

Bridekirk Dovenby CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112270
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	378450
Inspection dates	19–20 October 2011
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	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	107
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	C Proctor
Headteacher	Helen Tinnion
Date of previous school inspection	11 January 2007
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Inspectors visited eight lessons taught by four teachers. They scrutinised a variety of pupils' work and held meetings with the headteacher, staff, pupils, parents and carers and members of the governing body. The team observed the school's work and looked at minutes of governing body meetings, the school development plan, records of pupils' progress and safeguarding documentation. Inspectors analysed 62 questionnaires from parents and carers, and also evaluated questionnaires from pupils and staff.

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

- Is there a difference in the progress of pupils in Key Stage 1 compared to Key Stage 2?
- Are teaching and the curriculum effective in inspiring learning and enabling pupils to apply and develop their skills independently?
- Is the school's evaluation that the quality of care, guidance and support is outstanding accurate?
- Are pupils developing a secure understanding of the richness and diversity of modern society?

Information about the school

The school is smaller than the average primary school. It serves a wide geographical area within a rural location and many pupils travel considerable distances to attend. All pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is low. The percentage with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. The school is involved in a local teacher training scheme, guiding and training new teachers at the school. The school provides before- and after-school childcare. It has also achieved 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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

This is an outstanding school. Each child is special and excellent levels of inclusion are in place. The outcomes for pupils are excellent and prepare them extremely well for the next stage of their education. This is a result of the impact of outstanding leaders and managers, excellent governance, first-class care, guidance and support and the highest quality teaching. Parents and carers are virtually unanimous in their support for the school. The view of one typifies that of many, 'This is a fantastic school which is very well-managed with dedicated, enthusiastic staff.'

Achievement is outstanding and pupils enjoy learning. From starting points to the Reception class that are just above typical for their age, progress accelerates at a rapid rate across the school. This culminates by the end of Year 6 in high attainment in English and mathematics. It is not just academic achievement in which pupils excel – excellent levels of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development contribute to advanced levels of personal development. Pupils grow into self-reliant and assured youngsters who are articulate and confident to speak publicly. Initiatives such as 'golden time' to reward good conduct underpin exemplary behaviour. Pupils are naturally helpful and willingly raise funds for those less fortunate than themselves. The pupil voice is highly valued and enables it to influence a variety of decisions made within the school. All pupils have very positive attitudes which are manifested in their high rates of attendance.

Pupils benefit from many exciting experiences within a good curriculum. The focus on literacy and numeracy is very productive and strengths are also evident in sport and information and communication technology. Other subjects are given a fair proportion of time but the systems for planning and monitoring achievement in these subjects are not advanced enough to generate the highest outcomes.

Inspirational leadership by the headteacher and her assistant has created a staff team that shares the vision of giving pupils the best possible start in life. Every child matters and inclusion is of the highest standard. Excellent partnerships with local schools and support services and superb systems for engaging parents and carers in their children's education, add to the excellent value that is added to pupils' lives. Governance is first class because of its excellent knowledge of the school and its involvement in shaping its direction. Safeguarding is of the highest quality and reflects the high priority given to providing a secure environment. Since the last inspection, attainment has risen considerably and progress has improved rapidly.

Improvements have been made to the quality of the accommodation and, despite a cramped hall space every square metre is used effectively. Given the strong track record of sustained improvement since the previous inspection and the rigorous self-evaluations made by leaders and managers, the school has an excellent capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in other subjects up to the level reached in English and mathematics by:
 - strengthening the details of planning across the school in these subjects
 - developing effective systems to evaluate the gains pupils make.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Pupils thrive on learning, persevere with great stamina and produce much work, almost always of a high quality. Many pupils thoroughly enjoy writing and all take pride in their presentation. There is a buzz of excitement and hub of chatter in every classroom, and yet there is complete silence on occasions, as pupils strive to learn and do their best. Pupils have lively imaginations and a deep interest and curiosity. During a Year 6 lesson, for example, one could hear a pin drop as everyone was engrossed in composing imaginatively-written ghost stories. In so doing they exploited an excellent knowledge of grammar, punctuation and features of text to create a story with suspense. All pupils set themselves high standards for what they do and are disappointed if they don't maintain them. As pupils move through the school, they grow into independent and curious learners, confidently using a wide range of research techniques such as computers, to find out for themselves.

Attainment in English and mathematics at Year 6 has been consistently high for four years. A much higher-than-average proportion of pupils exceed the expectations for their age by gaining Level 5. Positive strategies to raise attainment in reading have resulted in exceptional levels being gained and better guidance in writing has also boosted attainment. Adaptations to the curriculum for mathematics have increased attainment considerably. In Key Stage 1, attainment is rising rapidly and the most recent results indicate that the upward trend is being sustained. There is a surge of improvement in progress across the school emanating from higher outcomes in the Early Years Foundation Stage and better teaching and outcomes in Key Stage 1. The progress for all groups, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and for the able, gifted and talented pupils is first rate.

Pupils are eager to take responsibility and speak enthusiastically about the work of the school council and the way that the school enables them to become involved in activities to raise funds for organisations such as Barnardos. The school's acquisition of Healthy Schools Status is reflected in the pupils' good understanding of healthy living. Pupils engage enthusiastically in a wide range of sporting activities and like the active playtimes, often led by play leaders from Years 5 and 6. Through links with schools in India and Portugal, pupils are widening their understanding of, and respect for, people from other cultures and with different beliefs. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Pupils benefit from high-quality teaching. This is a key factor in their outstanding attainment and progress. In the very best lessons, every second counts and no time is wasted. Lessons are brought to life where possible, for example, the visit of a builder to the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. This led to Year 2 pupils building and testing different structures as part of a science activity linked to the story of *'The Three Pigs'*. Pupils huffed, and puffed, but could not blow the house down! Staff use computers very well to enhance teaching and to enable pupils to learn independently. Lessons are prepared extremely well. Excellent assessment ensures that work is provided to match individual needs. An excellent teaching-assistant team is well qualified and highly professional. It contributes to high-quality support for pupils needing support in literacy and numeracy and for helping any pupil who needs emotional support. Marking is most effective and pupils have a very good understanding of their own performance and of how to improve.

The curriculum provides pupils with many opportunities to excel in literacy and numeracy and also in elements of sport and information and communication technology. It provides particularly well for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and also those who are identified as able, gifted and talented. The school works hard to provide memorable experiences for pupils, for example, by visiting the National Gallery in London. A wide range of extra-curricular activities and visits strongly promotes pupils' experience and personal development. For example, every pupil from Year 2 upwards has the opportunity to participate in a residential educational visit. The impressive strengths in the core subjects of literacy and numeracy are not fully evident in other subjects. The school is rightly aware of the need to strengthen planning and evaluation in the wider curriculum, to ensure that pupils reach the same high standards that they reach in English and mathematics.

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

The view of one parent and carer sums up the views of others with the words, 'The school very quickly diagnoses any problems a pupil has and then focuses very effectively on overcoming any difficulties.' The excellent management of special educational needs and/or disabilities and the close links with external agencies means that each pupil gets an equal chance to do well. Excellent induction procedures settle children and families into school in the Early Years Foundation Stage quickly and very effective arrangements ease the transition of pupils moving on to secondary school. The daily breakfast and after school club is very well managed and pupils are safe and secure at all times.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
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 and assistant headteacher lead and manage the school exceptionally well, working with energy, vision and a dedication to pupils, staff and the community. Together, they have focused very closely on the academic needs of pupils and built a strong staff team which also values the personal development of each individual. Staff morale is very high and everyone is involved in working on ways to make the school even better. This is a 'thinking school', one which considers all possibilities and then decides on the most effective strategies to meet the needs of all its pupils. Excellent governance offers strong support and, through rigorous monitoring, challenges the school to ensure that it is doing as well as it can. Procedures to secure safeguarding are meticulous and all reasonable steps are applied to maintain pupils' safety and security. Child protection procedures are understood by all staff, whose training is fully up to date.

As parents and carers comment, 'The school's relationship with parents and carers and also the wider community is superb...everyone feels part of a community that looks after each other.' This comment reflects the excellent engagement that exists with parents and carers, which is an important factor in the outstanding pupil achievement gained. The school has reacted positively to the previous inspection by improving its promotion of community cohesion. Much is done to promote cohesion within the local area and links are being built with schools abroad, which are impacting positively on pupils' attitudes to others. Partnerships with other schools, in particular a secondary school, enhance elements of staff development and, therefore, experiences for pupils. Racism and discrimination have no place in the school and the promotion of equal opportunities for all is outstanding.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1

The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
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	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

The provision is led and managed well. Leaders focus on the children's needs and all who work in the Reception class do so with a common purpose. Continuous assessment informs adults of each child's progress and achievement so that they are challenged to move forward. All adults promote good rates of children's learning and social and physical development. Facilities are welcoming and safe and children's welfare is paramount. Indoors, accommodation is suitable for children of this age although the school recognises that it needs to make more effective use of the outdoor facilities when promoting development in each of the six areas of learning. Partnerships with parents and carers are very productive and they are encouraged to be true partners in their children's education.

Many children start Reception with relatively advanced speaking skills and are generally socially adept and independent for their age. Given these strengths it is a challenge for staff to extend children and take them to higher levels. Staff work hard to avoid any complacency. They make sure that pupils are stretched and extended. They do this by using a variety of active learning activities, including adult-led learning. As a result children make good progress towards the areas of development set for their age. They do particularly well in aspects of communication, language and literacy. The use of sounds and letters (phonics) is laying good foundations for reading and writing. Staff skilfully harness children's learning by using experiences to inspire them. Using the story of '*Goldilocks and the Three Bears*', for example, children explored mathematical ideas linked to sequencing objects in patterns and by comparing the size of bears, bowls and beds. The visit of a builder really captured the children's imaginations, and prompted much learning. Some children became totally engrossed in acting out how to build walls using plastic bricks, mixing imaginary cement and using a safe spirit level to check its stability. By the time children start Year 1, the proportion gaining the levels expected for their age is above average in each area of learning. This reflects considerable improvement since the previous inspection.

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

Almost two thirds of parents returned their questionnaires, which is a much higher proportion than is typical. Levels of satisfaction are extremely high. Parents and carers are unanimous in agreeing that their children enjoy school and that the school keeps them safe. The vast majority rate all other areas very positively and many comments were received stating how happy parents and carers are with the school, its staff and the quality of the headteacher. A few comments were made expressing concerns about the effectiveness of the management of behaviour. Inspectors examined this concern and found that behaviour management is excellent and, as a result, pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site is outstanding.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Bridekirk Dovenby CofE 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 inspector received 62 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 107 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	49	79	12	19	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	51	82	11	18	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	36	58	21	34	3	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	38	61	19	31	3	5	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	46	74	15	24	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	35	56	24	39	2	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	37	60	22	35	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)	42	68	14	23	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	39	63	20	32	2	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	24	39	30	48	1	2	4	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	28	45	27	44	4	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	41	66	20	32	0	0	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	47	76	12	19	3	5	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.



21 October 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Bridekirk Dovenby CofE Primary School, Cocker mouth CA13
OPG**

Thank you for sharing so much with me during my recent visit to your school. Your school is outstanding. You benefit from caring and dedicated teachers, support staff and an inspirational headteacher. They work extremely hard to make lessons lively and interesting and to help those of you who find learning difficult to join in with all that your school offers.

All of you make excellent progress. By the end of Year 6, your attainment is high in English and mathematics and you also do well in using computers and in sport; given your starting points on entry to school, your achievement is outstanding. The curriculum is good and the enthusiasm you have for writing is amazing! I have asked the school to seek ways of helping you gain an even better understanding of subjects other than English and mathematics.

Your behaviour and care for others are exemplary. I was impressed not just by how hard you work in lessons but also by your independence. You have a good understanding of how to stay safe and healthy and you are mature in the way that you take on various jobs in and around school. You take great pride in your work and this quality helps you to grow as people. You told me that you feel safe at all times and that your views are always welcome. Your contribution to the school community and life in your locality is excellent and it is very much valued.

I wish you all the best for your future and I am sure that you will continue to work hard, show care for others and enjoy learning.

Yours sincerely

David Byrne
Lead inspector

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