

Irthington Village School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112113
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	378427
Inspection dates	22–23 February 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	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	55
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jeannie Pasley
Headteacher	Lynn Harrison
Date of previous school inspection	3 May 2007
School address	Irthington Carlisle CA6 4NJ
Telephone number	01697 72913
Fax number	01697 742814
Email address	admin@irthingtonvillage.cumbria.sch.uk



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



© Crown copyright 2012

Introduction

Inspection team

Ann Ashdown

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed three teachers teaching eight lessons. In addition, she visited specialist sessions teaching the links between letters and sounds and listened to pupils read. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body, and school staff. The inspector took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' books, progress data, safeguarding information, and other documentation. She analysed 30 questionnaires from parents and carers and also others from pupils and staff.

Information about the school

This is a well below average-sized primary school. No pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. All pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average. The school meets the current floor standard. It has gained Healthy Schools status and holds the Activemark, Sports Partnership Mark and Fair Trade awards. Pupils are taught in three mixed-age classes.

In September 2011, the school extended its provision to include part-time nursery education for children aged three years. As yet, this provision is not an integral part of the school's maintained provision as it is not fully funded.

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	2
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

- This is a good school. It has particular strength in its rich and innovative skills-based curriculum which engages pupils' interest and makes them enthusiastic learners who are eager to come to school. The school is not outstanding because children's progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage is not yet as brisk as that of older pupils and teaching is good overall, rather than outstanding.
- Pupils' achievement is good. Children settle quickly and make satisfactory progress in the recently opened Nursery and the Reception class. Pupils' progress accelerates as they move through the school and is good overall. Although attainment varies widely according to the ability of each, very small, year group, it is typically above average when pupils leave Year 6.
- Teaching is good. Teachers use interesting resources and exciting visits to provide the stimulus for pupils to extend their skills in literacy and numeracy and to promote their good spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development. In a few lessons, the pace of learning slows when activities are not sufficiently challenging and pupils are less clear about their learning targets, the lesson's objective, and the relevance of what they are learning.
- Pupils, typically, behave well. They are punctual and attend school regularly. They and their parents and carers say they are confident that school is a safe place and they are very appreciative of the good education that the school provides.
- The headteacher provides determined and forward-thinking leadership. Appropriate priorities for school improvement, for example, developing the skills of less-experienced members of staff through the school's effective systems of performance management, are based on accurate self-evaluation. Irthington Primary has improved since the last inspection and has demonstrated good capacity to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve further the quality of the already good teaching and learning by consistently:
 - explaining to pupils the relevance of what they are learning
 - sharing clear lesson objectives with pupils so they are sure about what they are trying to achieve
 - reviewing pupils' learning targets in lessons and revising them when they have been achieved.
- Improve the provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - monitoring and developing the skills of teachers and teaching assistants so that all lessons are consistently good or better and provide sufficient challenge for all children
 - formalising the status of the school's nursery so that it becomes an integral and fully funded part of the school's provision.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers are entirely happy with the progress their children are making at school and inspection evidence supports this view. In lessons, pupils work hard, concentrate on the task in hand and achieve well. They are keen to succeed and make good progress. Teachers' judicious use of praise and reward encourages pupils to answer challenging questions and produce their best work. Pupils in Years 2 and 3 were seen making very good progress in developing their literacy skills as they used imaginative phrases, such as 'candyfloss clouds and lollipop trees', in their fantasy stories. In a numeracy lesson, pupils in Years 4 and 5 enjoyed learning as they improved their mathematical skills by constructing complex three-dimensional shapes. Regular, skilled teaching of the links between letters and sounds ensures that pupils' literacy skills are developed well. Pupils' good progress in reading was confirmed when the inspector listened to pupils read and discussed their reading records with them. Attainment in reading is typically above average at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time pupils leave school in Year 6.

Children enter the school with skills levels which are broadly typical for their age. Their progress, although at least satisfactory, is slightly slower in the Early Years Foundation Stage than higher up the school because activities are not yet as challenging for all children as they are in other classes. Pupils' progress accelerates as they move through the school so that, although varying from year to year, attainment in national tests at the end of Year 6 is typically above average. Work in pupils' books, displayed on walls, and the school's own tracking data all confirm the good progress that pupils are making overall. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress because they receive very timely and skilled intervention in their learning from teachers and teaching assistants.

Quality of teaching

Pupils respond well to the good teaching they receive. Teachers are knowledgeable and their clear explanations and skilled questioning extend pupils' understanding well. Parents and carers, rightly, comment on the good teaching their children receive and they are

confident that the school is helping their children to develop good reading, writing and mathematical skills. Teachers use a range of interesting resources to engage pupils' interest. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage enjoyed learning when a pony called 'Shevvy' came to visit and his owner answered their questions about how to care for him. Lessons are carefully planned and teaching assistants work seamlessly with teachers to give extra help to those who need it. Most lessons are briskly paced and work is challenging for all pupils. Learning is slower in a small minority of lessons when activities are not sufficiently challenging for all pupils and the pupils are not clear about what and why they are expected to learn. Pupils' work is marked regularly and they are given good-quality written and verbal feedback from their teachers. However, although learning targets are set regularly and included in letters to parents and carers, the use of them in lessons is underdeveloped.

Teachers implement the innovative and carefully planned curriculum very well. They use it skilfully to promote pupils' good spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development. A particularly successful focus is placed on ensuring that pupils have a good understanding of other cultures through imaginative writing and artwork, visits to different places of worship, and studies of different countries. A detailed study of Egypt enhanced older pupils' understanding of other cultures greatly and they, particularly, enjoyed using a working model of the river Nile to understand how, when it overflowed, silt was deposited on the adjacent flood plain.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils, typically, behave well in classrooms, in the playground, in the dining hall, and on the school field. At break times, pupils of all ages were seen, in the middle of a wet spell of winter weather, to don their wellingtons and enjoy playing happily and cooperatively on a particularly muddy school field. Pupils are knowledgeable about how to keep themselves safe and they appreciate the importance of having a sensible attitude to taking risks. They all say how much they enjoy eating the healthy school lunches and they are clear about the benefit of taking regular exercise. They are aware of different types of bullying, including cyber-bullying, and have been taught how to deal with these. Pupils feel safe in school because they are, rightly, confident that adults will help them should they have worries or problems and will deal effectively with any bullying should this occur. In the mixed-age classes, pupils benefit from the good role-models of those older than themselves and older pupils, willingly, look after those younger than themselves. All parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire feel that the school is a safe place for their children to be. A very few parents and carers felt that their children's lessons were disrupted by poor behaviour. The inspection found behaviour to be good and any minor incidents of low-level disruption to be managed very well by all staff.

Leadership and management

The headteacher has a very clear vision for further school improvement which is focused firmly on raising attainment and accelerating pupils' progress. The vision is shared by the governing body and the whole staff team. Since the last inspection, pupils' good progress and achievement has been sustained and consolidated. The tracking of pupils' progress has become more precise and intervention in their learning, to provide expert extra help when this is needed, is more sharply focused. Effective performance management of all staff and good-quality professional development contribute well to the school's present improvement and to its good capacity to improve. Teaching and learning are monitored carefully and, through this accurate self-evaluation, senior leaders recognise the need to support and

develop the skills of less experienced colleagues further. The governing body is supportive of the school, but not yet involved fully in its strategic development. Arrangements for safeguarding are fully in place and meet requirements. Staff are well trained and fully aware of child protection and risk assessment procedures. This is a very inclusive school where the talents of all pupils are recognised and nurtured so all have good equal opportunities to succeed. This is reflected in the way that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make progress equally as good as their peers. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. Close links with partner schools ensure that pupils in this small school have good opportunities to meet and mix with a larger group of children and also help to ensure they make a smooth transition to secondary school.

The curriculum is reviewed and refined regularly and provides pupils with rich, varied and memorable learning experiences. Basic skills of literacy and numeracy are developed well. Subjects are linked together to allow pupils to study exciting topics based on trips, visits and practical activities. Pupils speak enthusiastically about experiences as varied as digging the school garden, laying bricks, and gazing at the stars during a 'sleepover' in the school hall. Residential visits provide a good balance of cultural trips to cities such as York and Edinburgh, and exciting experiences involving outdoor activities in more remote areas of the countryside. All of these experiences contribute greatly to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development.

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.



24 February 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Irthington Village School, Carlisle – CA6 4NJ

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave me when I inspected your school this week. A particular thank you 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 I have said about your school in my report.

- Your behaviour is good and you attend school regularly.
- Yours is a good school which continues to improve.
- Your achievement is good because you make good progress and attain above average standards.
- The teaching you receive is good.
- The way your school is led and managed is good and the curriculum you follow is interesting and exciting.

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

- Make your lessons even better by:
 - making sure you clearly understand the lesson objective
 - reminding you regularly in lessons about your learning targets and giving you new ones when you achieve them
 - making sure you understand why you are learning about each topic.
- Give the youngest children in the Nursery and the Reception class an even better start to their education by helping teachers to make all lessons even more interesting and challenging.

All of you can help your school improve by working with your teachers to achieve the very best you can.

Yours sincerely
Ann Ashdown
Lead Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone **0300 123 4234**, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.