

Pennine Way Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131177
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	381313
Inspection dates	7–8 February 2012
Lead inspector	Naomi Taylor

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	287
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jeff Johnston
Headteacher	Sue Blair
Date of previous school inspection	1 December 2008
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Introduction

Inspection team

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Additional inspector
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This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed 13 teachers and visited 18 lessons. Discussions were held with school staff, groups of pupils, members of the governing body and parents and carers. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation provided by the school including safeguarding documents, the school's self-evaluation and development plans, local authority evaluations, records of pupils' attainment and progress and pupils' work. The inspectors looked at the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) but no responses were recorded. The responses from 48 parents and carers, pupils and staff were also analysed.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized primary school. The vast majority of pupils are White British. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is well-above average as is the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. The school holds the Sports Activemark Award, Healthy Schools status, Foundation Stage International Award, Bronze Eco Award and Gold Inclusion Awards. It meets the government's floor standard, which sets minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

- Pennine Way is a good school. Pupils, parents and carers and staff are overwhelmingly positive about it. One parent/carer commented on their child being, 'happy, secure and learning well', a view which represented that of the vast majority. Pupils achieve well. From well-below average starting points, they attain above average standards overall by the end of Year 6. Attainment by the end of Key Stage 1 is broadly in line with the national average but the numbers reaching Level 3 are below average.
- Teaching is good. Some lessons were outstanding, although there are a few minor inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. The school provides good support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. As a result, these pupils make good, and in some cases, better progress than similar pupils nationally. The headteacher, teachers and teaching assistants work well together to ensure that all groups of pupils are highly engaged in their learning. Occasionally, targets are not fully understood by all pupils. Teachers' marking does not always provide precise detail on how pupils can improve their work.
- Pupils behave exceptionally well in lessons and around the school. They have high levels of respect for each other and for staff and visitors to the school. Those who join the school other than at the usual times are quickly made to feel part of an extremely strong school community. Pupils' academic and personal development are given equal importance giving them great confidence to move to the next stage in their education. These aspects, together with the well-planned curriculum, significantly support pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The headteacher and staff know the school's strengths and weaknesses. Performance management is used well to improve the quality of teaching and make effective staff changes. Since the last inspection there have been a number of recent and significant improvements which are accelerating progress, particularly in Key Stage 2. Key leaders have embedded a more creative curriculum but more challenge is needed for the more able in Reception and Key Stage 1.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that all lessons are at least consistently good or better by:
 - planning tasks in Reception and Key Stage 1 to sufficiently challenge the more able and maximise their learning
 - ensuring that teachers' marking provides pupils with guidance on the precise steps pupils need to take to improve their work
 - checking that all pupils clearly understand their targets.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Evidence from lesson observations demonstrates pupils are fully engaged in learning and are making good progress. Pupils show excitement and interest in their lessons and their positive attitudes and exemplary behaviour make a significant contribution to accelerating their progress, particularly in Key Stage 2.

Children start school with skills and knowledge that are generally much lower than those expected for their age, particularly in communication and language development, numeracy, and personal, emotional and social skills. Through the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 children achieve well; their skills are broadly in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2, although fewer than the national average of more-able pupils attain Level 3.

Overall attainment by the end of Year 6 is above average. There is more challenge for the more-able pupils in Key Stage 2; this is evident from the percentage of pupils achieving Level 5 which is higher than the national average. The introduction of a creative curriculum is having a positive impact on rapidly closing gaps between girls' and boys' attainment in the school. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs gain much in their development from working in a very secure community school setting. Parents and carers believe that their children are making good progress and this was evident during the inspection.

Pupils in Key Stage 1 quickly develop satisfactory reading skills. They use these skills well to break down and sound out difficult or unfamiliar words. They demonstrate an understanding of what they could read by retelling the story in their own words. Analysis of data shows that attainment in reading is improving. Reading books are correctly matched to the needs of the pupils. Their attainment in reading is broadly average by the end of Year 2. In Years 3 and 4, pupils have a good understanding of the importance of reading both for their school work and for their future enjoyment. They are confident in their reading skills and speak excitedly about enjoying reading a variety of books. Attainment in reading is above average by the end of Year 6.

Quality of teaching

The quality of teaching is good, reflecting parents' and carers' extremely positive views. Some lessons were outstanding; they were exceptionally well planned, with rapid pace and used a variety of activities drawn from the planned curriculum which fully engaged and enthused pupils. For example, in a Year 5 lesson, pupils were highly motivated in acting out their story using miming skills. Pupils worked exceptionally well together and talked about the impact of exaggerating gestures. Excellent questioning techniques used by the teacher and teaching assistant extended pupils' vocabulary and fired their imagination. Pupils were excited and enthralled and had a raft of language and experience to draw upon to help with writing their story at a later date.

In Key Stage 2, all ability ranges were given well-matched challenges to maximise their learning and this is reflected in their progress and attainment by the time they leave school. In a Year 3 lesson, pupils were highly engaged in reflecting on their visit the previous day to Whinlatter Park. They recalled the order of events as a whole class and built up a word bank prior to moving into ability groups and embarking on an individual piece of extended writing. They used a range of connectives and wrote in a particular style, building on the book that they had previously read. Such lessons also demonstrate the strong impact of teaching on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

In lessons where teaching is less strong learning activities for pupils of different abilities are not always so precisely matched to their needs. For example, in some lessons the introductions were too long and too teacher directed. In Reception and Key Stage 1 the more able are not consistently challenged.

Marking is frequent but does not consistently provide precise enough information for pupils about the next steps needed to improve their work. In Key Stage 1 the language used is not always child friendly. The school's tracking system allows teachers to set realistic and challenging targets, although pupils do not always know or understand them. There is effective use of peer- and self-assessment by the older pupils which gives them the opportunity to reflect on their own work and this was demonstrated in lessons and in their work books.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Behaviour and safety are outstanding. Pupils overwhelmingly say they feel extremely safe in school and they are confident that they can turn to any adults if they have any concerns. They have an outstanding understanding of the risks to which they may be exposed. This was evident during the inspection from the risk assessments scrutinised and from the way that pupils spoke about keeping safe in school and in their local community. There was an excellent example of raising pupils' awareness of e-safety during an assembly. The headteacher gave pupils some clues about a person she had been talking to online and the pupils had to guess who, in the school, it was. Pupils were amazed when the person revealed themselves, highlighting that people can tell lies about themselves on the internet. Attendance is above the national average and pupils arrive punctually to school.

Typically, pupils behave exceptionally well in and around school. Pupils, parents and carers and inspectors agree that behaviour is of a very high standard. There is no evidence of bullying of any type and there is great confidence that it would be dealt with efficiently and

effectively should such concerns arise. The curriculum includes raising awareness of different types of bullying.

The highly effective behaviour policy ensures that pupils are securely aware of boundaries and consequences. This ensures the school maintains its outstanding caring and respectful environment. Parents and carers, together with staff, acknowledge the improvement in pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning. The school council, junior governors and prefects are just a few examples of how well older pupils take on roles and responsibilities. There is evidence of older pupils thoroughly enjoying the responsibility of acting as mentors for shy children in order to build their confidence.

Those pupils who have difficulty in managing their behaviour, some of whom have recently joined the school, are helped considerably by excellent support and guidance on how to reflect on their behaviour in the Dingley Dell inclusion facility.

Leadership and management

The headteacher, staff and members of the governing body have focused successfully on identifying the school's strengths and areas for development. Consequently, there have been significant improvements in progress, particularly in Key Stage 2. Tracking of pupils' progress is very secure and the impact of new initiatives has been closely monitored to drive whole school improvement. The planned curriculum is now much more creative and includes topic work and work around trips, visits and residential trips. There is a significantly improving picture in the quality of teaching and learning seen in lessons, and the strong impact of this is noticeable in the tracking of pupils' progress and the quality of their work. This, coupled with an improving trend in attendance and the pupils' outstanding behaviour, demonstrates good capacity to improve further.

The curriculum is good. The impact of the planned curriculum is improving pupils' progress. There are appropriate interventions to accelerate the progress of pupils who join the school other than at the usual times or those identified as in danger of falling behind, thereby promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination.

Effective work with other small schools in the area ensures the curriculum gives many opportunities to gain a greater understanding of the experience of other children in contrasting environments to their own both within Britain and overseas. There is a highly successful link to the Elizabeth Welsh home for the elderly which raises pupils' awareness of their own responsibilities for those in their local community. Raising funds for Haiti is an example of how pupils gain an understanding of the global environmental issues. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Throughout the school there is a strong emphasis on respecting each other and knowing right from wrong. Pupils talk very thoughtfully about their responsibility to support those less fortunate than themselves. They are highly engaged with their local community.

The governing body has made changes in recent years in their appointment of new staff and developing the roles of subject leaders. This has driven whole school improvement which is sustainable. Safeguarding procedures are rigorous.

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.



9 February 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Pennine Way Primary School, Carlisle CA1 3RQ

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave the inspectors when we came to inspect your school. A particular thank you to those of you who gave your time to talk to us about how much you enjoy your work and the activities you take part in outside of lessons. Some of you who read to inspectors demonstrated how you work out unfamiliar words and told us why reading skills are so important.

You attend a good school where the staff do all they can to encourage and support you. The teaching you receive is good and improving. Your behaviour is exceptional in lessons and around the school and your school provides you with a very safe environment. You are extremely good at looking after each other and this helps the younger children in the Early Years Foundation Stage to settle quickly into school. Your headteacher and other leaders are very successful in helping all these things to happen.

I have asked that the school improve the quality of teaching and learning so that all lessons are at least consistently good or better by:

- asking teachers to plan tasks in Reception and Key Stage 1 which sufficiently challenge those of you who are more able in order to maximise your learning
- ensuring that teachers' marking always provides you with guidance on the precise steps you need to take to improve your work
- checking that you all clearly understand your targets.

You can help by continuing to attend school regularly and continuing to work hard in all your lessons.

Yours sincerely

Naomi Taylor
Lead inspector

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