



Warkworth Church of England First School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 122301
Local Authority Northumberland
Inspection number 292364
Inspection date 14 September 2006
Reporting inspector B Dower

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

Type of school	First	School address	Guildens Road
School category	Voluntary aided		Warkworth, Morpeth
Age range of pupils	4-9		Northumberland, NE65 0TJ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01665 711369
Number on roll (school)	54	Fax number	01665711369
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr A Webber
		Headteacher	Mrs J Carrick
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected		

Age group 4-9	Inspection date 14 September 2006	Inspection number 292364
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Warkworth Church of England First School serves a Northumberland village community and its surrounding area. The school draws its pupils from a range of backgrounds and attainment on entry can vary. Many, however, are above average in ability. The school is very small and the children are taught in mixed-age classes. Christian values are at the heart of this caring institution.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school with many strengths. It is valued and supported by parents. 'The children are given a great start in education and are caring and respectful to others.' This Year 3 parent expresses the views of many parents. Children settle quickly and develop well in their first year in school because of the excellent transition arrangements with the pre-school and the quality of provision in the Reception Year. Overall, pupils enjoy their work and achieve well because they feel safe, secure and cared for. Every child is known by all the staff. Pupils are confident and articulate and form good relationships with each other and with adults. Communication skills are well developed and pupils are competent in their use of computer technology. They are numerate but need to improve their problem solving skills, an issue which the school has in hand. The pupils understand the importance of a balanced diet and regular exercise in staying healthy. They also contribute to the local community through environmental and charitable work. Their spiritual, moral and social development is good and they are increasingly aware of their own culture and the diversity of other faiths and lifestyles. Such work is laying the foundation for success in the coming stages of their education.

Achievement and standards and pupils' personal development and well-being are good. The school is working to improve further the confidence, self-esteem and thinking skills of pupils in Years 1 and 2 by using the 'Philosophy for Children' teaching approach which has been successful with Years 3 and 4. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. Pupils learn well because of their positive attitudes to school and their excellent behaviour. Their teachers are successful in modifying the curriculum and adapting their teaching approaches to meet the varying needs of the mixed-age classes. The curriculum is good because of its breadth and balance and because of the wide range of extra-curricular activities and visits. Teachers are working together on curriculum planning and evaluation to improve provision further for the teaching of key skills. Christian values underpin the work of this calm and orderly community and every pupil receives the care and support they need. This aspect of provision is excellent but the recently introduced monitoring of pupils' progress as they move through the school has yet to have an impact on raising standards further.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides strong, effective leadership and is supported by committed and skilled teachers, classroom assistants and ancillary staff. All work closely as a team; morale is high and pupils receive the encouragement and challenge they need. The smooth day-to-day running of the school adds to the pupils' sense of security. The school is looking to improve school self-evaluation and development planning by involving everyone more closely in the process. Governors are the school's enthusiastic advocates and fulfil their role as critical friends. They and the staff work effectively together and this, together with the significant improvements since the previous inspection, places the school in a strong position to move forward. Value for money is good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in mathematics further by improving pupils' numeracy and problem solving skills.
- Improve guidance and support by evaluating the results of the monitoring of pupils' progress as they move through the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement and standards are good. All children reach the nationally agreed early learning goals by the end of the Reception Year and many exceed them. The progress they make in the Foundation Stage is good. Reading and writing standards in the 2005 national tests at the end of Year 2 were above average, a pattern of attainment consistent with the standards of recent years. Standards in mathematics were reported as variable at the time of the previous inspection, but have improved significantly and were also above average in 2005. More needs to be done, however, to improve pupils' problem solving skills. The school's internal assessments show that pupils now in Years 2 and 4 are reaching standards which are higher than expected for their age groups. Boys and girls attain equally well and the progress and achievement of all, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who come to the school with high prior attainment, are good.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also good. They are enthusiastic about their school, their behaviour is excellent and attendance levels are high. They take pride in their achievements and are keen to talk to teachers and visitors about their work. 'It's fun here and we do lots of activities,' was the unsolicited comment of one boy. This enthusiasm was also evident when senior pupils took the inspector on a tour of the building and grounds and impressed him with their mature understanding and appreciation of what the school had to offer, and what it needed to do to get better. Further opportunities for creative and adventurous work were top of their list. Older pupils are delighted to take responsibility for looking after younger children and for befriending those new to the school. Pupils' views are heard through the work of the school council. Pupils are expected to make decisions and recommendations that affect the daily working of the school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Pupils try hard and learn well because the work is made interesting for them. It is well matched to their needs. Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and are skilled at matching judicious praise with patience and encouragement for those who struggle to understand. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively and they play a significant part in supporting pupils to give of their best. The presentation standard of pupils' work is high and testifies to their positive attitudes to school. Handwriting is well formed and clear. Teachers have established excellent relationships with the pupils and blend their high expectations for them with sensitivity to their needs and occasional worries. The development of pupils' listening skills is now an area for improvement. Teachers want them to reflect on what is said to them, to comment on what others say and to ask for further explanations if what is said is not clear.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and meets the range of pupils' learning needs. The provision for extra-curricular activities is impressive and pupils have many opportunities to develop their understanding and enjoyment of their work. A variety of outings make learning fun and relevant. Visitors are welcomed into school to give the pupils an insight into the world beyond their local community. Efforts to increase the pupils' understanding that they live in a multicultural society are successful. Indoor and outdoor provision in the Foundation Stage is good and children have many opportunities for chosen and directed activities. There are very strong links with the pre-school to ensure continuity of curriculum provision, and with the middle schools to prepare pupils well for the next stage of their education. Teachers have as a priority for development more collaborative planning to give greater curriculum continuity in the teaching of key skills from one year to the next.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

This aspect of the school's work is good. The school evaluated provision here as exemplary but the inspection found that the recently introduced tracking of pupils' academic and personal development throughout their time in school had yet to improve guidance and support and raise pupils' attainment further. The care the school gives to its pupils is excellent. Christian values are at the heart of this close knit and harmonious community and pupils feel valued. Every adult working in the school is committed to pupils' welfare and to helping them to develop into confident and responsible young people. Children settle quickly as they start in the Reception class because of the caring and friendly welcome they receive. Child protection procedures

are well established and understood and used appropriately by all staff. Rigorous risk assessments, particularly when out of school visits are planned, demonstrate a strong commitment to pupils' safety. The small number of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, who are vulnerable or who require help with a particular problem are well supported.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides strong leadership. She knows her school well and what is needed to make it better. She is now looking to involve everyone, including governors, more closely in school self-evaluation and development planning to improve teaching and learning and raise standards further. Morale is high and there is a sense of purpose and unity in the school. Equality of opportunity is strongly promoted. There is no complacency and teachers and their assistants regularly share with each other ways to improve their classroom practice. They frequently take advantage of the extensive opportunities for training and professional development. Governance is good. Governors are committed and supportive and know their school. They carry out their responsibilities effectively and meet all legal requirements. The school is well staffed. There is an appropriate range of good quality resources to support pupils' learning and they are used well to secure good value for money. There have been significant improvements since the previous inspection and the school's capacity to improve further is good.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

16 September 2006

To the pupils of:

Warkworth Church of England First School

Guildens Road

Warkworth

Morpeth

Northumberland

NE65 0TJ

Dear Pupils

I enjoyed visiting you in Warkworth when I came to inspect your school. Thank you for the friendly welcome and your help in finding out about all the things you do and achieve. You told me that you enjoy your work and I can understand why. Your school does many things well and you are making good progress.

- You care for each other, behave well and work hard.
- You have the skills and personal qualities which will enable you to succeed in your education.
- You enjoy all that the school has to offer, especially the practical activities and trips.
- You are well cared for, feel safe from any form of intimidation or bullying, and you know how important it is to do things which make you healthy.

To make your school even better:

- you all need to work even harder to improve your numeracy skills and your ability to solve problems.
- your school is now going to check your progress as you move from one year to the next so that you can achieve even more.

I wish you and your school every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Brian Dower

Lead Inspector