



Lowick and Holy Island CE First Schools

Headteacher Report to Governors

Autumn Term 2021

School Characteristics

- School population**

Cohort	Nursery	Reception	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Overall
Gender (girls / boys)	4 / 3	1 / 6	5/1	1 / 3	3 / 1	4 / 1	18/15
Lowick / Holy Island	7 / 0	6 / 0	5/1	4 / 0	3 / 1	5 / 0	30/2
Total	7	6	6	4	4	5	32

Remote learning: school has been open as usual in the autumn term. At the time of writing this report, we have had 3 children who have benefited from short term remote learning this term due to Covid (awaiting the results of a PCR test or testing positive but feeling well).

- Pupil characteristics (Special Educational Needs / Disability (SEND) / Pupil Premium (PP))**

Three children across both schools are identified as having SEND at the level of 'school support'. One child is identified as SEND with an Education and Healthcare Plan (EHCP).

We no longer have children in school who are Looked After (LAC). Three children are in receipt of free school meals (FSM). These children's families have continued to receive support over the half term holidays through the online groceries voucher scheme funded by county.

- Current staffing**

- Headteacher: Rebecca Simpson
- Class 1 teacher: Carolyn Strangeways
- Class teacher (based on Holy Island and sharing Class 2 in Lowick): Heather Stiansen
- Nursery teacher: Katie Waddington (covering Kayleigh Adam's maternity from September)
- Teaching assistants: Julie Edmison, Steph Hay, Amelia Easten (in nursery) and Sara Morgan (for SEND support). Trainee TA attending on Mondays for experience: Dana Scott
- Support staff: Becki Telfer is our Administrator. Lesley Bradbury and Karen Ward are our caretakers for Lowick and Holy Island respectively. Rachel Easton and Joanne Marshall are our lunchtime supervisors. We have now taken on Dana Scott for lunchtime support four days a week (not Wednesdays)
- Margaret Smith has left and we are now buying our lunches from another school. We advertised last half term for a replacement and had no applicants.
- Zoe Turner delivers active learning sessions across the school on Tuesdays.

- Victoria Graham is not staff but a teacher training student who is in school on some days to observe and later in the year to take small groups and teach with supervision. Heather is her mentor.

- **Safeguarding overview**

Since my previous Headteacher Report for the spring term:

Concern raised for school file.	Children's services referrals	Early Help referrals	Child protection plan	Child in need	Referral to LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer)	Operation Encompass	Operation Endeavour
3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

As always, we remain vigilant and we had whole staff safeguarding training through county on the second INSET day in September. There is an updated version of Keeping Children Safe in Education from September 2021 which has been emailed to governors. It can be found online here:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1021914/KCSIE_2021_September_guidance.pdf

We are bearing in mind the possibility of peer-on-peer sexual abuse in schools following the Ofsted review that found schools should expect it and take action rather than wrongly think it 'doesn't happen here'. Staff should understand that even if there are no reports of peer-on-peer abuse in their school, this doesn't mean it is not happening. We are aware of the changes to the Keeping Children Safe in Education Sept 2021 and I attach a summary in Appendix 1 of the key changes as a reminder for you.

This term we have sent home information for parents and families around fire and firework safety as well as usual updates on our website around online safety. We have been looking at online safety in computing and we have been taking part in the NSPCC's speak out to stay safe online assemblies and follow up lessons in PSHE / RSE (personal, social, health and economic education and relationship and sex education) lessons.

- **Premises**

Some trees near our boundaries at Lowick were trimmed and the crown raised in response to requests from some neighbours. This work was done over the summer holiday.

As Covid cases are still high in our area, where we require workmen to come onto site to resolve issues, we are scheduling them to come when children are not in school as much as possible.

We are continuing to have our water systems checked regularly by HSL with regard to risks from legionella's, and so on, as advised by county.

One of the sheds on Holy Island was damaged in a recent storm in the high winds. Karen purchased wood and her husband helped her to build a new storage shed which looks great.

Leadership and Management

There has been some normality this term although we still have a window of arrival and pick up times for parents to reduce too many people being on the site in the same place at once. We maintained our cleaning systems and kept the children in their seating arrangements. County asked us to consider tightening up restrictions again after half term. We had kept most of ours in place already but we are now think we will need to cancel our panto booking for the Maltings and we will be filming our Christmas play again. We will need to think about our Christmas service and maybe move it outside or film it inside depending on how things go.

Focused staff training to ensure improved pedagogy is ongoing. We have been mindful of the need to balance workload pressures and staff well-being with the demands being made on them to deliver effective lessons, assess and review as well as engage in training programmes. However, the staff are keen to take training opportunities.

We have continued with the Maths Mastery embedding Teacher Research Group virtually. Our application for Mrs Stiansen to do the Mastering Number programme, also through the Great North Maths Hub, aimed at early years and Key Stage 1 was accepted and this has begun in school. Mrs Waddington is also using this resource with the younger children (Reception) to enable and support an early understanding of number.

Miss Easten has begun Initial Teacher Training for Early Years whilst working in our nursery. She also continues to access SEND training through county and is invaluable when assisting the headteacher with the SENDCo role.

Staff training since the previous Headteacher Report:

Date	Training focus	Who	Outcome	Impact
Ongoing	Great North Maths Hub – teacher research group (TRG) workshop on maths mastery (virtual)	RS & CS	Our maths practice continues to improve based on principles of mastery and mixed age teaching.	Staff cascading information from the maths hub and in particular training done online has helped inform practice and facilitate discussion around our next targets in maths.
Ongoing this year	Understanding Number (through the Great North Maths Hub)	HS & KW	Reception and years 1 and 2 are receiving extra intervention time focused on understanding number.	Children are able to subitise (know how many there are without counting) and group numbers more confidently and fluently.
July and September 2021	Computing @ Schools curriculum review for mixed ages / Intro programming and algorithms in EY/ KS1	RS	Computing long term planning reviewed and improved with feedback.	Clearly pathway from early years to lower key stage 2 for computing learning.
12 th October 2021	Food Hygiene training and qualification	All staff	Staff are knowledgeable about food hygiene and can support delivery of food and meals from Prior Park.	School meals are working well despite now buying them in from another school and plating up ourselves.
Autumn term 21	Reading Leaders	HS & KW	Higher understanding of leadership of reading across	Staff training cascaded through effective English staff

Date	Training focus	Who	Outcome	Impact
			the school including early years (nursery)	meetings and ongoing CPD using Ruth Miskin resources linked to RWI (Read Write Inc).
	Reading training including effective early reading.	HS, RS & KW	Clearer understanding of Ofsted expectations for effective early reading and its importance across the curriculum.	Review of what we already do in school, celebration of what we do well and actions agreed for what we need to do next.
	In house English training and focus on effective phonics	HS, CS, KW, SH & JE	Staff reviewed area of reading – phonics – and agreed non-negotiables and consistency of our practice.	Staff more confident and more consistent for RWI interventions.
Oct – Nov 2021	An Introduction to the Speech, Language and Communication (SLC) from the Communication Trust CPD offer	KW	KW becoming more aware of SLC issues and approaches to put into place in nursery and in school.	Planning and approaches revised to respond to training
	Quality Interventions to close gaps	KW	Focus in school on closing gaps for SEND and disadvantaged children from early years.	Planning and approaches revised to respond to training
	Ed Psych 4 kids training on speech delays during the pandemic – specifically help for under 5s SLC delays	CS	Focus in school on addressing speech delays from the pandemic lockdowns and interrupted schooling.	Reception and early years planning benefiting from updated approaches to support communication needs.
	Educational Visits Co-ordinator refresher	CS	School has a group of staff who are up to date with risk assessing for school visits.	CS continues to contribute risk assessments and Evolve entries to support our planned visits.
3 rd November	Starcatchers' Mixed Up training with NE Culture Bridge / Maltings	RS	School joined art project called Mixed Up to allow children to explore their feelings through the arts.	Children responded very positively in school. Parents commented positively about impact at home, in particular a child with SEND was much calmer and happier at home afterwards.
16 th Nov	Collective Worship training through the Diocese	RS	School's collective worship is reviewed and improved	

Quality of Education

This term we have done a lot of work on reviewing and improving our long term planning for subjects across the curriculum. This has been a joint process with reference to the national curriculum, as well as subjects and topics covered at Berwick Middle School and at Longridge Towers. As we have mixed aged classes and like to work with whole school themes we have planned themes for this year and the next four years which will take children through their time in this school. By referring our plans to the national curriculum and upper key stage 2 topics we can ensure that the children have access to a broad, appropriate and interesting curriculum which builds up learning step by step. We have updated our Curriculum Policy to reflect this work. All of these plans and the policy are available on our school website here:

https://www.lowickholylislandschools.org.uk/website/lowick_holy_island_long_term_curriculum_planning/324083

Our Read Write Inc (RWI) phonics small reading groups are supplemented with weekly guided reading sessions for all children in the main school. The younger groups are making good progress overall – we reassessed from their September baseline at the end of last half term and the vast majority of children have made progress and some have made accelerated progress. We re-organised the groups after this assessment and continue to run the assessments in small groups each morning.

We are now running mastery of number intervention groups for the younger children in school approximately three times a week (this varies due to the tides' impact on our timetabling). Whilst the younger children (Reception and KS1) are doing this work the older children (LKS2) are doing 'times tables fables' work with Mrs Strangeways.

We are very happy with the success of our Sikhism topic last half term. The children responded very well to learning about a different religion and we finished the topic with a celebration of the Sikh festival Bandi Chhor Divas (Day of Freedom) which coincides with Diwali.

Our general theme this term is Asia: China and Japan. This is particularly strong in history (we are learning about the Shang Dynasty from Bronze Age China) as well as in geography. We were fortunate to welcome Nobu Kuri, a Japanese gentleman who lives locally, into school to talk to the children about Japan, using chopsticks and Japanese writing. The children were enthralled. In English we have made links with suitable class readers including the Great Wave and Living in Tokyo.

Last half term Pippa Willits, a local artist, came into school to do Forest School Art on Friday afternoons focused on Trees and Seeds (she also linked it to Chinese and Japanese textile work). The children learned a tremendous amount and the processes were good for their mental health as well as their art, design technology and science knowledge and skills.

Our internal data from the summer term:

For our own internal information, we have done informal testing of children using past papers for both the year 1 phonics check and the key stage 1 (KS1) reading and maths SATs.

Our phonics checker for year 1s had a 3/4 (75%) pass rate which is what we would have expected from this cohort without lockdown.

KS1 reading results show all but one child working at age related expectations or better (4/5 or 80%). Two children were on the cusp of working at greater depth.

KS1 maths results show all but two children working at age related expectations or better (3/5 or 60%). One child is working at greater depth (20%).

Considering the loss of learning and unavoidable gaps in covering the curriculum over the past two years we feel that these results show a strong bounce back and the success of our small group strategy for this year.

Behaviour and attitudes

The school continues to have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Incidents are dealt with promptly and staff are confident in maintaining our expectations and responding to issues arising. The children currently attending school are happy to be here and are a pleasure to work with. Visitors to school all comment on the lovely atmosphere and how engaged the children are in school.

Since the previous Headteacher report there have been no major behaviour incidents, no exclusions or prejudicial/racist incidents.

- **Attendance**

Last year I could report that attendance was 100% for Holy Island and 97.4% for Lowick, this meant we were consistently seeing attendance above the national average of 96%.

However, due to the rising number of Covid cases in our local area, as well as a truly terrible cold which circulated round school, we have seen a significant drop in our attendance figures over the first half term of this year, with Holy Island dropping below 100% for the first time since I have been at this school. Lowick is on 93% and Holy Island on 95.4% up to November of this year.

I compared this rate with the Fisher Family Trust database and with other schools in our partnership and we are trending in line or slightly above those figures. However, we are concerned and we will continue to monitor this closely and support parents as they need it.

Personal Development

Since the last report, the children continued to work on the garden and the Remembrance Garden in Lowick and the peace garden in Holy Island. Although now it is November, less gardening is now taking place. The children are still making the most of being outdoors and the forest school work we did was very beneficial for them. We also continue to work with the Newcastle United Foundation to support Commando Joe's in school which contributes very strongly to character education and personal development.

Our curriculum extends beyond the academic and vocational to take into account the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC). We have followed up our work with Christian Aid last year with a new project still linked to the climate crisis. We took part in the COP26 response and made prayer boats for Christian Aid's Rise to the Moment campaign. These are on display at both schools.

We are building a link with Snape Primary School in Suffolk through arts projects which will allow the children to connect to other children from a different part of the UK. We have also joined the Global School Alliance and have attained a Bronze Award from the work we have done so far to celebrate other countries and cultures.

- **Collective Worship**

We had a successful Harvest Festival service at St Mary's church on Holy Island last half term which was led by Sarah and Sam. We were delighted to see some locals as well as family members join us for the celebration. As part of this, our parents made generous donations towards the local food bank.

This half term, we visited the War Memorials in Lowick and on Holy Island respectively for Remembrance Day. Charlotte helped to lead this in Lowick and Sam on Holy Island. We were pleased to see the local community join us outside as well as family members and nursery children who were not at nursery that day came along too. The children shared prayers on poppies and we observed a 2 minute silence, finished with the Last Post.

School trips / enrichment opportunities since the previous Headteacher Report

We currently offer five after school clubs four days a week in the autumn term. In the first half of the term we offered: eco-club, gardening, outdoor games and Commando Joe's. This half term we are offering eco-club, hockey, football and Commando Joe's. We had a very good take up on these clubs – including by disadvantaged children. For a small school we feel a strong commitment to provide a good and varied offer in terms of our extra-curricular activities. We are also still offering before and after school child care.

Kim and Doug kindly visited school to talk about South Africa Heritage Day in September. They told us a lot more about South Africa and Kim also taught us some gumboot dancing. The children enjoyed this very much. As mentioned above, we also had an RE day focused on Sikhism and Bandi Chhor Divas early this half term. The children were able to deepen and broaden their knowledge – for example experiencing langar rather than just writing about it, and creating their own chola with 52 hands on to represent the chola with 52 tassels that was used to free the 52 Hindu princes in the story.

We have been able to go on a local visit to the archaeological dig taking place at Hunting Hall in September. The children were able to get some hands-on experience of the dig, including digging, sieving, cleaning up artefacts and looking at finds through the microscopes. They very much enjoyed this experience and we were able to use their memory of the visit to talk about what archaeologists do and how they know about the Shang Dynasty. This allowed them to apply their knowledge to a different context – a very useful skill.

We are planning three STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths) days through the year (one a term) and we will be doing our first one next week. We will be focusing on materials and building strong structures, keeping teddy dry whilst transporting teddies across water in the rain, finding out what will work to create inputs for the Makey Makey device and the classic egg drop challenge.

Summary of changes to Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) 2021

The new version of [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (KCSiE) comes into force in September 2021. This follows on from a [consultation](#) on the proposed changes in March 2021. The main changes are:

1. Safeguarding information for all staff: condensed version of part 1 introduced

Your school can decide whether staff who don't work directly with children on a regular basis read either:

- Part 1 of KCSiE (as they're expected to do now); or
- The condensed version of part 1 (Annex A)

There's also additional guidance on peer-on-peer abuse, to emphasise the importance of staff knowing what it is and how to respond to reports.

2. Management of safeguarding: protecting children from peer-on-peer abuse in part 2

There's strengthened guidance around what you should be doing to protect pupils from peer-on-peer abuse. You should make sure your school's child protection policy includes:

- Your whole-school approach to peer-on-peer abuse
- Reporting systems in place for pupils
- Recognition that peer-on-peer abuse may be taking place, even if not reported
- Online safety, including the use of the internet on mobile phones due to its role in peer-on-peer abuse
- Additional barriers when recognising abuse for pupils with SEND

3. Safer recruitment: restructured part 3 with more guidance on the recruitment process

There are no changes to your school's statutory requirements. Instead, there's:

- Been a restructure so it's not weighted as heavily on Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks
- More guidance on advertising, shortlisting, references, selection and also ongoing vigilance

4. Managing allegations against staff: updated guidance on low-level concerns in part 4

There are no changes to your statutory requirements on managing allegations against staff.

5. Child-on-child sexual violence and harassment: additional guidance in part 5

There's extra content around these issues, such as clarity on where and how they can occur, and an explanation that part 5 should be read alongside the updated guidance on [sexual violence and sexual harassment](#).