

Oughterside Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112138
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	378433
Inspection dates	18–19 January 2012
Lead inspector	Ann Ashdown

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	26
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Penny Gray
Headteacher	Nick Sutton
Date of previous school inspection	21 October 2009
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Introduction

Inspection team

Ann Ashdown

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days notice. There were no responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View). The inspector observed three teachers teaching six lessons. In addition, the inspector talked with pupils and listened to them read. Meetings were held with members of the governing body and school staff. The inspector observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' books, pupils' progress data, safeguarding information, and other documentation. She analysed 12 questionnaires from parents and carers and also those from pupils and staff.

Information about the school

This is a well-below-average-sized primary school. Pupils are taught in two mixed-age classes. Almost all pupils are White British. Seventy per cent of pupils are boys. An average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and those with disabilities is average. The school meets the current floor standard.

The privately run provision for childcare, 'Oughterside Pre-School Unit' shares the school's site. It is subject to a separate inspection and will receive its own inspection report which will be published on the Ofsted website.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	3

Key Findings

- This is a satisfactory school. It continues to improve because during a period of falling rolls and budget constraints, staff have worked together to ensure that a firm focus on raising attainment and accelerating pupils' progress has been maintained.
- Children settle quickly into Class 1 where those in the Reception Year follow the good role models of older pupils. Although opportunities for learning outdoors are not as good as those provided indoors, these children make satisfactory progress and have the expected skills when they enter Year 1. This satisfactory progress and achievement continues as pupils move through the school and although cohorts are very small and attainment varies widely, it is typically broadly average when pupils leave Year 6.
- Teaching is satisfactory overall. In some lessons it is good. Teachers' explanations are clear and their questioning is usually carefully targeted to extend pupils' skills and check their learning. Pupils are well known as individuals and in the best lessons, work is carefully tailored to their differing needs. In some lessons, the pace of learning is slower because work is not as challenging, pupils are asked to listen for too long and have fewer opportunities to learn independently.
- Behaviour and safety are good. Pupils behave well and show kindness and respect to each other, staff and visitors. Pupils' attendance is above average because they enjoy learning and feel confident, safe and happy in school. Parents and carers are entirely satisfied with the education their children receive and comment warmly on the good support and care the school provides.
- Members of the governing body and the headteacher have identified appropriate priorities for school improvement which are shared by all staff. The school's self-evaluation is largely accurate and teaching and learning are monitored regularly. The satisfactory curriculum meets pupils' needs but does not yet provide sufficient opportunities for older pupils to develop their basic skills across all curriculum areas.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve teaching so that it is consistently good or better by:
 - reducing the time pupils spend listening and giving them more time to learn independently, solve problems and think for themselves
 - ensuring that the pace of lessons is consistently challenging for all pupils.
- Improve the provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - providing a dedicated outdoor space equipped with a range of high quality resources for outdoor learning
 - giving children more frequent opportunities to develop their independent learning skills in an outdoor environment.
- Develop the curriculum further to allow older pupils more opportunities to practise their basic skills of writing and calculation across a range of topics that interest them.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Achievement is satisfactory. In lessons, both boys and the much smaller number of girls make at least satisfactory progress and in some lessons their progress is good. All of the high proportion of parents and carers who completed the questionnaire are entirely happy with the progress their children make and with the way their children's skills in reading writing and mathematics are being developed. Teachers ensure, through regular guided reading sessions, that all pupils make at least satisfactory progress and typically reach at least average attainment in their reading at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This was confirmed when the inspector listened to pupils in Year 1 and Year 6 read. Most pupils have good attitudes to learning and are keen to contribute to lessons. A few are more reluctant learners but teachers and teaching assistants give them constructive individual help to ensure that they make the same satisfactory progress as that of their peers. Pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 were observed to be enjoying learning in a mathematics lesson as they developed a good understanding of the patterns that numbers and colours can make. Children in the Reception Year made good progress whilst learning in the classroom but a lack of resources and a dedicated space in which to learn slows their progress when they move outside. Lack of these facilities means they have too few opportunities to develop their independent learning skills outdoors.

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills broadly typical for their age, except in communication, language and literacy development where they are sometimes below expectations. From their individual starting points pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stages 1 and 2. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make the same progress as that of their peers because they receive timely and well-focused help from teachers and teaching assistants. Although results in national tests fluctuate markedly from year to year, over the

last three years, pupils' attainment has been broadly average at the end of Year 6. Work in pupils' books and that displayed on classroom walls confirms the satisfactory progress that current pupils are making. The school's own pupil progress data indicate that all pupils are on track to reach their targets this year.

Quality of teaching

Parents and carers are pleased with the quality of teaching that their children receive. The inspector agrees that teaching is never less than satisfactory and in some lessons it is good. Teachers know their pupils extremely well and use praise judiciously to build their confidence so that they enjoy learning. In the best lessons, teachers use attractive and varied resources to engage pupils' interest and, after a short introduction, allow pupils opportunities to work out things for themselves in pairs and groups. In a science lesson, pupils enjoyed working in groups to find out whether materials such as foil, foam and bubble wrap made good thermal insulators. The pace of learning is slower and a few pupils become a little restless in lessons where teacher introductions are longer and there are fewer opportunities for pupils to learn independently. In a few lessons, the pace of work, although satisfactory, is not brisk enough to provide high levels of challenge for all pupils. Pupils' books are marked regularly. Pupils are given targets to aim for and most know how to improve their work in order to achieve them. Teaching assistants are well deployed and good use is made of their individual skills, for example, in helping to develop pupils' artistic abilities, to enrich the curriculum.

Teachers use the satisfactorily planned curriculum to meet pupils' needs and extend their knowledge and understanding. However, there are currently limited opportunities for older pupils to develop their basic skills across the curriculum through the study of a range of integrated themes and topics. Teachers generally ensure that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through lessons and other very varied activities, including thought provoking assemblies, family camping weekends and African drumming sessions.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' behaviour is typically good. In the playground, in assemblies, in the dining hall and in lessons pupils were seen to be polite and sensible. They work well together and share information and ideas willingly. Older pupils in mixed-age classes provide good role models for younger children and all pupils are fully aware of the needs of others. Pupils say how safe they feel in school and that they are happy to talk to all staff if they have a problem. Although there is no formal school council, pupils say that, in this very small school, they are listened to and feel that their views are heard. They are clear about how to stay safe and have a good understanding, for example of road safety issues, through powerful and relevant messages delivered in assembly. Pupils understand that there are different types of bullying but say that they do not feel intimidated in any way in their school and have confidence that any minor problems they may have at school would be quickly dealt with. Parents and carers share their children's confidence that pupils are well looked after at school. They also agree with the inspector's findings that behaviour is typically good. Pupils enjoy coming to school, they are punctual and their attendance has been consistently above average for the last three years.

Leadership and management

The whole staff team at Oughterside Primary have a shared vision for further school improvement. Although the headteacher and members of the governing body face major challenges due to budget constraints and a falling school roll, they have ensured that pupils continue to make at least satisfactory progress. Appropriate priorities for development have been identified, such as reviewing the curriculum and developing the outdoor learning area for the youngest children. Members of the governing body know the school's strengths and weaknesses well and are very supportive of it. They have yet to be fully involved in determining its strategic direction. Safeguarding policies and procedures meet requirements. All pupils are given equal opportunities to succeed and discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. The school works closely with neighbouring schools to broaden the curriculum and ensure that pupils have a smooth transition to the next stage of their education.

The curriculum is satisfactory. It is being reviewed and further opportunities to link subjects together and give pupils more opportunities to use their basic skills across a range of subjects are now being explored. A strength of the curriculum is the way in which it contributes to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils speak enthusiastically about a range of enrichment activities which they really enjoy. These include for example, a residential outdoor activities week, trips to the theatre, a film club and varied sporting activities.

School self-evaluation is broadly accurate and satisfactory monitoring of teaching and learning takes place. Professional development is improving teaching and the leadership skills of both teachers and teaching assistants. Consequently, the school is well placed to improve further.

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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



20 January 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Oughterside Primary School, Wigton CA7 2PY

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave me when I inspected your school this week. I especially enjoyed listening to your African drumming. A particular 'thank you' goes to those of you who read aloud to me, filled in the questionnaires and were keen to tell me so much about your school. Please thank your parents and carers who also filled in the questionnaires.

This is what we have said about your school in our report.

- Your behaviour is good and you show kindness and consideration to others.
- Yours is a satisfactory school which continues to improve.
- Your achievement is satisfactory because you make satisfactory progress and attain average standards.
- The teaching you receive is at least satisfactory and sometimes good.
- The way your school is led and managed and the curriculum you follow are satisfactory.

This is what we have asked your school to do to help it improve.

- Make your lessons even better by making sure that the work you do keeps you busy all the time so you are challenged to do your best and also for teachers not to ask you to listen for too long and to give you more opportunities to work on your own and discover things for yourselves.
- Provide the youngest children with a special space and equipment so they can spend more time learning outdoors.
- Allow the older pupils more opportunities to practise their literacy and numeracy skills, whilst studying a range of exciting themes and topics.

All of you can help your school to improve by continuing to attend regularly, behaving well and working with your teachers to achieve the very best you can.

Yours sincerely

Ann Ashdown
Lead inspector

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