

Ulverston C of E Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112361
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	378475
Inspection dates	12–13 September 2011
Reporting inspector	Sue Sharkey

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	82
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Anthony Bryson
Headteacher	Bernadette Calvey
Date of previous school inspection	15 February 2007
School address	Church Walk Ulverston LA12 7EN
Telephone number	01229 894137
Fax number	01229 894136
Email address	head@churchwalk.cumbria.sch.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 rates 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



Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in five lessons taught by three teachers. Meetings were held with the headteacher, pupils, representatives of the governing body and staff. The inspectors observed pupils' work and looked at the school's system for tracking their progress, safeguarding documents and key policies. Inspection questionnaires from 54 parents and carers and six school staff were also taken into account.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The strategies the school has in place to raise attainment and improve achievement in reading.
- How well pupils use a wide range of information and communication technology (ICT) resources and how this impacts on the quality of their work.
- Whether teaching is sufficiently challenging for pupils so that they are motivated to read and make the best progress possible.
- How planning in the Early Years Foundation Stage makes full use of both the indoor and outdoor learning environments

Information about the school

This is a smaller-than-average sized infant school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than the national average. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The school has Eco-School and Healthy Schools status.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Ulverston Church of England Infant School is a good school. Care, guidance and support for pupils are excellent. This creates a welcoming and supportive environment where different groups of pupils say they feel safe. Links with a wide range of partners and the community are first class and bring considerable benefits to the learning and personal development of pupils. Engagement with parents and carers is outstanding; they rightly feel that the school is very caring and recognise that pupils' personal development is a high priority. A typical comment was, 'My child loves school, there is a general atmosphere of warmth and inclusiveness where children are nurtured as individuals.'

Children enjoy learning from the start in the Early Years Foundation Stage where they learn to share, follow routines and quickly adapt to the school's high expectations of politeness and courtesy. Attainment at the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics is above that expected of pupils of a similar age reflecting good achievement and progress for all groups of pupils. This includes those with special educational needs and/or disabilities who benefit from extra support or adaptations to the tasks they are given so that their needs are met well.

Throughout the school good teaching and the good curriculum ensure that pupils progress well. Opportunities for pupils to make choices and learn both actively and independently throughout the day are woven seamlessly throughout a wide range of activities. However, teachers do not always provide sufficient challenge when pupils are carrying out independent learning. Teachers assess pupils' learning well in lessons through good questioning; however, the marking and feedback of pupils' work is not always consistent to ensure that pupils know the next steps in their learning. Pupils' understanding of a healthy lifestyle is first class and they appreciate the many opportunities they have to take part in fitness activities, particularly after school. Pupils are proud of their school where they readily make an excellent contribution as well as playing an active role in community activities.

The school has good capacity for sustained improvement. The drive and ambition of the headteacher ensures that the school is always seeking ways to support pupils even more. Teamwork is strong and staff share a united ambition to ensure every child achieves as well as possible. Since the last inspection, accurate self-evaluation has led to a range of effective strategies that ensure the school continues to move forward and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve achievement and raise attainment, by:
 - ensuring that marking and feedback consistently help pupils to know how to improve their work
 - ensuring that teachers plan activities that provide greater challenge for pupils when they are carrying out independent learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

In lessons, pupils are active participants, are keen to succeed and are enthusiastic learners. During a Year 2 lesson pupils were keen to find out about activities in guided reading particularly as this was their new class at the beginning of the school year. They listened carefully as the teacher explained the different working groups and the range of tasks. One group found it fascinating that after they had discussed and sounded letters needed at the end of words they could put the word card into a 'machine' and out popped the answer. This not only encouraged discussion but also enabled pupils to enjoy their learning. Other groups enjoyed reading favourite stories and sounding words to adults. During a Year 1 lesson the teacher used the interactive whiteboard to share pictures with children. Children had to recognise the pictures and sound the initial letter. They enjoyed this thoroughly and their use of actions added to the excitement and ensured pupils were engaged and made good progress.

Overall, children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are broadly in line with what is expected for their age, but are often lower in emotional development, speech and language, calculation and writing. Pupils make good progress over time so that when they leave school in Year 2, their attainment is above average. The school has made successful strides in raising attainment and pupils' progress in writing. The current focus on reading indicates that the strategies being used are also proving to be successful.

Pupils behave well in school. They are polite, helpful and respectful to staff and other pupils. They agree that they are safe in school because adults look after them well and that gates and doors are always closed and secure. They are keen to raise funds for a wide range of charities locally, nationally and internationally. The school council plays a vital role in ensuring that they continually have a voice in school improvements while the eco-council has worked with community partners to help the school to gain the green award for their eco-developments in school. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to keep healthy and talk confidently about the importance of fruit and vegetables in their diet. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good; pupils are curious and embrace new experiences.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
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	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Positive relationships between pupils and adults help pupils make good progress and enjoy their learning. Lessons are characterised by a positive climate for learning and a strong sense of purpose. Teachers have a good understanding of pupils' performance, using data to plan suitable tasks for them. However, there are occasions, particularly when pupils are working independently, when the tasks are not always challenging enough. Teachers use assessment well to support good learning in lessons through effective questioning and good explanations. However, the marking and feedback of pupils' work in books does not always point out clearly to pupils their next steps in learning. Lessons are paced well, which helps to ensure that pupils who find concentration difficult remain engaged and motivated in their learning. Teaching assistants play an effective role in pupils' learning in class and in phonics and guided reading group work.

The curriculum meets pupils' needs well. Good use is made of both the indoor and outdoor learning environment to provide interesting and stimulating activities. Theme weeks and days help to provide a focus to extend pupils' skills and knowledge. For example, Africa week gave children the opportunity to dress up in different styles of clothes, to design skirts using repeating patterns and enjoy dance. There is a wide range of enrichment activities after school offering pupils the chance to add to their skills and interests. Pupils talk excitedly about sport clubs as well as gardening and Young Explorers. The range of visitors, partnerships and extended opportunities available to pupils greatly enhances their learning as well as their personal development.

The school's outstanding care, guidance and support ensure that all pupils can succeed in learning, develop well personally and reach the ambitious targets set for them. Pupils' attendance is average when compared nationally but the school has a wide range of successful guidance and strategies in use to encourage regular attendance and improve punctuality. For example, in working closely with parents

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

and carers punctuality has improved significantly due to the school changing the start time of the school day. Arrangements when children commence school are admirable and links with local primary schools ensure that Year 2 pupils are well-prepared for Key Stage 2, ensuring excellent continuity in their learning and development. The school provides a rich learning environment for all pupils with a wide range of art work and thematic displays.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher’s drive for improvement is well supported by all staff as demonstrated by the rise in attainment in writing. Subject leaders play an active role in school development and have good knowledge of their areas of responsibility. The tracking of pupils’ progress is carried out by all teachers and monitored rigorously by the headteacher who ensures that targets set for pupils enable them to achieve good outcomes. The first-rate partnerships with others enable the school to provide rich learning experiences. This is a notable strength. Governance is good. The governing body brings a wide range of expertise and provides a clear strategic view; its members support and challenge with enthusiasm and commitment. They make sure that safeguarding requirements reflect good practice ensuring that the school environment is well managed and provides a safe site for pupils.

The school is a cohesive community within which all groups are treated equally and there is no room for discrimination. This is exemplified through the good progress made by all groups of children and the way in which they work and play well together. The school’s strong involvement in the local community, its good links with other schools and the wider community and its success in extending pupils’ awareness of other beliefs and ways of life, show that community cohesion is promoted well. The school has identified where pupils’ understanding of different cultures represented in the United Kingdom needs to be developed. The school has excellent relationships with parents and carers. It provides good value for money.

These are the grades for the 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	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2

The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, responding well to the warm and welcoming environment. Children quickly settle into the Reception class because of the high-quality care and support they receive as well as the good partnerships with parents and carers and good induction processes. This provides a boost to successful learning. There is a good balance between activities led by teachers and those developed by children themselves. Children’s personal development and well-being is good; they are kind and thoughtful to each other and their strong sense of right and wrong ensures behaviour is good. Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good, ensuring that adults plan well together and have a clear understanding of how children learn. Planning makes certain there is good use of both inside and outside areas, where children widen their learning experience and grow in their desire to explore and be independent. As a result of good leadership, children make good progress from what is expected for their age and often excellent progress in speech and language, and emotional development. The stimulating learning environment helps children to play, share and talk together. For example, outside, children talked readily together while they controlled their computerised dinosaurs to move forward and backwards, while inside a group of children designed patterns for their dinosaurs, some preferring spots to stripes. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because early assessment highlights their needs and good teaching assistant support is provided to help them. Staff are vigilant in ensuring that children’s welfare needs are fully catered for.

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 in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Around 66% of all parents and carers returned the questionnaires, a proportion that is considerably higher than in most infant schools. All were positive about the way the school cares for and educates their children. They feel that their children enjoy school, are kept safe and are pleased with their children’s progress. Some parents and carers added comments to the questionnaire they returned; many to reinforce the strength of their positive views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ulverston CofE Infant 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 inspector received 53 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 82 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	32	60	20	38	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	29	55	22	42	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	20	38	26	49	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	21	40	24	45	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	27	51	18	34	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	23	43	22	42	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	32	60	17	32	0	0	0	0
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)	26	49	20	38	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	21	40	27	51	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	13	25	26	49	2	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	18	34	23	43	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	27	51	20	38	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	32	60	18	34	1	2	0	0

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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 is for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and 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.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.



14 September 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ulverston C of E Infant School, Ulverston, LA12 7EN

Thank you for being so kind when we visited your school recently. We thoroughly enjoyed talking with you and watching you learn in lessons. It was good to learn that you feel safe and that you have an excellent understanding of keeping healthy. Thank you for showing me your vegetable area and telling me how important it is to grow fruit and vegetables. I thought putting chives into butter in your jacket potatoes, especially when you had grown the potatoes, sounded really yummy.

It was good to talk with your school council members who work so hard to help your school to be good. Your behaviour is good and 'Well Done' for raising money for various charities. All the jobs you do in and around school help the school enormously but we were also impressed with all you do outside school and in Ulverston to help other people. Your headteacher and teachers are very good at working with other teachers in other schools as well as other groups of people. This helps you to learn lots of new things as you grow up. Overall, we found that your school provides you with a good education and helps you learn well.

There are two things that I have asked your school to do to help to make it better. First, for teachers to mark your work differently so that they help you to know what you need to learn next. Second, to make sure that when teachers plan work for you, particularly when you are on your own or with a group and do not have an adult with you all the time, you have to think really hard.

We were really impressed with how well you care for each other. Congratulations on all you do to help the school. We were really delighted that you said that you enjoy coming to school. Remember to always do your best and help your teachers. Thank you for helping us and for being so polite.

Yours sincerely

Sue Sharkey
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.