

Braithwaite CofE VA Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112334
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	378466
Inspection dates	3–4 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Naomi Taylor

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	100
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	M Elliot
Headteacher	J Laker
Date of previous school inspection	05 March 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Twelve lessons were observed and five teachers seen. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documentation including that relating to safeguarding, assessment and progress, and school policies. They analysed 37 questionnaires from parents and carers, together with a sample from staff and pupils.

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

- How the information on pupils' progress is used to ensure that all pupils, particularly the more able, are fully challenged in mixed-age classes. The extent to which the curriculum provides opportunities to develop literacy and numeracy.
- The effectiveness, and use of, the outdoor learning space in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels, and whether staff are skilled and rigorous enough.

Information about the school

Braithwaite is a smaller-than-average primary school serving a wide area. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than average. Most pupils are White British but there is a very small proportion from minority-ethnic backgrounds. There are very few who speak English as an additional language. Since the last inspection there has been a significant increase in the proportion of pupils who join the school at other than the normal times.

The school holds the Activemark award and has Green Tree status. It is part of the Keswick Collaborative Partnership and a Leadership School for the National College for School Leadership. Since the last inspection a new extension to the school has been built.

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

Braithwaite is a good school. It has a, 'very kind and caring' environment, as described by one parent or carer. From starting points that are broadly average for their age, pupils make good progress and by the time they leave Year 6 attainment is above average. Leadership and management are good and self-evaluation is rigorous. New systems for tracking, monitoring and evaluating, to improve target-setting for individuals and to ensure that areas for development are identified quickly, have been successfully implemented. Strategies, such as interventions to boost pupils' progress, are evaluated carefully to check they are having a positive impact. These successful developments indicate a good capacity to sustain improvement.

The quality of the pupils' contribution to the school and the wider community is outstanding. The school is highly valued by parents and carers and by the village community. Pupils' behaviour is good: they are supportive and considerate to each other and to the adults around them. Older pupils take on many responsibilities and are good role models for the younger children. Pupils say they feel safe and have confidence that adults will deal with any concerns. They have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and this is reflected in the take-up of extra-curricular activities which make a major contribution to pupils' personal and social development and their enjoyment of school. The exceptionally strong pastoral care and support for pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, is outstanding. The extensive work with a wide range of partners to support pupils' development is highly effective. Teaching assistants and volunteers work closely with the teachers to provide well-targeted interventions to tackle underachievement effectively. Attendance is above average.

Teaching is predominantly good. The majority of lessons are well paced and teachers' knowledgeable and clear explanations extend pupils' understanding well. However, such good practice is not consistently shared with all staff. In some lessons the pace of learning is slower when the class is taught altogether, and then the more-able pupils have fewer opportunities to learn independently and find out things for themselves. There is thorough tracking and monitoring of pupils' learning. However, this assessment information is not always used precisely enough to plan lessons so that all groups of pupils are fully challenged, particularly the more able. The curriculum provides many opportunities for pupils to develop their numeracy and literacy skills across all age ranges. The opportunity for outdoor learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage is limited on certain days.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve further the quality of teaching and learning so that all lessons are good or better by:
 - ensuring teachers consistently set work that effectively challenges all groups of learners, particularly the more able
 - sharing good practice in teaching more widely across the school.
- Strengthen the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by developing further the opportunities for outdoor learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Children enter the school with skills that are broadly typical for their age, other than in communication, language and literacy, where skills are below the levels typically expected for their age. Pupils work hard, concentrate well and enjoy their learning. They particularly enjoy project work, such as that on the Second World War. For example, the opportunity to develop writing skills using role play created excitement among Year 6 pupils. Similarly, in Year 2, pupils embraced enthusiastically the opportunity to write a letter to the local person who had recently donated the canopy for the outdoor area. The school sets appropriate and challenging targets. Since the last inspection, there has been an improvement in the number of pupils achieving Level 4 and Level 5 by the time they leave school. The school's accurate tracking of attainment shows that pupils' progress is accelerating and this was evident during the inspection. Progress and achievement across the school are good. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make the same good progress and some do better.

A very large majority of pupils enjoy school, and as a result their attendance is above average. The Activemark award reflects their good understanding of healthy lifestyles. Most participate in extra-curricular activities such as sports and cooking clubs. The gardening club has made a contribution to Green Tree status and the pupils' understanding of sustainability. Pupils work well independently and collaboratively. Behaviour observed in lessons and around the school is good. Pupils are polite and respectful towards each other and to adults. The older pupils willingly help the younger children by, for example, taking responsibility to quietly guide them back to their classrooms after breaks outdoors. The arrangement to sit in 'family' groups for lunch, with the older pupils serving food and clearing up, provides an excellent opportunity for personal and social development across the age range. There are numerous links with the local community who value greatly the contribution that the pupils make to the lives of those in the village through, for example, charity work and performances. Pupils say they feel safe and this view is endorsed by parents and carers. Pupils are sure that any member of staff would help them if there was a problem. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They are well prepared for the next stages of their education.

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	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	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The school's monitoring of lessons and the lessons seen during the inspection show that teaching is good. The majority of teaching is good or better, though some is less strong. Teachers plan their lessons making good use of varied resources to ensure that all pupils make good progress. In the best lessons, work proceeds at a brisk pace and is well matched to pupils' needs. In some lessons, too long is spent on whole-class teaching when the more able could be working more independently and finding out things for themselves. The monitoring of individuals' learning, carried out by teachers and teaching assistants, is thorough. However, it is not always used well enough to plan lessons so that all pupils are continually stretched and challenged, particularly the more-able pupils. Peer, group and self-assessment is embedded across the school and helps to raise pupils' ambitions to progress more rapidly and aim even higher. The school is exceptionally effective in meeting the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are particularly vulnerable. Good teaching was seen with these groups. The work of the teaching assistants and volunteers is very effective in ensuring all groups progress well.

The curriculum is enriched with many opportunities to visit theatres, museums and other stimulating places of interest. There are rural and city residential trips for the older pupils, which help to develop personal and social skills, broaden their horizons and raise aspirations. The well-planned personal, social and health education programme is underpinned by the values of respect and community within the school.

Exceptional care, guidance and support make a very strong contribution to pupils' progress and to all aspects of their personal development. The school works extremely well with external agencies to ensure that the potentially most vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive the expert help they need. Excellent transition arrangements ensure that pupils move smoothly between different stages of their education. This was evident during the inspection

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

by how well young children have settled into the Nursery and Reception class and by the eager sense of anticipation of Year 6 pupils who will be moving to secondary schools.

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 good leadership and management, and the commitment of all staff, volunteers and governors, have been instrumental in bringing about improvements to the school. Improvements to leadership and management at all levels, and in the use of assessment data, are having a significant impact on raising attainment and improving pupils' achievement. The headteacher has a very clear vision for further improvement, which is shared by staff and governors. This includes extending opportunities for sharing good practice in teaching and learning across the school and maximising opportunities which the Keswick Collaborative Partnership brings. The effective self-evaluation by school leaders since the last inspection demonstrates the school's good capacity to improve.

The governing body knows the school well and provides valuable support and challenge at a strategic and operational level. Excellent partnerships with external agencies enhance the outstanding care and support provided by the school. Membership of the Keswick Collaborative Partnership is providing opportunities to share good practice to support the curriculum. Parents and carers value the school and some take advantage of the opportunities provided by teachers to help them to support their child's learning at home. Safeguarding arrangements are good and staff are well trained. The school adopts good practice in the areas of risk assessment and child protection. The school works hard to identify any underachievement and is quick to implement initiatives to close any gaps. Consequently, all are given good equal opportunities to succeed. The school promotes community cohesion extremely well within the school and the local community. It is developing further its work with communities further afield in Britain and overseas to secure pupils' understanding of communities and cultures which are different from their own.

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	2
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

Although attainment on entry to the school varies, the overall level of children's skills when they start in Nursery and Reception classes is broadly average, other than in communication, language and literacy, which are below average. Children settle quickly and are soon happy and secure because of effective induction arrangements, which parents and carers greatly appreciate. They make good progress by the time they enter Year 1, particularly in raising attainment in literacy skills. Overall, children are provided for well. They have many opportunities to explore for themselves and develop independent learning, both in and outside of the classroom. However, they do not currently have access to the outside area throughout the whole school day, each day of the week. The children enjoy being at school, play happily with their friends and form good relationships with adults. They are well taught and there is a good balance of child-centred and teacher-led activities. A lesson on the changing seasons saw children working well with the teacher who was extending their vocabulary by asking them to describe the textures and what they could smell as they made their own birdfeeders. Others were carefully planting their own pot of bulbs and readily explained what they would expect to see in the spring. The children's progress is assessed carefully and their individual needs are met well. The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led and managed.

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

Most of the parents and carers, that returned the questionnaire, are very pleased with the education that the school provides and they say their children are safe. They see the school as an integral part of the local community where each child is well known by all staff. One described their child as, 'content, supported, achieving and growing in confidence', and this reflects the views of many. Appreciation was expressed for the regular trips and visits to places of interest and other extra-curricular activities. The few concerns recorded related to individual problems and there was no pattern of dissatisfaction.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Braithwaite CoE VA 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 37 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 100 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	19	51	14	38	3	8	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	21	57	16	43	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	16	43	19	51	2	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	17	46	19	51	0	0	1	3
The teaching is good at this school	17	46	18	49	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	20	54	17	46	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	14	38	20	54	2	5	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)	13	35	17	46	4	11	1	3
The school meets my child's particular needs	14	38	19	51	3	8	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	11	30	19	51	5	14	1	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	13	35	18	49	1	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	18	49	16	43	1	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	20	54	14	38	2	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.



7 November 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Braithwaite CofE VA Primary School, Keswick, CA12 5TD

Thank you for the warm welcome we received when the team came to inspect your school recently. A particular thank you to those of you who gave your time to talk to us about how much you enjoy your work and the many activities you take part in outside of school. You made a valuable contribution to the inspection.

You attend a good school where the staff do all they can to support and encourage you. The care you receive is excellent and enhanced by very strong partnerships with other agencies beyond school. You respond by behaving well and working hard. The teaching you receive is good. You make good progress and are becoming responsible and thoughtful young people with the older pupils showing a great deal of support for the younger children.

The children in the Early Years Foundation Stage settle quickly in a welcoming and caring environment. The work done by the staff in this area is also good. We have suggested that providing access to the outdoor area throughout each day would enhance children's learning even more.

We have asked that in your lessons you have more time to find out things for yourselves, and that you have even more challenging activities to do that make you really have to think hard.

You can help by continuing to attend school regularly and working with your teachers to achieve the very best you can.

Yours sincerely

Naomi Taylor
Lead inspector

