

Ewanrigg Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112136
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	378432
Inspection dates	6–7 March 2012
Lead inspector	Gillian Salter-Smith

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	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	163
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sandra Birkett
Headteacher	Yvonne Craig
Date of previous school inspection	9 October 2008
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Introduction

Inspection team

Gillian Salter-Smith
John Ellwood

Additional inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Sixteen part-lessons were observed. These were taught by seven teachers, six teaching assistants and a learning mentor and one was a joint observation with the headteacher. All the teaching assistants were observed either leading the lessons of small target groups of pupils or supporting in lessons. Pupils' written work was analysed and inspectors listened to pupils reading from Year 3 and Year 6. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body, staff and the school's local authority adviser. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at the self-evaluation document, the school improvement plan and subject action plans, data on pupils' progress, governing body meeting minutes and policies and records relating to safeguarding. Inspectors analysed 111 parental questionnaires and those received from pupils and staff. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection.

Information about the school

The school is a smaller than average-sized junior school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above the national average. There are more boys than girls compared with most primary schools nationally. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is above average, with a well above average proportion of pupils on the basic 'school-action' level of support. A very small number of pupils are looked after by adults other than their own parents. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds and no pupils speak English as an additional language. A breakfast club is run by a local private provider. The school does not meet the current floor standard set by the government for the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

Awards gained include the Allerdale Respect Award for Community Liason, Allerdale Respect Award for Outstanding Individual, Healthy School status, the Activemark and Investors in People.

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

- Ewanrigg Junior is a good school. Pupils enjoy school, feel safe and secure and ready to learn. They are well taught, make good progress and achieve well. The school is not outstanding because attainment in English and mathematics, although improving strongly, is not yet securely average or higher, and teaching is good and not outstanding. The governing body, although supportive, is not holding leaders fully to account.
- Pupils make good progress from their starting points. Excellent care and support, particularly for pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, helps many of them to make outstanding progress. Parents and carers are particularly appreciative of the support the school provides for these children.
- Teaching is good with some that is outstanding. Common approaches to learning, teaching and planning, based on rigorous assessment, help lessons to be well structured so that pupils learn at a good rate. The focus on becoming a 'Ewanrigg learner' and the strong emphasis on enabling pupils to communicate, helps pupils to become confident learners. The curriculum is carefully matched to pupils' needs so that targeted pupils are taught in small groups, helping to accelerate their progress.
- Pupils' behaviour is typically good. They enjoy lessons and persevere with tasks. They cooperate well in pairs and enjoy structured opportunities to talk about their work with others. They feel safe and secure in school, free from bullying and they have a good understanding of how to keep safe.
- The strong, vibrant leadership of the headteacher ensures a cohesive team of leaders and staff with a clear common focus on improvement. Rigorous monitoring and self-evaluation of pupils' performance and teaching ensure that

relative weaknesses are identified and effective action taken quickly. Parents and carers are highly supportive of the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve attainment in mathematics and English by:
 - providing more practical and relevant mathematical activities
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to practice and improve their numeracy skills through project work and in subjects across the curriculum
 - continuing to improve the accuracy of spelling, especially among older pupils
 - ensuring that older lower-attaining pupils have more opportunities to read to adults.

- Increase the proportion of outstanding lessons by:
 - providing pupils with more opportunities to learn independently
 - ensuring that more-able pupils are fully challenged in every part of each lesson.

- Increase the effectiveness of the monitoring role of the governing body by:
 - ensuring members of the governing body receive training to enable them to hold senior leaders more fully to account
 - ensuring that senior leaders provide the governing body with more information on the progress of key groups of pupils compared to the national picture.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils enjoy learning, especially working with each other using their 'clever partners' to discuss their work. In a Year 5 and 6 literacy lesson, pupils were thoroughly absorbed by a powerful text and enjoyed the challenge of posing questions to their 'clever partners' about it. Pupils benefit a great deal from looking closely at each others' work to see if it meets the success criteria they are working towards. In a Year 3 and 4 mathematics lesson, one more-able pupil took on this role with great confidence and sensitivity and the inspector recognised the signs of a future educator!

Rigorous assessments show that pupils' attainment on entry to the school is low, especially in writing. Most pupils make better progress than that expected nationally, and there are many examples of pupils making outstanding progress, particularly disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, including those on the 'school-action' level of support, and those whose circumstances make them vulnerable. The gaps between pupils' attainment and national averages are closing rapidly in English and mathematics, especially for those known to be eligible for free school meals and for boys, particularly in writing, as they move through the school.

Although attainment in previous years was low, an upward trend in attainment since the previous inspection is secure. This represents good achievement because many of these pupils started Year 3 much more than a year, sometimes more than two years, behind in their work. By the end of Year 6, they had caught up a great deal and, although attainment was still below average, they had made much better progress than pupils nationally.

Currently, Year 6 pupils continue the upward trend in attainment and are on track to reach the national average in English and mathematics and their attainment in reading is broadly average. Work in pupils' books and school data confirm pupils' good progress and the rising trend in attainment. Rigorous monitoring identifies pockets of weaknesses that are tackled swiftly and effectively. For example, the curriculum was improved successfully to engage boys in writing. The well-planned programme to develop reading and spelling skills for younger pupils has been extended. It now includes all year groups so that older pupils are using these skills more frequently to correct their own work. However, spelling remains a weakness and some older low-attaining readers do not have frequent enough opportunities to read to adults. Inspection evidence supports the very positive views of parents and carers with regard to their children's progress.

Quality of teaching

A consistent approach to developing learning through precisely planned teaching based on secure assessment is leading to good progress. Well-qualified and well-trained teaching assistants make a strong contribution to the effectiveness of teaching. Classrooms are warm, lively and supportive environments where relationships are positive and behaviour is very well managed. Staff have high expectations and collaborative activity is the norm. These approaches contribute very well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; pupils thrive on well-deserved praise and are not afraid to make mistakes and explore ideas. The secure knowledge of staff ensures that learning is well planned to match different needs, so that pupils tackle manageable steps in learning and questioning develops pupils' wider thinking. Well-structured talk between 'clever partners' supports pupils' growing confidence as learners. In the very best lessons, such as in a Year 3 and 4 mathematics lesson, a flexible approach to the structure of the lesson meant that more-able pupils quickly got on with challenging tasks independently while the teacher explained concepts to the rest of the class. Tasks were closely matched to needs and the teacher and the support teacher were continually alert to pupils' progress or their misconceptions, intervening quickly and encouraging pupils to work out solutions to problems for themselves. There was a buzz of independent activity. On other occasions, more-able pupils were not always fully challenged in every part of a lesson and opportunities for independent learning were sometimes missed.

Teachers' marking gives pupils very clear guidance and encouragement. Pupils have clear individual targets for reading, writing and mathematics and they constantly refer to precise success criteria matched to their different needs in every lesson. Pupils use these criteria successfully to evaluate their own and each other's work.

The effective implementation of curriculum plans ensures good progress in reading, writing, numeracy and information and communication technology skills. Teaching groups organised by ability across year groups, and the deployment of teaching assistants to targeted groups, support good progress. Pupils have good opportunities to improve literacy skills through work on projects stimulated by exciting activities. A younger pupil, excited by the work on Titanic, wrote at length about the plight of the ship. The development of numeracy skills through projects and other subjects is not so well planned. Furthermore, activities in mathematics lessons are not always well-matched to pupils' interests and lack practical application.

Inspection evidence supports parents' and carers' positive views on teaching. One of their comments clearly sums up the impact of teaching on pupils' learning, 'To hear my children come home from school saying, "Oh mam, today was brilliant. We learned ... We did ... and did you know ...?", is music to my ears!'

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The school has a strong and effective focus on developing positive attitudes to learning and good behaviour. Staff set high expectations to which pupils respond very positively. Pupils enjoy school, lessons and extra-curricular activities. Pupils collaborate well and persevere in tasks in order to succeed. They settle down to tasks quickly and are confident and respectful of each other. Adults are very good role models and behaviour in lessons is typically good. These good attitudes and positive behaviour are strongly supported by parents' and carers' views. Pupils enjoy playtimes and pupil-play leaders take on their roles conscientiously, contributing to a harmonious community. Pupils say that there is very little bullying. They and their parents and carers know there are different types of bullying, such as name calling and cyber-bullying, and they know what to do to get support on the very rare occasions it occurs. Pupils are aware that there are a very small number of pupils with severe behaviour problems in the school. On a very few occasions, they are aware of disruptions, but also that these are sorted out very quickly. There are case studies of individual pupils who have made exceptional progress in improving their attitudes and behaviour because of the excellent care and support provided. Attendance has been consistently average and is improving. Pupils looked after and cared for by adults other than their own parents, and pupils whose circumstances make them more vulnerable, are very well supported. Parents and carers are clear that their children are safe and that behaviour, overall, is good.

Leadership and management

Strong teamwork and the high expectations of the headteacher have ensured a clear and successful focus on improving the impact of provision on pupils' achievement. This, alongside the provision of exceptional care and support, ensures that every pupil, whatever their circumstances, has the chance to succeed. Improvement has been brought about through well-targeted professional development for all staff as the result of rigorous monitoring of pupils' progress and the effectiveness of provision. Performance management is closely linked to school priorities. Staff are confident in sharing good practice and seeking external expertise. Since the previous inspection, achievement and the quality of teaching have improved and are now

good; issues identified have been tackled rigorously and successfully, demonstrating the school's good capacity to improve further.

The governing body is very supportive of the school's work and is keen to receive further training in order to be able to hold school leaders and staff more closely to account. The governing body is well informed of pupils' overall progress but does not receive enough information on the performance of different groups of pupils compared to the national picture. The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities well, including the safeguarding of pupils and staff. Adults working with children undergo rigorous checks on their suitability. Child protection arrangements are securely in place. Equality of opportunity underpins the work of the school with a clear focus on support for every individual, consequently gaps are closing rapidly between national averages for all groups of pupils. Discrimination is not tolerated and there have been no racist incidents in recent times.

The curriculum meets different pupils' learning needs well because of the carefully planned teaching groups and the thorough assessment that informs teaching. Adjustments are made to bring excitement and challenge, especially in literacy. The school has recognised that the curriculum for mathematics, although well matched to pupils' differing abilities, needs further development and is about to launch a programme to bring further interest, relevance and challenge. A wide range of extra-curricular activities, good involvement within the local community, and strong emphasis on pupils taking on roles and responsibilities within the school, all contribute well 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.



8 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ewanrigg Junior School, Maryport CA15 8HN

Thank you for your friendly welcome when we visited your school. We were glad to see you hard at work and enjoying lessons. Thank you to those of you who talked to us or read aloud to us. We can see why you enjoy school. Ewanrigg is a good school where you are well taught, your achievement is good and the care and support you receive is excellent. You told us how safe you feel, that everyone gets on well with each other and that there is hardly any bullying. It was good to see how many of you take on jobs in the school, such as play leaders, and are proud to do them well. We enjoyed looking at the work in your books and can see how much you have enjoyed writing about exciting events such as visits.

The staff, the leaders and the governing body all work very hard to help you to do your best, and your school has got better since the last time it was inspected. There are always more things that can be done to make it even better. Your headteacher and school leaders have agreed to:

- help you to reach even better standards in English and mathematics
- find ways of making work in mathematics interesting and practical and to give you more chance to use your numeracy skills when you work on projects or in different subjects
- continue to help you improve your spelling and to make sure that older pupils who are catching up on their reading skills get a chance to read aloud to an adult more often
- make sure that in lessons everyone is challenged all of the time and that you have more chances to work independently.

You can help by continuing to enjoy school and trying your best and keeping up your attendance. I wish you all the best for your future. You are well prepared for moving to the next school.

Yours sincerely

Gillian Salter-Smith
Lead Inspector

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