

# Whitecliffe Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	111654
<b>Local authority</b>	Redcar and Cleveland
<b>Inspection number</b>	378330
<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–11 November 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Clive Petts

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 of pupils on the school roll</b>	126
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ross McMillan
<b>Headteacher</b>	Christine Shannon
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	30 April 2009
<b>School address</b>	Kilton Lane Carlin How Saltburn-By-the-Sea TS13 4AD
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors visited ten lessons taught by six class teachers. Meetings were held with members of the governing body and inspectors spoke with staff and groups of pupils. They analysed 39 questionnaire responses from parents and carers and looked at questionnaires from staff and pupils. The inspectors also looked at: pupils' progress and achievement data; intervention and support programmes; documents relating to the safeguarding of pupils; school policies and plans for improving the quality of learning. They scrutinised pupils' current and past work and spoke with a local authority officer to discuss the conclusions of a recent review of the school's work and effectiveness.

The inspectors reviewed many aspects of the school's work and looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The quality of learning and the rate of progress made by all groups of pupils in Years 1 to 6, especially in challenging their thinking and raising their aspirations and self-esteem.
- The consistency and quality of teaching and its effectiveness in sustaining rates of pupils' progress and tackling any underachievement to close progress and attainment gaps, especially in boys' writing.
- The extent to which senior leaders, including the governing body, are demonstrating the capacity to bring about a consistent pattern of faster progress and rising achievement and attainment.

## Information about the school

Whitecliffe is a smaller-than-average primary school. It serves the villages of Carlin How and Skinningrove on the North Cleveland coast. All pupils are White British. The number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is almost three times the national average. A significantly higher-than-average proportion of pupils than found nationally have special educational needs and/or disabilities. There is a well-above-average number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs. The school runs a breakfast club. The school is working towards the UNICEF Rights Respecting award.

**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

Whitecliffe is a good school. It is improving quickly. At the heart of the school's systematic improvement since the previous inspection is the ambition and quiet determination of the headteacher, astutely supported by an insightful governing body. All staff are totally committed to the senior leaders' ambition to ensure each child reaches his/her full potential. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly supportive and appreciate the excellent care, guidance and support their children receive.

Most pupils start school with abilities and skills which are well below those expected for their age, especially in their listening, speech and language. Children make rapid early progress, confidently settling into classroom routines. By the end of Year 6, attainment is typically broadly average. A consistent pattern of good progress has resulted in a clear trend of improvement. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good and occasionally excellent progress, because their needs are accurately identified and intervention and support are effective. Writing skills are improving, although those of boys are not quite so strong. Pupils' achievement and enjoyment are good because teaching and learning are good. This is the result of the positive action taken by the headteacher closely monitoring lessons and nurturing the skills of staff. Yet, staff sometimes miss opportunities to demand more from more-able pupils and to promote literacy and numeracy skills in all subjects. In lessons, where progress is faster, expectations are high, learning is thought-provoking and approaches are inspired and stimulating. When progress is less brisk, questioning does not probe thinking sufficiently and teachers' explanations are sometimes too long. Occasionally, the inspired and thought-provoking approaches seen in the best lessons are missing in the less effective lessons. Marking is constructive and helpful, but does not always provide well-defined guidance for improvement.

The school instils in its pupils a clear sense of values, self-belief and above all, enjoyment of learning. This is evident in improved attendance, which is now above average. Pupils gain great benefit from the excellent links the school enjoys with parents and carers, the local communities and sports service providers. Pupils report that they feel safe and show a good understanding of how to stay fit and healthy. They make an excellent contribution to school improvement and to community life, for example, by helping to promote the UNICEF Rights Respecting initiative in school and village life. Pupils are safety-conscious, such as when taking sensible precautions using a computer.

The headteacher has brought about many improvements by accurately checking and evaluating what the school does well and planning for improvement. The robust checking of pupils' progress adds to the quality of strategic planning. Senior leaders demonstrate a strong sense of purpose and this is evident in their determination to sustain improvement gains. Subject leaders ensure that all pupils are included in happy, learning experiences and achieve well. Together, this ensures that the school has a good capacity to continue improving.

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

- Increase the proportion of teaching which is outstanding by:
  - raising expectations even further of what pupils of all abilities can achieve
  - using and building upon current thought-provoking practice within the school
  - extending the use of imaginative approaches to inspire and challenge pupils to practise their skills, especially boys' writing
  - making certain teachers' written feedback consistently provides detailed guidance on how to improve.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2
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The quality of pupils' learning and progress in lessons is good. They behave well, with older pupils often displaying much mature, thoughtful and considerate behaviour. Pupils are keen to learn and respond well to teachers' requests and guidance. For example, pupils were observed totally absorbed planning an investigation growing mould and responding positively to the prompts and reminders of the staff. Attainment at the end of Year 6 is broadly average. Test results, school progress information and inspection evidence confirm the good and improving trend of progress and achievement that all pupils are making. This includes closing achievement gaps, such as in boys' writing. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make at least good progress, because their tasks are thoughtfully matched to their individual needs and interests.

Pupils respond extremely positively to the guidance and support that staff provide. Their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is sharply focused on respect and consideration for others, regardless of background. For example, pupils attended a short remembrance service at the village war memorial for the two-minute silence at eleven o'clock in the morning. They support and help each other well and willingly take on responsibilities around school, such as taking care of their school environment by organising recycling. Pupils take great pride in their decision-making role helping to secure school improvements. This includes using life-size child-friendly signs around the villages to express their commitment to children's human rights in their daily life. They display a good awareness of the diversity that exists in the world around them.

*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>	3
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>1</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>

**How effective is the provision?**

Classrooms, both indoors and out, are vibrant and stimulating places in which good teaching captures pupils' interests. For example, pupils were observed thoroughly absorbed following up their field trip by identifying and considering the properties of the ironstone samples they had collected. There are excellent relationships between staff and pupils. Staff make explanations well-structured and clear because they have good subject knowledge. They increasingly use new technology to enliven lessons. In the best lessons, teachers match activities well to pupils' age and abilities, maintain a good pace and ask open-ended questions. Within this positive picture, there are occasions when teachers' explanations are too long which reduces the opportunity for pupils of all abilities to explain and justify their thinking. Teachers' marking does not consistently show pupils how they can improve their work.

The good curriculum provides an interesting range of often rich and memorable experiences to extend pupils' skills across different subjects. However, opportunities are occasionally missed for pupils to apply their writing skills in interesting ways, particularly for some of the boys. Good and sometimes excellent use is made of partnerships to enrich learning. For example, pupils spoke enthusiastically about the wide range of high-quality sporting activity in which they are involved. A broad range of trips and visits, including a residential visit, provides excellent opportunities for pupils to extend their personal and academic skills. Many pupils take advantage of the breakfast club, which provides a good start to the day.

The school is rightly proud of its highly-effective care, guidance and support. Those pupils and their families whose circumstances may make them more vulnerable benefit greatly from high-quality work with specialist support agencies. Staff can point to some striking examples in helping pupils overcome barriers to their learning or challenging episodes in their lives, to boost their self-belief and enjoyment of learning to make good progress. This involves successfully engaging sometimes hard-to-reach families. The school has also worked extremely constructively with

<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

parents and carers raising aspirations, boosting self-esteem and promoting the value of good attendance, which is steadily improving.

*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>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The clear vision and sense of purpose of the headteacher have created an encouraging and friendly ethos which permeates the whole school. Teaching and learning are effectively and sensitively monitored and managed. Consequently, staff support each other well. Less effective teaching has been tackled well and all staff share a desire to ensure that lessons are thought-provoking to enable all pupils to achieve at least well. Consequently any unevenness in pupils' progress rates and achievement is being eradicated. The growing confidence of subject leaders is adding to their sense of purpose in enlivening learning. The school's extremely positive engagement with parents and carers is increasing their involvement in their children's learning and development. The good governing body has an excellent grasp of the needs of the communities the school serves. They hold the school to account in helpful ways and are increasingly assured planning for the future. Partnership working is good and makes a particularly strong contribution to the well-being of pupils.

The school has good procedures for safeguarding and risk assessment. These meet government guidelines and include high-quality management of pupils' safety. The school tackles discrimination vigorously and ensures that every pupil has an equal chance to learn. This is evident in the sustained improvements in achievement and the narrowing of pupils' performance gaps. Community cohesion is good and improving, because senior leaders have an effective grasp of the community needs. Developing national and international links promote good awareness of global issues, such as with partner schools in Stockton, France and India.

*These are the grades for the 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>1</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>
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## Early Years Foundation Stage

The warm, welcoming and busy environment enables children to settle quickly into classroom routines and get off to a good start. Children play together well and are well-behaved, because of the appropriate expectations made of them. In reception, imaginative approaches and fun activities enable children to make rapid progress. For example, a group of children were completely captivated painting a story map of a brown bear’s journey into space on a long piece of wallpaper. By the end of reception, nearly all children are confidently working towards the goals expected of them for their age. They are encouraged to work independently and think and investigate for themselves. As a result, progression from adult-directed to child-initiated activities is generally good. However, there are occasions when expectations of children’s play and learning are not sufficiently challenging.

The regular practising of linking sounds and letters helps children make good gains in their early reading and writing. For example, children become engrossed explaining how to build a rocket from cardboard boxes. Good leadership and management ensure that high levels of care and welfare are provided for children to safeguard their well-being. Support for those newly arrived who find difficulty adjusting to routines is a particular strength. There are good rigorous systems for staff to observe and assess the development gains that children make. Excellent partnerships with parents and carers and external agencies ensure their active involvement in their children’s learning development. The provision of family learning sessions is giving parents and carers the confidence to support their children’s learning in different ways.

*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 in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

A below-average proportion of parents and carers returned the questionnaire with their views of the school. Of these, almost all were entirely positive and all indicated that their children are kept safe and are well-prepared for the future. All parents and carers are happy with their children’s experiences at Whitecliffe School. The inspection entirely endorses these positive views.



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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Whitecliffe Primary 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 inspector received 39 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 126 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	28	72	10	26	1	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	29	74	9	23	0	0	1	3
The school informs me about my child's progress	28	72	11	28	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	22	56	16	41	1	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	25	64	13	33	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	25	64	14	36	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	26	67	12	31	1	3	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)	26	67	13	33	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	26	67	12	31	1	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	22	56	17	44	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	22	56	16	41	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	25	64	14	36	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	27	69	12	31	0	0	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 2010 to 08 April 2011 and is consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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 up exactly to 100. Sixth-form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## 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.**



14 November 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Whitecliffe Primary School, Saltburn-By-the-Sea, TS13 4AD**

I want to thank you all for the friendly welcome that you gave the inspection team when we visited to see how well you were learning. We really enjoyed our time talking to you.

Whitecliffe is a good and constantly improving school, which has a number of strengths. We were really impressed with the excellent relationships your school has with your parents and carers and the way your staff continually encourage and support you to do as well as you can. This is helping to improve your keenness to learn and your attendance. We were pleased by your thoughtful behaviour and the excellent care taken of you. You clearly feel safe and happy because of this. You understand well the benefits that an active and healthy lifestyle can bring. You clearly take considerable pride in helping your school to improve. Your contributions to village life are impressive.

The headteacher and the governing body are taking positive action to ensure that your school continues to improve and this can be seen in your sustained rates of progress and your improving skills, including boys' writing. We have asked the school to improve the quality of teaching further. We would like staff to expect even more of you, especially when boys are asked to use their writing skills. We want staff to provide more activities which can excite and interest you to test your thinking. We have also asked that you be given more opportunities to practise your literacy skills in all your subjects and that you are provided with more detailed help to improve when teachers mark your work.

You can all play your part by continuing to work as hard as you can and by telling your teachers if work is too easy or too hard. All the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Clive Petts

Lead Inspector

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