

Kirkbride Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112114
Local Authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	357047
Inspection dates	3–4 November 2010
Reporting inspector	David Byrne

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	86
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs L Blacklock
Headteacher	Mrs V Bairstow
Date of previous school inspection	25 September 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in six lessons, which were taught by five different teachers. Meetings were held with pupils, staff and members of the governing body and also a cross-section of parents and carers. The inspectors looked at a variety of school documentation. This included the procedures for safeguarding and child protection, data on pupils' progress, the school development plan, information about governance, and documents relating to the management of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The team analysed the questionnaires returned by 48 parents and carers and also those completed by pupils and staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- The achievement and progress of pupils to determine whether teaching and the curriculum is sufficiently challenging.
- The quality of assessment to establish its impact on raising attainment for all pupils.
- Whether the leadership of the school is moving the school forward with sufficient pace.
- The expectations for pupils' performance across the school and whether academic targets are ambitious enough to challenge all pupils sufficiently.

Information about the school

Kirkbride is much smaller than most primary schools. All pupils are from White British backgrounds and the proportion known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The percentage identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. There are a few looked after children. The school has gained Healthy School status and is in receipt of the Activemark. An Adult Learning Centre on site provides a wide range of activities for the community. Since the last inspection, a new headteacher has taken up post, there have been a number of staff changes and several new members of the governing body have been appointed.

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: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education. Good features include the good care, support and guidance for pupils and their positive personal development. Pupils are happy. This is reflected in above average attendance. Behaviour is good and pupils are very welcoming and polite. They say that they feel safe at all times. Attainment over recent years has been broadly average. This reflects satisfactory achievement, but inspection evidence backs the school's assertion that progress is accelerating. Attainment in writing and aspects of mathematics are rightly a school priority for improvement. Leaders and the governing body are rigorously monitoring and evaluating the school's work to ensure that actions are taken to correct any areas of underachievement. The success of these strategies is evident in the 2010 results for Year 6. The proportion gaining above average levels in reading is the highest for six years.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. In the best lessons, more-able pupils are effectively challenged but this is not consistently the case and higher attainment is possible. There is a tendency for pupils to be over directed, thereby restricting their ability to think and act independently. Good assessment systems are established but some pupils are not sure of how well they are doing in their work and precisely what they need to do to improve. While the curriculum is satisfactory, the planning of topics does not always link different subjects, which reduces opportunities for pupils to develop and practise key skills, such as writing, in different contexts. The wide and varied range of extra-curricular clubs is popular with pupils and excellent provision through the extended learning service benefits pupils, parents and carers, and other members of the community.

Senior leaders and managers, supported by a team of enthusiastic staff, have made a number of strategic changes since the previous inspection. These have sharpened the school's focus on raising pupils' achievement. Some of these changes have been met with resistance from a minority of parents and carers. Inspection findings indicate that pupils, staff and the majority of parents and carers support the new initiatives because of their positive impact on pupils' achievement and enjoyment. Pupils' satisfactory progress, which has been typical for many years, is no longer acceptable to school leaders and the rate of learning is improving across the school. Leaders and governors know the school's strengths and weaknesses and the effectiveness of actions to improve progress demonstrates the school's good capacity to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' achievement, by:
 - pursuing current strategies to raise attainment in writing and extending opportunities for pupils to develop investigative skills in mathematics

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- improving the quality of teaching so that the more able are consistently challenged and all pupils are given more precise guidance about how to improve
 - refining the curriculum to give pupils the confidence to take more responsibility for their own learning and to provide them with more opportunities to apply their basic skills in relevant contexts.
- Up to 40% of the school's whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Pupils respond positively to opportunities to play and learn practically. Where this is the case, pupils show good attitudes and high levels of enjoyment. For example, some Years 3 and 4 pupils had great fun role-playing characters from a children's novel in order to develop empathy characters from their class book. In a Year 1 and 2 lesson, pupils thrived on exploring forces by experimenting with toys running down a slope. Too often, however, pupils are not given enough reassurance to follow their own interest and lines of enquiry. Where this is the case, pupils are less motivated and while being well behaved, they lack the spark of interest and enthusiasm.

Children start school in the Early Years Foundation Stage with levels of development that are typical for their age. As they have moved through school, pupils' progress has for many years been satisfactory. Attainment in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6 is broadly average, although it dipped in 2009. Attainment has not been better because the more able have not been challenged enough and pupils have been expected to follow adult directions too much, rather than becoming independent learners. The negative impact of this on their achievement is evident in mathematics where pupils have too few opportunities to develop their mathematical ideas through investigations. Progress is currently accelerating, as a result of teachers' better use of assessment to identify those pupils who could achieve more and the support they need. New initiatives to boost attainment in reading and writing are having a marked impact, noticeably on boys' attainment. Initiatives to help pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, for example, in literacy, have increased the progress of these pupils towards reaching the targets in their individual plans. Well-structured support enables those looked after children to settle in quickly when joining the school and to make good gains in both their personal and academic achievement. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a solid foundation for future learning and life.

Most pupils feel that they are safe in school and they are aware of the dangers they may encounter in their everyday lives. They have a good awareness of what constitutes healthy eating, say they know what is good for them, and try to follow this advice out of school. Many engage readily in physical activities, such as 'Walk to School Wednesday', to help them keep fit. Pupils are mindful of the similarities and differences between world religions and know their own local culture well. Regular community lunches, themed lunches such as the recent 'Monster Munch Halloween lunch' and performances by the Glee Group (the choir) effectively raise the school's profile in the wider community.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

At its best, teaching is innovative and challenging, giving pupils a thirst for learning. This was seen during a Year 6 lesson, where pupils were enthralled by a lively presentation linked to the poem 'The Highway Man'. Teachers' use of assessment has improved substantially since the previous inspection and work is increasingly matched to pupils' differing needs. Teaching assistants fulfil a crucial role as part of the teaching team and contribute skilfully to pupils' good learning and progress.

Where teaching is good, pupils are encouraged to reflect upon their own and others' work and to offer suggestions about possible improvements. This is not yet consistent enough. While pupils have a general awareness of how well they are doing, their knowledge of their own achievement is frequently not detailed enough to enable them to take responsibility for improving their own learning. Where teaching is less than good, more-able pupils are not given enough challenge to fully extend their existing skills and knowledge.

The curriculum is in the process of being overhauled to improve links between subjects in order to add relevance and excitement to learning. The school is currently highly focused on raising pupils' attainment from average to above average in their basic academic skills. Recently introduced strategies to boost pupils' speaking and knowledge of letter sounds, and to improve their writing, are successfully raising attainment in literacy. Improved interventions for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities have had a

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positive impact on the progress of such pupils. Strengths in the curriculum include good provision for the development of pupils' personal and social development, including health education. Pupils have good access to information and communication technology (ICT) resources, which are increasing their contribution to their own learning. An extended range of extra-curricular activities and clubs, together with visits and visitors, enriches the curriculum. Links with local schools enable pupils to participate in a variety of inter-school sports.

The school knows its children and families very well. Good quality support is provided for pupils who may be vulnerable or experiencing difficulties in their lives. The majority of parents and carers are happy with the way in which their children are cared for. Links with parents and carers have a very positive impact on the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and looked-after children. The school works very hard to encourage parental involvement in their children's education. Pupils' targets are shared with parents and carers. Workshops are offered to explain what is meant by phonics (letter sounds) and modern methods of calculation in mathematics. Effective systems ease the transition into secondary education.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders, teachers and members of the governing body care about the school and are committed to improving pupils' achievement and attainment from the current satisfactory and average levels. Leaders recognised that systems to check pupils' outcomes and to target improvement needed refinement. As a result of clearer direction and of increased accountability, strong improvements in pupils' progress and attainment are evident. Increasingly challenging targets are set for all pupils across the school and high expectations are set for these to be achieved. The quality of teaching is improving as a result of rigorous monitoring and of effective, continuous professional development. This has resulted in a greater understanding by all staff that they are accountable for their actions and areas of responsibility. As a consequence, improvements are evident in areas, such as the provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Governance is satisfactory. Members of the governing body, many of whom are inexperienced, are actively involved in school life and are increasingly challenging the school's performance.

The engagement of parents and carers in school is satisfactory and improving rapidly, although some have reservations about changes occurring in the school. The school welcomes parental involvement in school life. As well as offering good quality information to parents and carers about what is going on in school and how well their children are

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doing, help on a day-to-day basis is constantly available. The school's satisfactory promotion of equality of opportunity is based on respect and value for all people as individuals. Disparities in the attainment of different groups, for example, between boys and girls are narrowing. Procedures to tackle discrimination are thorough and underpinned by the satisfactory promotion of community cohesion. The school is in the process of developing strategies to widen pupils' understanding of cultures other than their own. While the school's procedures for safeguarding are satisfactory, some administrative procedures are not as well organised as they could be. The vast majority of parents and carers have confidence in the school to keep their children safe and systems for child protection are good.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

The effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. It meets the needs of all children who are currently achieving well. Improvements to the curriculum and in the quality of resources have resulted in a greater focus on improving children's basic skills, such as recognition of letter sounds to support their early reading and writing. On entry to the Nursery class, most children have skills for their age that are at the expected level. Children have made good progress towards the early learning goals by the time they move into Year 1. A higher than average proportion are currently reaching the levels expected for their age. A strong emphasis on children's personal and social skills ensures that they soon learn to share, work and play harmoniously together. A good range of challenging and exciting activities help to stimulate children's imaginations and help them develop curiosity. They make good progress in their mathematical understanding, becoming familiar with numbers and sequences. Their creative development is less strong in comparison with the other areas of learning.

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There is a reasonable and improving balance between activities chosen by children and those led by adults. Regular, externally validated assessments enable staff to identify gaps in children's learning accurately and to plan accordingly. Adults pay careful attention to children's welfare. Effective partnerships with parents and carers ensure good induction arrangements. Parents and carers confirm that their children settle quickly. Leadership and management are effective and recent investments in upgrading the quality of indoor accommodation and resources is paying dividends in terms of children's progress and staff well-being. The need to improve aspects of the resources and their use in the outside area has been recognised and is being acted upon.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The number of completed questionnaires represented just over half the pupils attending the school. The majority of parents and carers who responded through the completed questionnaires were happy with the school's provision and indicated that their children enjoyed school. Most parents and carers also agreed that the school helped their child to have a healthy lifestyle and that the pupils' behaviour was good. Inspection findings endorse the positive views.

A minority expressed reservations about the level of communication they receive and about some aspects of the quality of leadership and management. A small minority expressed concerns about the way behaviour is managed. The inspection finding is that communication with parents and carers is good. The school works effectively to involve parents and carers in their child's learning. Strategies for managing behaviour are effective. Around a quarter of respondents to the questionnaire felt that their child was insufficiently prepared for the future. Inspectors found that the clear educational direction by the leaders is now improving pupils' achievement.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Kirkbride Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 48 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 86 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	20	42	23	48	2	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	19	40	25	52	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	18	38	24	50	5	10	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	14	29	25	52	7	15	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	19	40	23	48	2	4	1	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	17	35	25	52	5	10	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	20	42	22	46	1	2	1	2
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	17	35	14	29	13	27	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	17	35	22	46	4	8	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	15	31	18	38	11	23	3	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	12	25	16	33	7	15	11	23
The school is led and managed effectively	12	25	13	27	11	23	10	21
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	18	38	18	38	6	13	1	2

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

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.



5 November 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Kirkbride Primary School, Wigton, CA7 5JR

It was a great pleasure to inspect your school. You were all friendly and helpful and we enjoyed talking to you about how you are getting on. Thank you!

Your school is providing you with a satisfactory and improving education. The youngest children get off to a good start. You behave well and pay good attention in lessons. Your progress varies but for most of you it has been satisfactory until recently. It is now accelerating and you are increasingly learning more. By the time you leave at the end of Year 6, your attainment in English, mathematics and science matches that of most pupils around the country. You could do even better, however, and your teachers are doing much to raise your performance. You are improving in reading and writing and in mathematics. However, those of you who find it easier to learn than most could do better. The teaching you receive is improving and you like learning very much, especially when you are given practical activities. You enjoy the activities out of school and the visits you make to places of interest. Your headteacher, teachers and other adults take good care of you all and make sure that you feel safe and secure. Part of my job is to identify how the school can be even better and there are two improvements for staff to make.

- Help you to do even better in English and mathematics, by giving you more chances to develop and practise these skills in all subjects and by giving those of you who find your work easy more challenging tasks.
- Make sure that you understand better how well you are getting on with your work and that you all know how to improve and move forward.

Please continue to work hard. I send you all my best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mr David Byrne

Lead inspector

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