healthy lifestyles. The school encourages the children to consider and contribute to the well-being of others, through significant fundraising and charity work.

Children's basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) are promoted well, enabling them to be given an excellent start to their middle school career.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

The lessons observed during the inspection were outstanding. Talking to pupils and looking at some of their work supports the view that teaching and learning are excellent throughout the school, with many outstanding features. As a result, all children achieve very well.

The children get an excellent start in the nursery and reception class because the teacher uses every moment to impart knowledge and skills to the children. It is here that the children become very confident learners, and this quest to learn remains with them throughout school because of the very interesting things that they do in lessons.

Children respond exceptionally well to teachers' high expectations of work and behaviour. They listen attentively and concentrate very well, striving to do their best

at all times. Teachers know the children exceptionally well and set them work that is very well matched to their individual needs. The marking of children's work is good overall. It is very good in Years 1 and 2 because the children are shown what they have done well and where they can improve. Classroom assistants are carefully directed and make a positive contribution to the children's learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is superb. It not only meets statutory requirements, it provides all children with the enthusiasm, motivation and confidence to learn. The school has achieved Arts Mark Gold and evidence within the school shows children enjoying activities such as story writing and telling, poetry, drama, music and a wide range of art. Some of this work involves other schools. Teachers use the local environment, including the very good facilities within the school grounds and community, exceptionally well to support lessons. Many visitors are brought into the school such as Zulu dancers and singers to help children become more aware of the world. Children gain experiences of urban environments through visits to towns, cities and a large primary school in Newcastle. Children have many opportunities to take part in a range of clubs and the school council is actively involved in deciding which clubs are to be offered.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Outstanding care, guidance and support are given to all children. All adults have excellent relationships with the children who say they feel safe and can share any worries with an understanding adult. Children are encouraged to care for each other and this is very evident in the classrooms, at playtime and lunchtime. Children in the nursery settle quickly because of the caring and nurturing atmosphere. This results in happy and confident learners. Children know what they can do and are very clear about how they need to improve. The school works exceptionally well with parents and has a very good working partnership with a number of agencies. The school places a strong emphasis on health and safety issues. Child protection is secure and risk assessments are carried out rigorously.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The leadership and management of the school are excellent which is better than the school's own judgement. Positive action has been taken on the issues identified in the last report, particularly in helping children know how they can improve their work.

The headteacher has excellent leadership and management qualities. She has helped all of the adults involved in the school to develop their strengths and address their own areas for improvement. This has created a very effective team of teachers, support staff and governors who have worked hard to improve further the already very good

standards and provision identified at the last inspection. These adults are correctly proud of their achievements and have well formed plans to increase the effectiveness of this school.

The school's self-evaluation is based both on statistical evidence, which is used appropriately due to the small numbers in each year group, and the collective views of all the adults working in the school, the governors, parents and pupils. The evaluation correctly identifies the strengths and areas for improvement. Due to the small numbers of children in each year group, the standards and progress each child makes could be better set out so that a judgement about children's achievement is clearer. The areas for development are effectively translated into a school improvement plan, which is carefully monitored by the headteacher and governors and which contributes to the corporate development of the school. The school's overall judgements are, however, conservative, judging itself to be good whereas it is outstanding.

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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
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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	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?	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	1	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	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	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	2	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	2	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	NA
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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Whitley Chapel Church of England First School

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4 February 2006

Dear Children

Thank you for your help in the recent inspection of your school. I thought you were polite, friendly and very helpful and I understand why you are very proud of your school.

There are many things in your school that are excellent. I have listed below the things that really stick out in my memory:

your headteacher and teachers are doing an excellent job taking care of you and helping you to learn

you work very hard and you are doing very well in all of your lessons

your excellent behaviour helps teachers to do their job

your teachers put a lot of effort into making your lessons interesting, enjoyable and fun

the enjoyment and the amount you learn from the many visitors who come to your school and the many visits you make to different places.

I am also very pleased to tell you that there is nothing of significance wrong with your school. You have a wonderful school and I hope you continue to enjoy your time there.

Thank you again for your help.

Yours faithfully

Barbara Hudson

Lead inspector