

# Warkworth Church of England First School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	122301
<b>Local Authority</b>	Northumberland
<b>Inspection number</b>	340120
<b>Inspection dates</b>	29–30 April 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Andrew Scott

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>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–9
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	70
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr J Park
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs J Carrick
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 September 2006
<b>School address</b>	Guilden Road Warkworth Morpeth NE65 0TJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01665 711369
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<b>Email address</b>	admin@warkworth.northumberland.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited eight lessons, taught by six teachers. They observed as many of the school's other activities as possible and held meetings with governors, staff and pupils. They analysed the school's documentation, data on pupils' progress, welfare arrangements and the 40 questionnaires that were returned by parents, as well as those from staff and Key Stage 2 pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the progress of pupils through the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1
- the way in which writing is taught throughout the school
- the balance of the curriculum, in view of the time devoted to sport
- the promotion of pupils' awareness of communities and cultures beyond the immediate locality
- the extent to which self-evaluation and improvement plans are rooted in analysis and linked closely to pupils' academic and other needs.

## Information about the school

This is a small school. Currently, all pupils come from White British families. Few pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The movement within the pupil population is less than the national norm. The school is part of a 'soft federation' with five other first schools, two middle schools and a high school; it is also part of the Forest Schools Initiative. The school was undergoing building work during the inspection to provide two new classrooms.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

### Main findings

This is a good school. It has a warm and welcoming ethos in which pupils feel safe and valued and are eager to work. Children make good progress in the Reception class and continue to achieve well as they move through the school. By Year 4, pupils attain above average standards in all the main subjects, and do well in art and physical education. The school takes good care of its pupils, helped by supportive links with parents and external agencies. The clear-sighted and determined leadership of the headteacher ensures a cohesive, upbeat staff and has resulted in good school development since the previous inspection.

Pupils enjoy their school; indeed, their attendance is excellent. They are sociable, sensible and responsible around school. They are keen to learn new things and sustain good concentration except when lessons are not very interesting. Behaviour is good for the most part, buoyed by high self-esteem and impressive spiritual development. Their opinions matter to staff and influence the school's development. Pupils are an integral part of the local community but are much less aware of the world beyond the immediate vicinity because the school has not fully extended its promotion of community cohesion.

Teaching is good overall. In most lessons, and increasingly in the Reception class, pupils are well challenged, and activities are diverse and generate interest. Teachers ask good questions and keep pupils on task, ensuring a good pace to learning. This is not always the case, especially in Key Stage 1. Teaching is not consistently versatile or creative enough to bring learning alive and teachers' expectations of pupils are not always high enough. The curriculum has a high proportion of physical activity but is sufficiently broad and balanced. Its strengths include a concerted focus on basic skills, effective support for pupils with specific needs and the range of interesting activities, such as circus skills, cooking club and looking after the school animals.

The school has an accurate view of its provision. Staff and governors work well with the headteacher to maintain strengths and analyse any perceived shortcomings. For example, weaknesses in mathematics and writing have been tackled successfully, as has the use of progress data to help plan lessons. The monitoring of teaching is regular but is not focused enough on outcomes. Nevertheless, the improvements in attainment, provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and to the building and grounds show there is a real momentum to the school's development and underline its good capacity to sustain improvement.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the consistency of pupils' achievement by ensuring that:

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

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- all lessons have a sufficiently high challenge for all pupils
  - teachers are more creative and flexible in devising activities that stimulate pupils, strengthen their skills and broaden their knowledge
  - the monitoring of teaching is more robust and linked closely to outcomes for pupils.
- Establish a more structured approach to community cohesion, especially to improve pupils' awareness of the wider world.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****2**

Pupils of all levels of ability enjoy school. They are lively and positive in lessons and concentrate well, especially when the activities are hands-on, outdoors or particularly fascinating. The impressive skull of a hippo to promote observational drawing in a Year 2 lesson certainly gripped their attention. Although they sometimes need chivvy to work faster, their pace of work is mostly good. Consequently, their progress is good. Attainment by the end of Year 2 is consistently at least average and sometimes higher, as it was in 2008. Current standards in reading and mathematics are above average; standards in writing have improved but remain a bit lower. By Year 4, standards are consistently above average, verging on being high. All pupils tend to reach the expected level and a significant number exceed it. Standards in writing are on a par with those in other subjects as a result of a concerted focus this year. Given their starting points, achievement for all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, is good.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. Occasional restlessness does not unduly disturb the flow of lessons. They develop very good social skills and interact confidently with adults. They are calm and reliable. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 set up for assemblies very efficiently on their own. Pupils lead active lifestyles in and outside school and have a mature view of how to eat healthily. Their spiritual development is excellent, nourished particularly by rich opportunities for reflection and to appreciate the natural world about them. Good links with the local community are typified by participation in music and dance festivals. Pupils are less aware of the diversity of the UK and wider world communities.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	1
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

### How effective is the provision?

Teaching is essentially good, although it is more effective in Key Stage 2. Common strengths in lessons include the positive atmosphere that encourages pupils to relax yet work well. Teachers devise work that is usually well matched to pupils' needs because they have a clear view of how each pupil is progressing. Resources are skilfully used to enhance topics and reinforce learning. Teachers increasingly make use of the 'outdoor classroom' to diversify learning. Pupils appreciate the guidance they receive from teachers. In some lessons, more so in Key Stage 1, the teaching is not very enterprising, too linked to set courses and workbooks and does not expect enough from pupils. This lessens pupils' interest in work and dilutes their learning.

For the most part, the curriculum is varied and stimulating. Teachers often blend subjects to give better meaning to learning and maximise opportunities to learn new concepts. Writing skills were strengthened when Year 3/4 pupils crystallised ideas in a topic about the West Indies. Extra time for physical education makes pupils healthier and does not overtly impinge on the time available for other subjects. A strong focus on art certainly raises pupils' skills. The Forest School initiative involves termly courses in an inspiring setting to enhance a range of skills, including pupils' personal and social development.

Pupils feel safe at school because they have complete confidence in the staff. Pupils with particular needs are quickly identified and supported accordingly, benefiting from good outside expertise when appropriate. The more vulnerable pupils are nurtured constructively and so respond well. The management of pupils' behaviour is good and the school is far from complacent about keeping attendance at the high level that it

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currently is.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The thoughtful and caring leadership of the headteacher ensures that the school is developing well. Staff feel valued and benefit from regular, suitable training. Not only is staff morale boosted, but their commitment and enthusiasm benefit the pupils directly. The vision for the school is imaginative yet rooted in common sense. In essence, the school succeeds in ensuring that all pupils, regardless of background, aptitudes or other differences, achieve equally well and have the same access to a wholesome range of experiences. The monitoring of teaching is mostly good. However, it lacks a little rigour and would benefit from a clearer focus on pupils' outcomes.

The staff and governors are fully involved in the school's development. Self-evaluation is largely accurate so the school's priorities for improvement are fitting. On some issues, such as writing, the school has been very specific in its analyses and action plans, with resultant success. Not all plans have quite the same detail. Governors hold the school to account well and their skills are very useful, notably in finance and in helping to oversee the smooth resolution of the new building work.

The school has good arrangements for safeguarding pupils, which meet requirements. The vetting of staff is secure, for example, and relevant training is up-to-date. Good communication with parents means that they are increasingly helping their children with work at home. Several parents actively support learning in lessons, and more help with other activities. Partnerships with other agencies are fruitful. For example, the federation is providing valuable scope for training and outside experts have taught pupils lantern-making and silk painting.

Although the school champions a sense of community internally and within the local community, it has not fully developed pupils' awareness of the broader communities that exist elsewhere, including the multi-cultural dimension of the United Kingdom. In most other aspects, though, it has done well to maintain its good provision and to improve. It has successfully addressed the issues in relation to numeracy from the last inspection, writing standards are on the up and assessment data is being used more skilfully.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children get off to a good start in the Reception class. Overall, they enter with skills and abilities typical for their age, although occasionally these are higher. As a result of good teaching and a strong curriculum, they make good progress. Indeed, progress has improved recently because there has been a renewed impetus to ensure that the expectations staff have of children are firmly linked to the children's capabilities and prior learning. Staff are now very good at recording all relevant achievement and use these records to plan what children need to learn next. Learning is vibrant and exciting, because staff motivate children very well, ask searching questions and ensure a brisk pace in lessons. Teachers have good expectations of children and instil in them a sense of responsibility for their own learning, whether responding to an adult or initiating their own activities. Three children, for example, sat for a long time by themselves deep in earnest discussion about the different features of a wide range of toy animals.

Good use is made of the large outdoor facilities; staff are experimenting with the best ways to allow free flow between the outside and inside learning areas. The good provision means that children now exceed expectations for their age by the end of Reception, with a relative weakness in early writing. The same quality of care exists for the children here as for pupils elsewhere in the school. The Early Years Foundation Stage leaders work very well as a team, are enthusiastic and have demonstrated that not only are they susceptible to new ideas, but they also put them readily and successfully into practice.



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*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

Most parents and carers who returned the questionnaires expressed positive views about the school. They highlighted particular strengths including the warm, welcoming atmosphere generated by staff, the happiness of their children and the quality of their progress. The inspectors agree with these opinions. A few parents and carers raised individual concerns and several expressed a concern about an aspect of teaching. The inspectors agree that more could be done to improve the consistency in the quality of teaching.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Warkworth Church of England First School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 40 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 70 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	28	70	10	25	1	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	29	73	9	23	1	3	1	3
The school informs me about my child's progress	22	55	15	38	1	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	22	55	15	38	2	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	27	68	11	28	1	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	20	50	17	43	3	8	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	29	73	10	25	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	16	40	19	48	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	20	50	15	38	3	8	1	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	19	48	19	48	0	0	2	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	19	48	16	40	2	5	2	5
The school is led and managed effectively	22	55	14	35	1	3	1	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	26	65	11	28	2	5	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



4 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Warkworth Church of England First School, Morpeth, NE65 0TJ

I am writing to thank you for the part you played in the recent inspection of your school. My colleague and I enjoyed our time at your school. I would like to tell you what we think of your school.

It will probably come as no surprise to you that we judge it to be a good school. We know that you are happy with it, enjoy your lessons and all the other activities. Your excellent attendance proves it. You behave well, and are responsible around school. You lead active and healthy lifestyles. You are encouraged to be extremely thoughtful about life, especially the natural world. You engage well with your local community and we have asked the school to make sure that you understand more about the world beyond your immediate area.

You benefit from good teaching and interesting activities in and out of lessons. We were especially intrigued by your work in the Forest School. As a result, you achieve well throughout the school and, by the end of Year 4, your standards are above average. Sometimes, teaching is not as good as it could be and so we would like the school to make sure that you are always given work that is both exciting and challenging for your abilities.

The staff make the school a happy and safe place to be. Your headteacher has the right ideas to help the school continue to improve and she is well supported by the staff and governors. I am sure that you can't wait for the new classrooms to be completed, and then you might want to work even harder!

I wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mr Andrew Scott

Lead inspector

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