

# Wheatley Hill Community Primary School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	114147
<b>Local Authority</b>	Durham
<b>Inspection number</b>	311502
<b>Inspection date</b>	25 April 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Graeme Clarke

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3-11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	227
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jayne Dinsdale
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Alan Bromley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 June 2005
<b>School address</b>	Wheatley Hill Durham County Durham DH6 3RQ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01429 820594
<b>Fax number</b>	01429 820594

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

The inspector gathered evidence from lesson observations, looking at pupils' work, assessment information and documents, as well as interviews and discussions with the headteacher, staff, pupils and a governor. He evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following aspects:

- the quality of provision in the Foundation Stage
- pupils' progress, particularly by those presently in Years 2 and 6 and those receiving specialist language support
- pupils' personal development.

Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments as given in its self-evaluation form, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

This average size school, with a nursery, serves a former mining village community where socio-economic characteristics are well below average. A high proportion of pupils are eligible for free school meals. Many more pupils than usual have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and a statement of special educational need. The school has additional specialist staffing to support pupils with language learning difficulties. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. Others are from Asian or Caribbean origins and some are at an early stage of learning English. The school has the Healthy School, Activemark Gold, Artsmark, Basic Skills and International School Awards.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Wheatley Hill Primary is a good school with some outstanding features. Pupils make good academic progress. Their personal development and well-being are also good. The very effective leadership of the headteacher and his senior team, and the way that all staff work exceptionally well together to promote a caring ethos and uphold their belief that every child matters, are the principal reasons for the school's success. The school's exceptionally effective partnerships with parents, nearby schools and the Local Authority's Children's Support Services make a vital contribution to pupils' education and well-being. An overwhelming majority of parents hold the school in the highest regard. One parent's comment reflects their appreciation: 'The staff are very committed and dedicated. They are always approachable and keep parents well informed. My children enjoy school and are making excellent progress.'

Outstanding pastoral care and support, together with a thoughtfully designed curriculum, reflect how well the school recognises local circumstances and gives priority to promoting pupils' personal development. Good assemblies, after-school clubs and a varied programme of visitors and visits to local heritage and outdoor activity centres all play a vital part. In turn, pupils demonstrate a very positive outlook on life and a desire to learn. Pupils' spiritual and moral development is good; their social and cultural development is especially good. They clearly enjoy school and the friendships they make. Their good behaviour is reflected by sensible and considerate conduct in the communal parts of the school and in classrooms where, for example, they listen carefully to their classmates' contributions. Pupils' attendance is broadly average. Through effective work with parents, and because they thoroughly enjoy coming to school, pupils' punctuality has improved noticeably. Pupils know the importance of good health and fitness, and many take part voluntarily in sports and other physical activities. They take pride in their contribution to school life as school councillors, as sports leaders and as playground buddies to help minimise bullying. Their charitable work helps the local and wider community. Their positive attitudes and basic skills, including those in information and communication technology (ICT), prepare them satisfactorily for their future.

Pupils begin Year 1 with abilities generally below those expected for their age. They make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1, although standards at the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics remain below average. By the end of Year 6, pupils make good progress and reach standards that are broadly average. Standards in Year 6 rose in 2007 and met the school's challenging targets. Standards in science were particularly good. Performance at the higher Level 5 in English was below average, but much better in mathematics and science. Given pupils' backgrounds and starting points when they begin school, their achievement is good and compares favourably with schools nationally. Excellent support for the high number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those requiring specialist language support, enables them to do better than their counterparts nationally and they too achieve well.

Analysis of English results, particularly where standards were below average, rightly led the school to make improving English a priority for development. Initiatives are paying dividends. Many pupils presently in Year 2 are doing as well as or better than expected in reading and writing. Almost all pupils currently in Year 6 are meeting their targets in English and mathematics, and almost half are exceeding them, although the school recognises that pupils could do even better at the higher levels in reading and in writing.

Pupils' good achievement stems from good quality teaching evident in the school. Teachers and assistants work exceptionally well together to give support which ensures that all pupils fully participate in lessons. This is a very inclusive school. Teachers ensure pupils know the purpose of lessons and what they are expected to learn. Activities engage pupils' interest in lessons and encourage their learning through involvement. Teachers carefully set targets in English and mathematics that challenge pupils to reach higher standards. Pupils really appreciate how marking congratulates them on their accomplishments and helpfully gives them guidance about how they can improve their work.

Good leadership and management foster pupils' personal development and well-being. This ensures that they learn well. The headteachers' excellent leadership and vision for the school are driving forward improvements to the curriculum that are more relevant and engage pupils more effectively. In particular, the pastoral aspect of the curriculum is outstanding and is used as an exemplar by the local authority. The governors and leadership team have made certain that the school has improved since the last inspection. They are determined to raise achievement and standards further. Governors have developed their role in evaluating the school's work through diligent review of reports and they know their next step is to extend their first-hand knowledge of the school's work. They meet all their responsibilities and current government requirements including, for example, those to safeguard the welfare of pupils. They have improved facilities such as those for ICT, and ensure they get good value from resources to promote pupils' good personal development and academic achievements. The senior leaders and governors have a very accurate knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for development. Given the school's track record of improvement since the last inspection, sustained good achievement, its high level of care and successful work to align the curriculum more closely to pupils' needs and raise standards, even more ambitious goals are well within reach. It has an outstanding capacity for further improvement.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Children make a good start to their education in the Foundation Stage. The clear expertise of the teaching team ensures good quality provision in the Nursery and Reception. Children settle, enjoy school and learn well within a safe and secure environment. Many children join the Nursery with a range of abilities that are very low for their age, particularly in relation to their personal and language development. Effective and carefully planned provision, which makes good use of indoor and outdoor facilities, ensures children thrive and make good progress in all areas of learning. Other than in their mathematical development, many do not quite reach the standards expected of five year olds by the end of Reception.

## **What the school should do to improve further**

- Consolidate the improvements made to raise standards in English.

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## Annex A

## 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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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	3

### 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?	1

<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.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
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

28 April 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Wheatley Hill Community Primary School, Durham, DH6 3QR

I really enjoyed my visit to your school last week. Thank you for helping me when I came into your classrooms to see you at work. I did enjoy talking with those of you whom I met. You were very well behaved and polite, and most helpful. I was pleased to see how much you enjoy coming to school and take part in all the different activities, and how you value the friendships you make. I was impressed with the many ways you contribute to school life, such as through your school council and as playground leaders and buddies. I know your headteacher and all the staff are rightly very proud of you.

Yours is a good school. It is very warm, welcoming and very well organised. I know that you feel safe and happy because all the adults in the school look after you exceptionally well. Your lessons are good. I was especially pleased with the way you work hard and like to take part in lessons and other school activities. Last year, those of you in the Reception class and Years 1 and 2 made satisfactory progress in your work. Most pupils who were in Year 6 did well in the tests everyone has to take, especially in science, but not as many pupils as expected gained the highest level in English. I was also pleased to see that pupils who get extra help with reading and writing did well.

This year, the work in English that you do and the way your work is marked, is designed to help you improve your work. I noticed that many of you, especially in Years 2 and 6, are close to meeting your targets and some of you have already reached them. I have asked the school to help you all to do even better by making sure that your school helps each of you meet your writing targets whenever you have written work to do.

You have very many opportunities at Wheatley Hill Primary School to learn about life and these should stand you in good stead for the future. I hope that you all do really well.

Yours sincerely

Graeme Clarke

Lead inspector