



Lowick and Holy Island CE First Schools Headteacher Report to Governors Summer Term 2023

School Characteristics

- School population**

Cohort	Nursery	Reception	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Overall
Gender (girls / boys)	11 / 6	0 / 1	1 / 3	5 / 2	1 / 2	1 / 2	19 / 16
Lowick / Holy Island	15 / 2*	1 / 0	3 / 1	6 / 1	2 / 1	2 / 1	29 / 6
Total	17	1	4	7	3	3	36

**Please note that Holy Island children attending nursery are officially counted as Lowick children until they start school and they move to the Holy Island SIMs system. This is because our nursery operates under Lowick school community powers. I include them under Holy Island numbers above so we can see the trend over time for Holy Island school.*

Since the previous report:

Our numbers have increased from 31 to 36 since the spring report. Our nursery is currently the largest it has ever been with 17 children and more applications coming in. Stay and Play continues to be well attended. This is a positive indicator for the future growth of the school as a whole.

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

Seven children in Lowick are identified as having additional needs (SEND) at the level of 'school support' (four in our main school and three in nursery). This is an increase from five in our previous report. In addition, one child continues to be identified as SEND with an Education and Healthcare Plan (EHCP). No Holy Island children are identified as SEND.

We currently do not have any children in school who are Looked After (LAC) or who have previously been LAC. We have one child in receipt of free school meals (FSM). This child's family continues to receive support over the holidays through the online groceries voucher scheme funded by county. No children are currently identified as Ever 6 (receiving free school meals in the previous 6 years). No Holy Island children are identified as Pupil Premium.

- 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: Kayleigh Adams
- Teaching assistants: Steph Hay, Becca Armstrong (in nursery), Sara Morgan (for SEND support) and Karen Ward on Holy Island (also our caretaker there).
- Support staff: Becki Telfer is our Administrator. Lesley Bradbury and Karen Ward are our caretakers for Lowick and Holy Island respectively. Rachel Easton, Lyndsey Langley and Joanne Marshall are our lunchtime supervisors. Lyndsey has just resigned and will work out her notice until July.
- Our school cook is Olive Fortune.
- Zoe Turner currently delivers active learning sessions across the school on Tuesdays but she finishes at the end of this academic year.
- Susie Cochrane delivers music and French (to class 2) on Wednesday mornings and has agreed to continue this next year.

Adults in school other than staff (with DBS, but these adults are always supported by a member of staff).

- Mr Graham is a sports coach who delivers our Commando Joe’s sessions on Thursday afternoons.
- We work with a range of sports coaches throughout the year through the Newcastle United Foundation.

Staffing next academic year: I have agreed to be an interim Executive Headteacher in the autumn term to look after Hugh Joicey CE First School in Ford whilst they recruit a headteacher. This is conditional on the HR proposal organising how this will work in effect. I anticipate 1.5 – 2 days at Ford during this time. In order to facilitate my capacity to do this extra role, it has been agreed that I will not undertake any teaching duties at Ford and that out of the money paid into the Lowick budget for my services we will be able to afford supply cover for some/most of my teaching commitment in Lowick.

- **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
4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Safeguarding continues to be an important part of our role in school. We have continued with teaching children how to keep themselves safe in different ways, including online, in friendships, in the sun, on the road and in water. We also draw on NSPCC materials and ‘Pantasaurus’ to help children recognise what is appropriate and also to know who to talk to if they have a concern both in and out of school. NSPCC and Childline posters are available in both school buildings.

We have booked whole staff training for a September teacher training day through the NCC safeguarding team. We will also be looking at the new Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 which comes into effect in September and which has just been published online.

- **Premises**

The ash trees at the front of the Lowick school site have now been taken down as they both had ash die back. We have also given another neighbour permission for their tree surgeon to access a tree which overhangs their garden so that they can get some of the branches trimmed.

The children and staff have been working on the Remembrance Garden and the Peace Garden at Lowick and Holy Island respectively. The children have cleaned up some of the area and helped with weeding. We have put in some ground covering plants and the children have painted new stones for the reflection area. Nursery has had a new sandpit and a volunteer kindly put it together for us.

Holy Island school has had some of the planned work completed. We now have new carpets down and the cupboards in the discovery classroom are now finished and look great.

I have been in discussion with representatives from NCC about changes we will need to our building in order to be able to convert successfully into a primary school. I expect them to visit the school on 12th June and can update you about that visit at the governors meeting on the 13th June.

Leadership and Management

In my last report to you I wrote about how I felt our cultural capital, the richness of our curriculum and the spiritual development of the children in line with our Vision were all strong. I am delighted that our recent SIAMs inspection recognised these strengths in their reports for both schools and that we have been graded as good overall, with good collective worship and excellent RE. The reports have now been published on our website as well as on the SIAMs national website and excerpts and a link shared on our newsletter with parents. We are particularly proud of achieving an excellent grade for our RE curriculum.

We recently had our summer term SIP visit. This was an opportunity again for subject leaders to talk to her about progress and impact. It was also useful to talk about how our personal development offer has been developed.

As you know, I have been asked if I would be an interim Executive Headteacher in the autumn term and look after Hugh Joicey CE First School (Ford) whilst they recruit a headteacher. I have been liaising with Claire Williams (SIP to both schools) as well as meeting with the current head to start to process what will need doing and how things work there as it has been some time since I was a governor or parent to children in that school.

The role is planned to be 'light touch' in that I am not planning on leading significant change as that would be for the substantive headteacher to make decisions about when they take up the role. I am confident that they will be able to appoint a strong candidate so that I will only be in the role for one term. That said, I will need to ensure that I have the capacity to undertake the role and make sure that Lowick and Holy Island schools are not adversely affected. To this end, I am exploring supply cover for my teaching commitments at Lowick and I am not anticipating taking up any regular teaching responsibility at Ford.

Financially, it needs to be arranged what time I am giving to the other school and my expectation that they will pay into the Lowick budget for that time. It is my hope that this will facilitate money to look again at our need for an apprentice TA in nursery.

Staff training remains important for us to be able to deliver the strong curriculum that we do and also to take care of the many needs of the children in our care.

Staff training since the previous Headteacher Report:

Date	Training focus	Who	Outcome	Impact
Ongoing this year 2022 2023	Mastering Number (through the Great North Maths Hub)	CS & KA	Reception and year 1 and some children in year 2 are receiving extra intervention time focused on understanding number.	Children develop secure number knowledge and flexibility around number with clear progression from Reception upwards.
Ongoing all year	NPQEYL (National Professional Qualification in Early Years leadership)	KA	Increased understanding of leadership in Early Years and developing leadership skills.	So far, reviewed school development plan for Early Years linked to NPQ targets.
Ongoing all year	CLPE English subject leadership training	HS	Increased understanding of leadership in English including reading and early reading.	English leadership is strengthened and developed to support the subject across the school.
Ongoing (5 sessions)	Speech, language and communication pathways in Early Years	KA	Increased understanding of speech, language and communication needs and support for nursery and early years' children.	Planning and learning environments improved based on increased knowledge and expertise.
13 th & 16 th February	Sensory diet SEND training	SM	Increased understanding of how to support children with SEND (ASD/ADHD) with sensory needs.	SM able to put in place strategies and resources in school to support children with SEND sensory needs to feel more comfortable in school and able to learn better as a result.
6 th March	Attendance support	RS	RS to review attendance targets and strategies and put in place necessary improvements.	Good attendance is supported, strategies in place to support attendance issues.
8 th March	Paediatric first aid, including emergency first aid	BA	All nursery staff fully trained in first aid.	Staff knowledgeable and capable of managing any first aid needs well.
14 th March and 24 th May	Senior Mental Health Leader training	RS	DfE funded training to support role of senior mental health lead and put in place effective plan to support mental health and well-being in school.	Mental health is supported for both pupils and staff in school. Well-being is promoted in systematic and effective way. RS supported to develop a whole school plan.

Date	Training focus	Who	Outcome	Impact
29 th March	Early Years – 2 year old training	CS	To ensure expertise across school to support our 2 year old offer in nursery.	2 year olds flourish in our nursery environment.
20 th April	Sensory processing difficulties CPD	KA	CPD in managing sensory processing difficulties with respect to early years / nursery setting.	Further adaptations put in place to support children's additional needs around sensory processing. Application put in to support developing sensory area outside.
21 st April	SIAMs conference: the new framework, courageous advocacy and spiritual development.	RS & NG	Awareness for HT and Chair around how SIAMs is changing and the driving ethos behind it. Updated understanding around support spiritual development and courageous advocacy in school.	SIAMs report praised our courageous advocacy and spiritual development in school. Recent training around the framework enabled me to feel more confidence in managing the process.
24 th April & 22 nd May	Thrive practitioner CPD – managing emotional dysregulation in early years	CS	To support Thrive approach in younger early years children (Reception and nursery)	EY children more supported with effective strategies in place to help with dysregulation and 'meltdowns'
25 th April	Canva training	RS	To improve knowledge of software potentially useful for computing and also for school marketing.	RS more confident in accessing canva but not yet used in lessons as not in curriculum this term.
4 sessions monthly starting 26 th April	Maths subject knowledge and skills for TAs – bespoke training as requested, delivered by the Great North Maths Hub.	SH & SM	Increase TA's confidence and skills in maths by boosting their understanding of maths mastery, necessary subject knowledge, vocabulary and skills.	TAs more confident and skilled in supporting maths learning.
4 th May	Thrive training: school life and the menopause	RS	Opportunity to learn more about making our schools menopause friendly and support mental health of staff.	Systems in place reviewed in that context to ensure that the schools are supporting the wellbeing of staff.
4 th May	Physio training on handling & positioning for child in nursery with SEND needs.	KA/BA	Nursery staff are able to handle, position and support a child who has needs around movement.	The child has started nursery and is able to enjoy the experience with appropriate handling and positioning.
10 th May	NHS training on feeding child in nursery with SEND needs.	BA	BA is able to feed this child on her schedule to meet her needs.	The child is able to attend nursery and have her feeding needs met.

Date	Training focus	Who	Outcome	Impact
16 th May	Ogden Trust CPD on science in early years	CS	CS more knowledgeable about how to develop a strong EY curriculum linked to science.	EY curriculum is enriched and science is developed further for Reception children.
9 th June	Supporting giftedness in school by Potential Plus.	RS	1:1 support call for advice on managing gifted children in school.	Useful advice shared and potential future staff CPD identified. Strategies to be used consistently in school.

Planned staff training coming up:

Date	Training focus	Who	Outcome	Planned Impact
29 th June	Thrive: supporting LGBTQA+ in primary schools.	RS	Ensuring our Thrive approach and culture in school is inclusive.	That the school can consider inclusivity and ensure that it is a welcoming and supportive place for everyone.
4 th July	Diocese educational conference.	RS	RS is up to date on latest in educational philosophy, especially with regard to church schools. Opportunity to liaise with other educational professionals.	Vision and leadership refreshed and inspired.

Quality of Education

Our learning themes this term are ‘People dedicated to service’ last half term and currently ‘The Maya’. In RE the children have been learning about Pentecost and are now learning about how people show commitment in different world faiths, with a focus on marriage.

Our latest RWi (Read Write Inc phonics) outcomes are strong and we are hopeful that our phonics check will go well. Year 2 have done their SAT papers now and the results are:

Holy Island:

- 100% (1 child) at least at expected standard for reading, writing and maths. Potentially greater depth in reading and writing but we await moderation to be sure.

Lowick:

- 83% (5/6) at least at expected standard in reading, with two children (33%) working at greater depth.
- 83% (5/6) at least at expected standard in writing and potentially one (17%) at greater depth. We await our moderation on 19th June to be sure.
- 67% (4/6) at least at expected standard in maths, with one further child borderline expected / at working towards. One child (17%) also working at greater depth in maths.

National KS1 results

To compare to national results – we do not have 2023 national results as yet. However, looking at 2022 and 2019 (pre-Covid) here are the comparisons:

- In reading, 67% of pupils met the expected standard in 2022, down from 75% in 2019.
- In writing, 58% of pupils met the expected standard in 2022, down from 69% in 2019.
- In maths, 68% met the expected standard in 2022, down from 76% in 2019

It seems that our results are therefore in line with national results from 2019 and above the 2022 results. As our numbers are so small it is very hard to make comparisons so these are to be taken with a pinch of salt, however we are pleased with these outcomes and especially our writing results which we feel are strong.

We have had outstanding results from our entries to the Leaders Award engineering competition. This is a national competition for primary school age children where they are invited to work through some challenges and then create a solution to a real life problem. Our children invented solutions to the problem of people driving into the water on the Holy Island causeway. Nine children entered from year 2, 3 and 4. 8 out of 9 received a distinction and two of them were shortlisted to go further in the competition for the North East. We are really proud of them.

Our STEM day, exploring forces and cause and effect was very successful. The children were very engaged, solving problems, demonstrating resilience, teamwork and practical thinking. They began by experimenting with toy cars travelling down tubes (different materials, cars, weights etc) where the older children also had to get them to go around corners. We then explored 'Rube Goldberg' causation machines and the children worked in small groups to create table top ones with different forces being used. Finally, the whole school worked together to create a giant causation machine from one end of the school to the other which was a fantastic feat of engineering and applied science.

Our RE day about 'Christianity around the World' enabled the children to learn about how the Bible has been translated into many languages and learn about worship songs in multiple languages before learning a simple worship chorus from Nigeria (Imela). The children then explored the many faces of Jesus and how he has been portrayed in art from all around the world. Finally, we investigated church designs from countries in every part of the globe before each child designed their own 'world church' drawing on their favourite aspects and considering the climate of their chosen location.

We continue to layer our curriculum to help children make connections and so learn more and remember more over time. For example, the older children are aware that writing is different in different countries and have learned about how Chinese writing was developed in China during the Shang Dynasty and now they know about Greek writing and how that is different from both Chinese and English. We are now learning about the Maya and their writing is very different again. They are becoming more aware of diversity through their learning in a natural and accepting way.

Behaviour and attitudes

The school continues to have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and visitors continue to comment on how well our children behave in school and when we visit other places. We have very few minor incidents –we have had no major incidents, no exclusions or prejudicial / racist incidents or bullying incidents since the previous report.

Our parent survey recognises that children feel safe in our school, are well looked after and that any bullying is effectively dealt with. The children's pupil voice is similarly positive. We see that they are increasingly resilient and persistent in their learning when they face difficulties and they are increasingly using the suggestion box

and school council to suggest ideas, changes, additions or ways of doing things showing that they take an active interest in the life of the school and contribute accordingly. For example, we are updating our starlet rewards, repeating our French ice cream parlour (which we did last year), organising different clubs and activities, and doing more work around worry and anxiety based on these suggestions. Our school mental health plan will be focused on anxiety. We currently do quite a few things to help children manage anxiety and as part of the SMHL (Senior Mental Health Lead) training, I have taken on board suggestions to do CBT work with children to begin to tackle the root cause of anxiety. This is being planned this term to begin implementing next term.

- **Attendance (September to May)**

Lowick

Overall attendance 96.2%

Pupil premium group: 98.7%

SEND group: 97.9% (EHCP) and 94.2% (SEN support)

Persistent absentees: 2 (one at 90% and one at 75% attendance)

- In one case the child has been ill and suffers from anxiety affecting attendance. The school is working with parents to improve his attendance.
- In the other case the child has moved from home schooling most of the week and has increased his time in school from 50% when he began in November to 90% a week with an agreement with parents he will attend full time from September.

Holy Island

Overall attendance is 92.7% (This is affected by the extended holiday taken in the autumn term by two pupils. Attendance for Holy Island for the spring term alone was 96% which shows a marked improvement).

No pupil premium

No SEND groups.

Persistence absentee: 1 (83%)

- The school has supported the family and reminded them of the importance of school attendance. Since this, attendance has been improved.

There is a time lag in terms of getting Government statistics for attendance from the DfE. Their figures for autumn and spring term combined in the last academic year was 92.6%. FFT statistics suggest national attendance for 5th September to 26th May is 93.8%. In which case Lowick is above national averages and Holy Island is broadly in line and improving.

There have been no suspensions or exclusions since the last report.

Personal Development

We continue to promote the personal development of each child. We ensure that they all have access to a wide, rich set of experiences both within the curriculum and extra-curricular. For example, we took the children to the Grace Darling museum to enrich their learning about people of service, the history of the RNLI,

character development (kindness, bravery, being a team player) and work in English about biographies. We also visited the RNLI lifeboat station in Seahouses. It also gave us an opportunity to offer Nursery children a chance to enrich their learning. Nursery children came with us so that they could visit another nursery in Seahouses (Busy Bees) and experience a different environment, meet new people, try out their sensory equipment and outdoor area before joining the main school to see the boats in the harbour and the RNLI station.

The children are learning songs about the environment (particularly water) so that they can take part in the 'What a Wonderful World' festival in Alnwick about climate action. In this way, their learning in music is supplemented through character education, courageous advocacy and the opportunity to visit Alnwick Gardens for free with their families for the festival (which is outside of school hours).

Clubs we offer after school:

Our clubs have a high take up from children in each year, this includes groups of children such as SEND or pupil premium.

Monday: cooking club

Tuesday: active club

Wednesday: gardening club

Thursday: Commando Joe's club and cricket club

Friday: eco-schools / environmental / forest school club

Enrichment opportunities since the last report

Date	Activity	Who	Outcomes
2 nd March	Trip to Great North Museum: Hancock in Newcastle	Whole school	We took part in bespoke workshops by the museum around classification of animals, we did work on conservation and also a story bag activity for Early Years around plastics in the environment. We also saw the Ancient Greece collection and the dinosaur exhibition during our visit.
3 rd March	World Book Day +1	Whole school	One of our parents is a published author of children's books and she agreed to come and work with the children. She talked about her books and how she became a published author before leading a collective story writing activity. Afterwards, parents and family members came in to school to share books with the children. This was well attended.
10 th March	Developing Experts live lessons – amphibians	Main school	There are were live lessons about animals and amphibians in particular for the two key stages. This helped make learning more memorable as it was delivered in a different way.
17 th March	Red Nose Day	Whole school	An opportunity for fundraising and considering the importance of key charities to support those in need.
23 rd March	Year 4 transition meet up with other schools	Year 4	An opportunity to make friends, smooth transition and engage in forest school activities with problem solving and teamwork.
27 th March	Easter service at Holy Island	Whole school	An opportunity to worship together and being alive what they have learned in RE about the Last Supper and salvation.

Date	Activity	Who	Outcomes
9 th May	Coronation celebration, throne building and sports	Whole school and families	Families joined us in school for a shared lunch and an afternoon of throne building and decorating outside, as well as a carousel of 'royal sports'. This enabled the community to come together, demonstrate their skills and resilience.
9 th May	Skipping workshop	Whole school	In different age groups the children took part in a morning of skipping workshops to improve skills and fitness. Older children will take part in the partnership skipping festival in July.
10 – 12 th May	Year 4 residential at Ford Castle	Year 4	The children have the opportunity to be more independent away from home, take part in a range of outdoor challenges and activities and become part of the wider community of their peers before going to their next school.
15 th May	Trip to Grace Darling museum, her grave, her house in Bamburgh and then the RNLI Lifeboat station at Seahouses. Trip to Busy Bees nursery and RNLI Lifeboat station at Seahouses	Main school Nursery	An opportunity to make connections to work being done on biographies (class 2) and history (KS1). An opportunity to broaden horizons, have new experiences, try out a different environment with more children before seeing the boats and learning about people who help us.
22 nd May	Visit to the Coastguard station on Holy Island, visit to Priory museum, visit to the lookout and outdoor collective worship on the Heugh	Main school	An opportunity to consolidate learning about the work of the coastguard and make links to previous trips. An opportunity to review the new educational offer at the Priory which the children had contributed towards and an opportunity to look out from the Heugh to see the Farne Islands where Grace Darling lived. Finally, an opportunity to give thanks for the work done by people who risk themselves to help others.

Planned upcoming enrichment events

Date	Activity	Who	Outcomes
12 th June	Maya Day – past productions drama based workshop in school introducing the Maya in a memorable way.	Main school	The children make connections to their prior learning. The children learn more about how Maya lived and what they did in a way that they will remember.
13 th June	Hosting Year 4 transition visit at Lowick	Year 4s	Opportunity to take part in archery, Commando Joes and outdoor art activities whilst cementing relationships with peers to support transition.
14 th June	Trip to Dance City in Newcastle for 'Jumpers for Goalposts' project.	Main school	Opportunity to take part in a dance / football workshop and work with professional dancers in an engaging way. Also an opportunity to travel into a city in contrast to our usual location.

Date	Activity	Who	Outcomes
23 rd June	Trip to walk the sands, following the Pilgrim's poles to Holy Island.	Main school, governors and clergy.	The children make links to our school vision 'Journeying Together' and consider pilgrimage and their sense of place.
30 th June	Etal cricket festival for local schools.	Main school	Opportunity to take part in sports with a wider community.
6 th July	Sports day / beach cricket / summer fair	Whole school	Opportunity to take part in sporting event, raise money for school – taking leadership and responsibility.
11 th July	STEM Day – light and shadow	Main school	Opportunity to enrich the science, maths and DT curriculum in a memorable way.
14 th July	Trip to Lilidorei in Alnwick	Whole school	A chance to explore storytelling and video making in a fun environment.
18 th July	Berwick partnership schools skipping festival	Class 2	A chance to take part in a wider sporting event with other schools.
20 th July	Trip to Northumberland Zoo	Whole school	A chance to recap learning about animals as well as a reward trip requested through the school council for the end of year.

• Collective Worship

Since the last report, we have had our Easter service at St Mary's church on Holy Island on 27th March. Rev Sarah also joined with the Holy Island children on the afternoon of 20th March for St Cuthbert's Day. The main school also enjoyed an outdoor service to thank people who help us when we visited Holy Island.

Our SIAMs report graded our collective worship as 'good' and called it the highlight of the school day which was very pleasing. We recognise the wide variety of worship we are able to facilitate, receive or lead in school and will look at our target for improvement to involve the children in more planning of worship.

Children's evaluation of the impact of collective worship was very interesting and I share with you the end of year summary of their responses:

Collective Worship responses - pupil voice		Summer term 2023		
What I like	What I don't like	What has it made you think about?	Have you changed your mind about anything or changed how you act because of collective worship?	Three words to describe collective worship
Being together	nothing	everybody else	Yes, I'm more helpful	good
everything	I get hungry	God	Being more kind	nice
getting medals & certificates	I just like it	being kind	I think about people, not just myself	happy
the candles	people shouting out	Jesus	When I say "what?!"	calm
talking	just sitting there	happiness	No	fun
it feels like a family	sitting down	love	More thoughtful	amazing
sitting in a circle	when I can't see the light	my friends	I like candles	loving
praying to Jesus		people I miss	It's good to be kind	kind
prayers		my family and Bob (his pet)	Listening	relaxing
thinking of others		prayer	I listen	thoughtful
when we read a story		being calm	I say sorry more	excited
thinking about God		the candle	A bit	think more
the quiet and the calmness		being together	I've become nicer	sad
learn a lot of things		the world	When I walk in I know it's time to calm down and I feel really calm	peaceful
passing the cross			I feel kind of different	harmony
				calming
				clapping
				sharing