



## Lowick and Holy Island CE First Schools

### Headteacher Report to Governors

### Spring Term 2022

#### School Characteristics

- School population**

Cohort	Nursery	Reception	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Overall
Gender (girls / boys)	6 / 5	1 / 4	5/1	1 / 3	1 / 2	4 / 1	<b>18 / 16</b>
Lowick / Holy Island	9 / 2*	5 / 0	5/1	4 / 0	2 / 1	5 / 0	<b>30 / 4*</b>
Total	11	5	6	4	3	5	<b>34</b>

*\*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.*

**Remote learning:** since the last Headteacher report we experienced some cases of Covid in school in the spring term. Consequently, remote learning was made available to children with Covid (although expectations were that if they felt ill they would not do the work) and to children isolating due to close contacts having Covid. We continued to use Seesaw to communicate work and Classroom Secrets Kids for English and maths and a range of resources, including the Oak National Academy, for foundation subjects.

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

Four 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). No Holy Island children are identified as SEND.

We no longer have children in school who are Looked After (LAC). We have two children in receipt of free school meals (FSM). These children's families have continued to receive support over the holidays through the online groceries voucher scheme funded by county. 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: Katie Waddington (covering Kayleigh Adam's maternity from September – Kayleigh is to return on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2022, we plan to retain Katie for Covid recovery tutoring)

- Teaching assistants: Steph Hay, Amelia Easten (in nursery, she is also undertaking Early Years teacher training (EYITT) whilst working here), Sara Morgan (for SEND support), Karen Ward on Holy Island (also our caretaker there) and new appointment - Megan Adams working across the school.
- 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.
- Our new school cook is Olive Fortune who began this half term.
- 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 autumn 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

We have upgraded to using an online system to record safeguarding concerns as well as tracking SEND pupils and parent / school communication. The software is called CPOMs and most staff have had training and have begun using it from January. Catch up training for new staff will be prioritised before Easter. New staff have had an induction which included safeguarding information.

Anonymised reports on this academic year so far from CPOMs are available below (please note that all entries are called 'incident' even if it entails adding positive communication with parents / updating SEND plans:

Categories	Currently Monitored	Incidents (this A/Y)
► Attainment	0	0
► Attendance	0	0
► Behaviour Related Log	0	0
► Bullying/ Friendship Related Issues	0	0
► Cause for Concern	3	4
► Child Contact	1	1
► Child Protection	0	0
► Communication	2	4
► Contact with External Agency	1	1
► Home Issues/ Parenting Issues	5	8
► Medical Issues	2	2
► Parental Contact	4	7
► Safeguarding	0	0
► SEND	1	5
Team Teach Incident	0	0
► Verbal & Aggressive Incidents	0	0
Totals (unique):	8	17

## Cause for concern overview:

Dashboard		
		Import status: Healthy <span></span>
		<a href="#">Back</a>
Viewing students in category Cause for Concern.		<a href="#">Update categories</a>
Name	Year Group	Categories
***** <a href="#">+</a>	Year <a href="#">👤</a>	<a href="#">Neglect Related</a> <a href="#">Home Issues/ Parenting Issues</a> <a href="#">Telephone Call</a> <a href="#">SEND</a> <a href="#">Email</a> <a href="#">Meeting/ Parent's Evening</a> <a href="#">Face to Face Conversation</a> <a href="#">Email</a>
***** <a href="#">+</a>	Year <a href="#">👤</a>	<a href="#">Voice of the Child</a> <a href="#">Home Issues/ Parenting Issues</a> <a href="#">Face to Face Conversation</a> <a href="#">Domestic Violence</a>
***** <a href="#">+</a>	Year <a href="#">👤</a>	<a href="#">Physical Related</a> <a href="#">Home Issues/ Parenting Issues</a> <a href="#">Meeting/ Parent's Evening</a>

I attended virtually recent training from Ofsted on what to expect for inspection which we attended as Holy Island is due as an outstanding school who has not been inspected for several years. It was strongly emphasised about the culture of safeguarding and vigilance extending to every member of the school community and governors. It is vitally important that we are not complacent – as very small schools we must still be acutely aware that it could be happening here (and probably is) rather than assuming otherwise.

Children's work this term in PSHE and computing have looked in more depth on online safety issues including who to trust online. I drew upon serious case reviews I am aware of from my Designated Safeguarding Lead training to create options to test the children's trust of people online – including if someone says they are a child, a friend of their parent or a famous celebrity to gain trust. We feel these lessons have been very valuable in making children more alert to deception online. This was shared with parents in our newsletter with links to information and resources for them to support from home. They have also done work on seeking permission for actions online and why as well as work around how information on the internet can be false or misleading.

We are also looking at road safety – particularly for some of our younger children and children with SEND.

- **Premises**

I have had another request for the hedge at the end of the field to be trimmed further. I understand that the metal fence which stands between our hedge and our neighbour's hedge prevents us cutting it much lower, however I have asked our gardening company to do an additional trim when they are next able to do so.

We now need to move ahead with our planned update and renovation of the Early Years outdoor area behind nursery. We plan to extend the space onto the flatter area towards the field and resurface this for improved vehicle play. We will also gate the end into the field and into the yard so that children have a larger overall space and ensuring easier access to the rest of our outdoor areas including the trim trail.

In the follow up storms we were lucky to receive much less damage than in November. We were able to pre-empt further losses through moving as much of our yard equipment as possible into the gym and weighing down other items successfully. We are still awaiting new sheds to replace those lost in the autumn term and these have been ordered.

Our main gate on Holy Island was damaged in a recent storm in the high winds. Karen has blocked off the area temporarily for safeguarding and we have asked John Moore to replace it as soon as possible. He has already done the posts which were the weak point and we await the actual gate.

## Leadership and Management

We continue our journey towards greater normality with restrictions outside of school being much looser. We are still asking school community member to observe the advisory isolation period if they test positive or are a close contact of a positive Covid case. Parents and staff are being respectful of this request. We are continuing with our previous precautions: regular cleaning, handwashing and staggered drop off and pick up times.

Staff training to on pedagogy and subject knowledge is ongoing. We continue to be 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 very willing to undertake professional development.

Currently in maths we are taking part in three programmes through the Great North Maths Hub and teaching for mastery approach. (1) We are in the third and sustaining year of Maths Mastery which is beginning to move towards being face-to-face again; (2) Heather and Katie are both taking part in the Mastery for Number approach to consolidate and address number knowledge and working with Reception and Key Stage 1 children. We hosted a training session on this in our Lowick school this half term; (3) Carolyn and I have joined a course on 'How Pupils Learn Maths' which is covering the cognitive science behind learning and memory. This is proving to be extremely valuable in helping us apply theory to our practice to improve learning experiences for our children in school, for example, strategies to help develop long term memory or reduce cognitive load.

In English, Heather has attended virtual training by St Michael's English hub on leadership and reading as well as training by the Diocese on early reading. This is helping us to identify what we are doing well to promote reading and what we can also do. Our strengths are our core books and text choices through the year groups which are also linked to our topics. During our current topic of English Queens (Elizabeth I and Elizabeth II) children have had access to reference books about both the Queens as well as fiction such as 'The Queen's Handbag' with the younger children (which also had excellent links to geography as she chases it all round the county using different types of transport) and the older children have been incredibly enthusiastic to work on Shakespeare's Twelfth Night (a suitable version for their ages). Our SIP visited recently and noted that they had an 'in depth knowledge of Twelfth Night' whilst maintaining clear differentiation between year 2 and key stage 2 children in their English books.

Miss Easten is continuing her Initial Teacher Training for Early Years whilst working in our nursery. She also continues to access SEND training through county and is becoming extremely knowledgeable through this work.

### 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

Date	Training focus	Who	Outcome	Impact
				discussion around our next targets in maths. Maths books show good variation in questioning and reasoning and problems solving.
Spring and summer term	How do Pupils learn maths – cognitive science of learning and remembering	RS & CS	Through gap tasks and increased knowledge, we are adjusting our planning and lesson delivery and resources to support learning and memory.	Staff cascading information and developing resources such as 'stepping stones' to support learning. Too early yet to measure impact other than anecdotally.
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.
4 <sup>th</sup> January	Safeguarding update and mental health awareness training	All staff	Staff safeguarding knowledge refreshed and greater understanding of approaches to support mental health across school.	Planning and action in school to explicitly support mental health including time to talk about anxiety and ensure children have a toolkit of strategies such as 'bear breathing' to manage their emotions.
12 <sup>th</sup> January	CPOMs training	All staff	Staff understand how to use CPOMs to record communication, safeguarding incidents, SEND incidents and alert the appropriate member of staff.	Staff are recording incidents on CPOMs with sufficient information and correct categories.
January 2022	Computing @ Schools training on networks, inputs and outputs	RS	Computing long term planning for this area reviewed and improved with feedback.	Computing planning includes appropriate work around networks, inputs and outputs
January and February	Leading Early Reading / supporting reading	HS	HS more aware of expectations when leading reading and early reading in particular.	Audit of our current reading practice to promote (a) a love of reading and (b) support phonics and progression over time.
February 2022	Core Books in Early Years	KW	KW more confident to plan around core books in Early Years and how these can be used successfully.	SIP identified our use of core books as a strength of the school.
February 2022	Music partnership meeting	KW	KW shared good practice with music teachers and specialists in our area and at county.	Review of our music planning and increased challenge and differentiation planned in.

Date	Training focus	Who	Outcome	Impact
Spring into summer term	Elklan Speech, Language and Communication training	RS	Working towards being accredited Elklan practitioner. RS more knowledgeable about SLCN and strategies to identify need and support development.	Gap task already having an impact on memory work using colour coded mind map, visual aids such as visual timetables and identifying levels of attention and cascading strategies with staff.
3 <sup>rd</sup> March	Ofsted webinar – what to expect for outstanding schools who have not had inspection for many years.	RS	RS more aware of expectations linked to more recent Ofsted framework.	RS and staff able to prepare more efficiently for an upcoming Ofsted inspection.

## Quality of Education

We are continuing to develop high quality planning across the curriculum with a focus on the children knowing more and remembering more. We understand that children need to be able to make links with prior learning and build on that. We are undertaking pupil voice around their views of different subjects which we then hope to come round on later in the year so see if any negatives can be addressed and positives capitalised upon. So far we have done this for maths and RE. Our next step with our long term planning is to integrate the separate Early Years planning into the KS1 and KS2 plans so progression across the whole school is more clearly evident.

We are still delivering successful Read Write Inc (RWI) phonics small reading groups each morning and assess every half term. We are seeing strong progress across all children, including SEND children, in RWI and early reading. Heather is delivering weekly guided reading sessions (tide allowing) for all children in the main school so that as English lead she has a good grasp of the reading capability of every child in school – this is the advantage of being small schools.

Children who have graduated from RWI as confident readers are either using online programmes such as Sumdog to practise spellings or maths skills, doing active learning with Mrs Turner on a Tuesday or doing a morning maths club with me. I am currently working with KS2 children on decimals to supplement the maths curriculum and enable full coverage, taking into account recovery work, by the end of the year. Similarly, we have split class 2 for maths into a year 2 group and a KS2 group to enable us to ensure coverage and small group attention for children. This is part of curriculum recovery and we hope to continue this after Easter using Mrs Waddington to support this.

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 in preparation for the times table check this year for year 4s.

In RE, we have completed our topic on 'How do we belong?' which was a multi-faith unit. It included work on baptism and naming ceremonies for Jewish girls. All the children were able to visit St John's in Lowick and enact a baptism in groups with dolls. This was a memorable experience and parents reported their children

were able to give detailed recounts of what happens during baptism afterwards. We welcomed Jaswinder from the North East Sikh Service into school to talk about belonging to the Sikh faith and the '5 Ks'. He was very engaging and as well as showing the children his 5 Ks he brought musical instruments which he played for us and led a short meditation based on the Mool Mantar.

Our current school theme is English Queens (Elizabeth I and Elizabeth II). This has allowed us to compare royal portraits and fashions as well as changes over time between London then and now. We are exploring changes to transport (linked to maps over time), the size of the Empire and using historical sources. The link to geography has been about locational knowledge as well as transport and capital cities. In art we looked at traditional portraits of Elizabeth I with a chance for the children to draw inference from what is presented (in one picture for example she is standing on a map of the world). We compared that to Andy Warhol's prints of our Queen and the children created their own block prints and created very colourful prints of their own design. Our forest school art is beginning again this half term and Pippa has begun this with work on Elizabethan knot gardens.

We had another successful STEM day (science, technology, engineering and maths) focused on animals. The children got to experience different animals in school – birds, reptiles, arthropods and insects – and use that experience to think about classification of animals, the insulating properties of different materials such as fur, feathers and blubber, consider adaptations and create a habitat to suit a creature of their own imagining.

We have decided to adjust our timetable to offer French to KS2 children only. We were initially including KS1 children as well but felt that we needed the curriculum time for them to focus on other areas of the curriculum, including writing at length and mastering number. As the national curriculum for modern foreign languages starts at KS2 we feel justified in making this change, especially as the KS1 children will have had some French input in anticipation of KS2.

- **Pupil outcomes**

Our RWI phonics assessments show that all pupils are making good progress. Several of our year 1 children have graduated the programme already (normally a child would be on until end of year 2).

We anticipate that 100% of our year 1s will pass the phonics checker in June, our one concern is a SEND child who struggles with the concept of nonsense or 'monster' words although she can read fluently for her age.

For our key stage 1 SATs, we anticipate that 75% (three out of our four) year 2s will achieve expected standard in reading, writing and maths. The fourth child will be disapplied from the SATs exams due to working below the key stage standard.

This will be the first year of the year 4 times tables checker. We are unsure if our pupils will 'pass' this as it requires them to answer all questions correctly online within a 6 second window per question. We are ensuring our children have a good grounding in times tables, but we are not sure if they will be able to demonstrate this under those test conditions.

## **Behaviour and attitudes**

The school has high expectations of pupils' behaviour. We have very few minor incidents –we have had no major incidents, no exclusions or prejudicial / racist incidents since the previous report.

Children have reported to our SIP during pupil voice that they feel safe in school and that teachers are quick to deal with any issues on the yard. The only issues they were able to describe included crying because they had fallen over on the yard or disagreements around football. They communicated to our SIP that these disagreements were rare and that “teachers watch to make sure no one is sad”.

We have conducted some pupil questionnaires around their feelings towards certain subjects and hope to expand this across all subjects. This has helped us to work with them as owners of their learning, considering what helps them and what can be barriers to learning.

In PSHE children have been considering rules and responsibilities and have helped to create a ‘Children’s Charter’ for the playground to reinforce positive behaviour and have ownership for behaviour across the school.

- **Attendance**

As you know, 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 of this year. Holy Island continues to be below 100% for the first time since I have been in school, and due to both pupils being ill, Holy Island attendance is currently at 89%. We have carefully gone through their individual attendance records and can confirm all absence was for genuine reasons of ill health, including Covid, and could not be helped. We continue to support our parents in this and monitor it closely.

At Lowick, overall attendance (Sept – spring half term) is currently at 95%. Our SEND group (4 children) have higher attendance at 99%. Our pupil premium group has lower attendance at 91% (both children have experienced genuine illness as well as required isolation time). Again, we are satisfied that their absences were unavoidable and continue to support parents and monitor closely.

## **Personal Development**

We are continuing to ensure that our curriculum extends beyond the academic and provides for children’s broader development. We continue to have Commando Joe’s in school on Thursday afternoons which supports our work on developing strength of character as well as helping children become more confident and resilient.

We have sought out a range of additional activities linked to physical fitness and well-being, as we know that being active has a positive effect on mental health as well as physical health. We have had a day with hula hooping and dance and we will be having further workshops for the children on skateboarding and curling.

We are focusing on democracy and rule of law through PSHE and activities in school. Miss Hay and Mrs Morgan have taken on the school council and they are looking at the pupil suggestion boxes and feeding back to us their requests which include an art day and a day for trying new foods. Older children are responding with great interest to work on Universal Human Rights as well as Children’s Rights.

We continue to invest in high quality book resources for our library and reading scheme boxes. We have added several books recently which support children’s confidence in learning and being creative (for example ‘The



Dot') as well as books about 'untypical' people – either people who are neurologically divergent or physically different. This is in addition to the books we have in to support relationships and emotional well-being – we have expanded our range of books about parents divorcing, living with split families, different family types and coping with loss. Our topic linked books are also important so that children can 'read around' the subjects we are learning about in school with a choice of fiction and reference texts. We ensure, as before, that we have a diversity of people with different beliefs, cultures and ethnicities represented in the books we have available in school. We are expanding this for Early Years age range including nursery through some new purchases of stories from other cultures and books about clothing, foods and beliefs from around the world aimed at these much younger children.

We are continuing to build 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. As part of this we will be taking part in the International Children's Day art competition based in Europe which has a focus of spirals (younger children) or helixes (older children) and is being run by the son of the famous sculpture, Arthur Fleischmann.

Since the last Headteacher's report we have raised money for Save the Children and Ryan Renton in Berwick who is battling cancer. We are taking part in Comic Relief – Red Nose day this half term.

- **Collective Worship**

We had a successful outdoor Christmas service at St John the Baptist church in Lowick last term which was led by Charlotte. We were delighted to see family members join us for the celebration.

This half term we will be having a beach service on Holy Island for St Cuthbert (on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> March) and an Easter experience at Lowick church before the end of term.

In the meantime, we are pleased to welcome Charlotte, Sarah and Sam into school on Wednesdays to lead our collective worship. We have daily collective worship with the other days being led by different staff members. We have reinstated our singing collective worship on Tuesdays, we focus on the world and environment on Thursdays and we have a theme of thankfulness and celebration every Friday. In between, we are using the Roots and Fruits 2 worship guide on key themes. Children are invited to share their thoughts and prayers during collective worship and we enjoy our body prayer which Charlotte introduced as well as the circle prayer with the cross which Sam introduced.

### **School trips / enrichment opportunities since the previous Headteacher Report**

We currently offer four after school clubs four days a week in the spring term. In the first half of the term we offered: eco-club, multi-skills, gymnastics & dance and Commando Joe's. This half term we are offering eco-club, cricket, skipping and Commando Joe's. Miss Hay is also leading a lunchtime football club given our children's current enthusiasm for the sport.

We welcomed Jaswinder from the North East Sikh Service into school to talk to the children about his Sikh faith, his culture and his signs of belonging. This was hugely valuable in bringing what we had been learning about to life.

In nursery we have had a few visitors including Boogie Beats (music and dance), the library service for World Book Day and baby massage for Stay and Play.

We were thrilled to have V Rev Susan Brown visit us. As a previous Moderator in the Church of Scotland and Chaplain to the Queen she was a fantastic inspiration for our children and full of interesting and funny stories. We hope to welcome her back to school to talk about her links with schools in Southern India in the future.

In school we marked the Lunar New Year with a crafts festival and a Chinese lunch.

We also marked Safer Internet Day with a special assembly which was followed up in the curriculum.

Our second STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths) day was a huge success with the children making great connections with their learning and producing some good follow up work on scientific thinking, fair experimentation and knowledge about animals and habitats.

We look forward to our day on Holy Island this half term where children will join worship on the beach, meet with a member of the Holy Island Archive Group to talk about the centenary of the James B Graham shipwreck rescue as well as take time for using their field sketchbooks.

We are planning further enrichment activities on Holy Island and have been contacted by English Heritage to support their revamp of their museum and display at Lindisfarne Priory.

We have also been talking to musician Paul Edis about a music workshop based around the music at the time of the writing of the Lindisfarne Gospels (such as plain song and chanting) followed by his band's performance of the St Cuthbert's Suite at the church. This is planned for the autumn term.

Finally, we are having fortnightly forest school sessions led by local artist – Pippa Willits – and she is linking these sessions to our overall school theme of English Queens. She will be doing further sessions in the summer term when we begin our new theme of 'Northumberland'. We have also asked her to support us with our art competition entry mentioned above for the International Children's Day.