

# Holywell Village First School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	122195
<b>Local Authority</b>	Northumberland
<b>Inspection number</b>	359185
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 September 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Margaret Shepherd

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>	First
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–9
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	154
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Eva Coulson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Sarah Brett
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Holywell Whitley Bay Tyne and Wear NE25 0LN
<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 237 0384
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They visited 10 lessons observing six teachers; held meetings with a group of with parents and carers, groups of pupils, governors and staff. They observed the school's work, and looked at documents related to the school's self-evaluation, safeguarding, tracking information, teachers' planning and assessment. They scrutinised pupils' work and analysed 82 parental questionnaires.

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

- The reasons for the differences between standards and progress in writing and mathematics.
- Whether the aspects of feeling safe and behaviour are better than other aspects of personal development.
- The key features of the new senior leadership team.
- The impact of the new Nursery provision on the progress of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## Information about the school

The school serves the families of the local village with a small number of pupils from further afield. It is smaller than most first schools and has a lower proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. The great majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The overall proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is lower than average. The school has the Activemark and Healthy School Status. The school has undergone considerable change in leadership and management since the previous inspection. There have been four different headteachers, the current one having been in post for five terms. There is a new deputy headteacher, who is at the beginning of her second year in the school. The school's provision has been extended to include a Nursery class which has been open for a year. There is a before- and after-school club on site run by an independent company.

**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. Despite the high number of headteachers since the previous inspection, the high expectations and skilful leadership and management of the current headteacher is ensuring that there is systematic improvement across all aspects of provision. She works in a close and effective partnership with the deputy headteacher and the governing body. All staff are keen to be part of the clear and accurate self-evaluation processes and to play their part in improving the school's work. These features give the school a good capacity to succeed in future.

Children make a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The new Nursery is very effective in ensuring that they move on confidently to Reception. Progress is particularly good in personal development. It is not consistently good for more-able children because they do not always receive enough challenge, particularly in their independent learning. Pupils build consistently on their good start and progress well through the school, and by the time they leave standards overall are above the expected level. This good progress is due to the school's very thorough assessment systems and to good quality teaching. There has been a very effective programme of whole-school staff development for improving pupils' writing, which has resulted in higher standards. Although standards in mathematics are above the expected level, they are not as high as in writing.

Pupils' personal development is consistently good. Their sense of feeling safe is outstanding. This is due to a strong emphasis on safety across the curriculum; the high priority given by all staff to supporting and caring for pupils, and the good quality safeguarding systems. Pupils take their responsibilities very seriously and their contributions to the school community are excellent.

The school has worked very hard to improve the curriculum, which was satisfactory at the time of the previous inspection. It is now good and the creative curriculum is particularly effective. The school supports those pupils whose circumstances have made them vulnerable very well. Everyone takes their responsibility to individual pupils very seriously and leaders ensure that they take advantage of the small size of the school to make communication very effective. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including pupils with a statement, benefit from these features. They are fully included in the school's provision, with teachers and teaching assistants providing well-matched programmes of work and sensitive care and support. This ensures that they make good progress.

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

- Raise standards further in mathematics, by:

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- – using questions in lessons and the detailed assessment information more effectively to target pupils' individual needs and provide more specific feedback of how to improve
- – identifying and then using more opportunities to extend mathematical learning in other curriculum subjects
- – applying the successful model of whole-school development that improved writing standards across to mathematics.
- Increase the progress of more-able children in the Early Years Foundation Stage by challenging them consistently, particularly in activities that they choose for themselves.

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

Achievement is good throughout the school. Children enter the school with skills that are broadly at the expected level. They progress well and enjoy their learning. This is particularly evident when they play different roles, such as writing a letter to try to persuade the council not to take a grandfather's allotment away from him. They are eager to learn and listen carefully to staff. They take a pride in their work and settle quickly to their tasks. By the end of Year 4, they write confidently across a range of different styles. Pupils working on programmes specifically tailored to meet their needs make good progress. The individual tuition for older pupils in writing is particularly good. Pupils' knowledge and understanding in mathematics, although above average, is not as thorough and assured as in their writing. Pupils' understanding of how to stay safe is excellent. They explain in detail what to do in the event of fire, or the dangers in crossing roads or in ponds and lakes. They say very confidently that they feel safe and can go to anyone for support or guidance. Pupils are very keen to play their part in the school's decision-making and in playing their role in the school community. They are proud to be play leaders, supporting others in the playground, being school councillors representing their classmates, or food champions checking that the packed lunches are healthy. Their contributions to the wider community are not as well developed. Pupils show great respect for each other, particularly for pupils with a statement of special educational needs. Their behaviour is good and they interact courteously with adults.

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

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<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>1</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>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<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

## How effective is the provision?

Teachers make lessons interesting and provide pupils with a range of contrasting activities. They use drama well to prepare for writing, such as creating a setting where there is a fire in a street, or taking pupils through a visit to the beach, feeling the sand through their toes. Planning is good and the different tasks in group work match pupils' different needs well. The use of questioning in whole-class sessions is good in literacy, but not as effective in mathematics, with a narrower range of questions used. Marking of pupils' work in writing is very good and exemplary in Year 4. It identifies ways to improve very clearly, in contrast to the mathematics' guidance which lacks detail. Good planning between teachers and teaching assistants ensures that assistants understand exactly and effectively what their groups of pupils are expected to learn. There are very thorough and efficient assessment systems in place. The curriculum is now a strength of the school. Many links are made across subjects to extend literacy, although there are fewer in mathematics. There is a strong focus on pupils' personal development and an interesting range of visits and after-school clubs. There is a clear emphasis on analysing individual needs and then providing a programme tailored to these particular needs. The school works in close partnerships with parents and carers and outside agencies to provide comprehensive care, guidance and support for pupils.

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*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 headteacher drives improvement and communicates ambition enthusiastically, considering initiatives systematically in order to improve provision for all pupils. There is a clear emphasis on the use of whole-school professional staff development to extend staff skills and understanding to create consistent systems through the school. The positive impact of this whole-school approach is apparent in the improved standard in writing, but has yet to be applied to mathematics. There are effective plans to extend the high quality of the leadership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher to other staff, for example, in extending their monitoring skills. There is a clear commitment to equal opportunities, which is carried out well in practice. The emphasis on safeguarding is strong, with some outstanding features, for example, the comprehensive forms that visitors are required to sign as they arrive. The governing body play an important role in decision making and were particularly effective in steering the school through the difficulties in the changes of leadership. The school is working well to analyse and extend community cohesion outside the school to match the outstanding work within the school community.

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*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall, children's skills and experiences on entering the nursery are broadly at the levels expected for their age. The teaching team works well together to share the use of the accommodation both indoors and outdoors. The leader is very enthusiastic and communicates well with staff. The use of assessment information to identify areas for improvement is good. The team is particularly successful in promoting personal development and children make very good progress in this aspect, reaching higher levels than expected for their age. Staff build strong partnerships with parents and carers who appreciate the care that their children receive. There are good systems in place to identify children's skills and when adults lead a group task they focus effectively on individual needs. For example, when Nursery children were being introduced to a new giraffe puppet, everyone had a chance to whisper their name in her ear, which they thoroughly enjoyed. Some activities do not have enough scope to challenge more-able children, particularly in the independent learning. Arrangements for children to join the school in the Nursery and to move between the two age groups are very effective, with staff handling interactions with sensitivity.

*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	2

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

Stage	
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## Views of parents and carers

More than half the parents and carers returned their questionnaires. Most expressed positive views which the inspectors endorse, although a very small minority did not feel they received enough information about progress. Everyone agreed that the school is led and managed effectively, that teaching is good and that their children are helped to have a healthy lifestyle, to feel safe and enjoy school. Inspectors endorse these views. There were a good number of written comments from parents and carers that praised the work of the school. Key features were how their children love to come to school, how approachable all staff are and the family context that is created for learning. A typical comment was 'My children love going here. Lessons are fun and pupils have opportunities to be involved in lots of trips and extra-curricular activities.' Several parents and carers mentioned how well the school supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, bringing in additional support where required.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Holywell Village 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 82 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 154 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	65	79	17	21	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	60	73	21	26	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	44	54	35	43	2	2	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	51	62	25	30	2	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	50	61	29	35	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	49	60	28	34	3	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	49	60	33	40	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)	50	61	28	34	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	47	57	31	38	2	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	50	61	28	34	1	1	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	44	54	32	39	2	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	57	70	21	26	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	61	74	20	24	1	1	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 all 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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are 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 and spring terms 2009/10 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 pupils' 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.**



30 September 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Holywell Village First School, Whitley Bay, NE25 0LN**

The inspectors and I would like to thank you very much for giving us such a warm welcome when we came to your school. We enjoyed talking with you and listening to your views. You helped us to understand what you think about your school.

You go to a good school. Your headteacher, staff and the governing body all work hard together to keep making it a better place to learn. You make good progress as you move through the school and by the time you leave your standards are higher than expected for your age. You make a good start in the Nursery and Reception, particularly in your personal development. You build on this through the school. You told us all about the different ways that you feel safe and this is outstanding. We were particularly impressed with how much you know about the dangers of fire. You told us all about the different responsibilities that you have in school and these are excellent. Your teachers and teaching assistants work very well together. They support those of you with special educational needs and/or disabilities very effectively and you are all included in the interesting things that you do in school. You have a stimulating curriculum and interesting lessons that you enjoy. All the staff in your school believe that it is their own responsibility to care for you, to support you and guide you and they do this very well.

Everyone in your school works hard to make their teaching and the curriculum better for writing and now you are particularly good at writing. Although you do well in mathematics, this is not as good as in writing. We have asked the school to use all the good things that they did to improve writing and to use them in mathematics. You can do your best to work even harder in this subject. In the Nursery and Reception classes, staff plan well together to make it a better place to learn. They are going to make sure that all the activities are challenging enough for the more-able children, particularly in those that you choose for yourselves. We wish you well for your future learning through your lives.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Shepherd

Lead inspector

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