



# Whytrig Community Middle School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 122335  
**Local Authority** Northumberland  
**Inspection number** 292374  
**Inspection dates** 28 February –1 March 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Paul Hancock HMI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Middle deemed secondary	<b>School address</b>	Western Avenue
<b>School category</b>	Community		Seaton Delaval, Whitley Bay
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	9–13		Tyne and Wear, NE25 0EB
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 2371402
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	265	<b>Fax number</b>	0191 2371830
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr Alan Coulson
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Pamela Watts
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 January 2003		

<b>Age group</b> 9–13	<b>Inspection dates</b> 28 February –1 March 2007	<b>Inspection number</b> 292374
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

Whytrig is on the Northumberland border close to Newcastle and North Tyneside. The school is subject to reorganisation proposals. The number of pupils has fallen significantly in the last two years with the loss of two full-time teaching posts. Nearly all pupils have English as their first language and the number of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is average.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Whytrig is a satisfactory school which has strengths in the personal development, care, and support it provides. Staff know individual pupils well and the partnership with others to promote learners' well-being is good. Improvement since the last inspection has been slow, partly because of the need to reorganise with fewer pupils on the roll. Also, plans and practice have not been focused sharply enough on individual learning and achievement. The impact of this can be seen in different aspects of the school's work such as monitoring the quality of teaching and assessment practice which are not sufficiently rigorous. The school is starting to move forward with more speed as a result of the senior management team being reorganised and its capacity to improve is satisfactory.

Achievement and standards are accurately judged to be satisfactory. Inspection evidence also confirms that most of the teaching is satisfactory and there is good teaching which is shared to improve practice. Attainment and skills are average when pupils start and average when they leave. Progress is satisfactory overall. There is a trend of improvement and the 2006 results are slightly better. The school knows the most able learners do not always make the progress they should and a significant proportion of pupils do not write as well as they read.

Behaviour is good in lessons, attendance is above average, and pupils enjoy learning. Parents feel their children are safe and well cared for at school. Healthy lifestyles are promoted and a cooking club run by the kitchen staff is a feature. The school has a satisfactory and improving curriculum and the range of activities outside school time is good. The quality of leadership, management and governance is satisfactory. Resources and some poor accommodation are effectively deployed to achieve satisfactory value for money.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the proportion of good teaching.
- Raise individual achievement and progress by analysing and using data more rigorously.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

The school accurately evaluates achievement to be satisfactory and standards to be average. Attainment and skills are average when pupils start in Year 5. This is confirmed by inspection evidence and the results of optional tests carried out by the school. All pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, make satisfactory progress during their time at the school. The most able learners do not always make the progress they should and the school is starting to provide for their needs more effectively.

National data show standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are average by the time they leave. Boys do not always write as well as girls and this is an issue which is being addressed. There is a trend of improvement and the 2006 results are slightly better with more pupils gaining higher levels in English.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

The school rightly evaluates the personal development and well-being of pupils to be good. Spiritual and moral development is promoted well within assemblies. Pupils demonstrate a good ability to reflect on their views, reactions and beliefs. For example in one assembly, they were asked to reflect on the consequences of repeating gossip and could understand what might happen as a result of doing this.

Social development is very good. Pupils work very well together in lessons in support of each other. Older pupils support younger pupils through a buddy system. They are able to listen to and communicate well with each other. Pupils are keen to engage in charity work and to make a good contribution to the local and school community, for example through the school council.

Behaviour is good. Pupils are friendly, well-mannered and act responsibly. They concentrate well in classes, enjoy lessons, and are keen to learn. Attendance is above average. A good awareness of what is required to live a healthy lifestyle is developed through physical exercise and knowing about a balanced diet.

Pupils communicate well, make decisions and contribute to outcomes when working in groups. They say incidents of bullying are rare and they know how to keep themselves safe. Future economic well-being is developed well through role play and enterprise activities such as running a stationery shop each week.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory and subject knowledge is secure.

In the most successful lessons, pupils have a good understanding of what they are required to learn through clearly stated objectives. Teachers intervene appropriately to remind pupils of the standards they are aiming for. The teaching ensures good class management and behaviour.

Where the quality of teaching is not as high, assessment and monitoring practice is not fully developed and teachers do not always take sufficient account of the different abilities of pupils in their class. In these lessons, progress and the marking of pupils' work are inconsistent. Praise is used well to develop pupils' self-esteem but marking is not effective in helping them to reach higher standards.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory and meets the range of pupils' interests and abilities. It is consistently under review in the school's drive to raise standards. Changes made to the curriculum are improving writing and achievement is rising. Links with other providers such as the 'creative partnership' scheme are enriching the curriculum and improving standards. These enrichment activities create a good climate for learning and raise pupils' aspirations of what they can achieve. However, the standards reached are not consistently built on, and the work in lessons which follow does not extend pupils' learning and does not take sufficient account of individual ability. Pupils enjoy a good range of extra-curricular opportunities, sport and creative pursuits.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

The care and support provided for pupils is a strength. The academic guidance which helps pupils to know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve is not secure. Learners do not have clear enough targets set consistently in all subjects. Staff work well as a team to provide good support and guidance for pupils' personal needs. Academic needs are less well met and systems are inconsistent across subjects and teachers. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities receive good support. Arrangements for safeguarding and child protection meet national guidelines. Pastoral support is good and older pupils mentor Year 5 which helps them settle quickly into school.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Monitoring and self-evaluation have provided the school with a picture of its strengths and weaknesses. The impact of leadership and management has been more successfully focused on raising the quality of personal development than it has been on academic achievement.

Staff have a strong shared vision centred on providing an inclusive and caring community where pupils gain in confidence and develop good personal and social skills. Management systems for using data to monitor pupil progress have only recently been introduced and the newly formed senior management team is beginning to use this information to set a clear direction for improvement. The information is not rigorously analysed or used well enough to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Issues raised at the last inspection have been improved, standards are now beginning to rise and the school is demonstrating a satisfactory capacity to improve.

Governance is satisfactory and governors improve their knowledge of how the school is doing through discussions with staff and a programme of visits. They are not yet sufficiently involved in the monitoring process to be able to influence priorities or to hold the school to account for the standards attained.

The school provides satisfactory value for money. Staffing levels are adequate and good improvement has been made in the range and quality of resources particularly in the provision for information and communication technology.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

Whytrig Community Middle School

Western Avenue

Seaton Delaval

Whitley Bay

Tyne and Wear

NE25 0EB

2 March 2007

Dear Pupils

Thank you for all your help when I inspected the school with my colleagues on 28 February and 1 March. Please would you pass on my thanks to your parents and carers for returning the questionnaires and say we took all their views into account. I thought you might like to know what we thought about your school.

- The school has many strengths in the personal development, care, and support it provides which help you to be safe.
- Your results are steadily improving.
- The school is starting to move forward with more speed as a result of the senior management team being reorganised.
- You behave well and enjoy learning.

Your teachers and the staff work hard and want to make the school even better. To help them do this, I have asked if they could:

- improve the proportion of good teaching
- speed up the progress you make so that you achieve more highly.

Thank you for being so helpful and I wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Paul Hancock

Her Majesty's Inspector