

# Aspatia Richmond Hill School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	112127
<b>Local authority</b>	Cumbria
<b>Inspection number</b>	378431
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 November 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Sue Sharkey

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	192
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Henry Barker
<b>Headteacher</b>	Helen Richardson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	29 April 2009
<b>School address</b>	Aspatia Wigton CA7 3BQ
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 15 lessons taught by eight different teachers. Meetings were held with the acting headteacher, pupils, members of the governing body and the local authority, 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 56 parents and carers, 21 school staff and 71 pupils 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.

- What the strengths of leadership and management are at different levels in the school to ensure school improvement.
- Whether the school has a clear monitoring process and how this impacts on achievement.
- What strategies the school has in place to raise attainment and improve achievement in English at Key Stage 2 and mathematics at Key Stage 1.
- How the curriculum impacts on pupils' progress.
- How the staff in the Early Years Foundation Stage plan for effective use of both the indoor and outdoor environment.

## Information about the school

This is a smaller than average primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than the national average and almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities is above the national average. There has been an unexpected change in leadership recently and an acting headteacher was appointed in September 2011.

An independent management committee provides child care, as well as breakfast and after-school care on the school site. This setting did not form part of the inspection but a report about the quality of its provision can be found on the Ofsted website.

**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**

**3**

## Main findings

Aspatria Richmond Hill School is a satisfactory school. Pupils are keen to talk about how much they enjoy school and this is reflected in their above-average rates of attendance. They are enthusiastic about all they do in school, particularly the many activities and clubs they enjoy after school. Following an unexpected change of leadership, the acting headteacher has settled quickly into her role and is well-supported by staff and the governing body. A particular strength is the link made with parents and carers. Parents value the education their children are getting. A typical comment being: 'The school staff are approachable, caring and they always listen. I am happy to have my child in the school.' The skills and confidence that pupils develop ensure that they are soundly prepared for life as a young adult.

Children enjoy learning from the time they start school in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where they are nurtured and cared for in a safe environment and make good progress. Attainment is broadly average at the end of Year 6 in English and mathematics, reflecting satisfactory achievement and progress for all pupils across Key Stages 1 and 2.

Teaching is monitored regularly but as yet not all teaching across the school is consistently better than satisfactory nor are the qualities of good or outstanding teaching shared. Teachers plan interesting and relevant work. As a result, relationships are good, pupils have positive attitudes to work, and most try hard. The quality of marking of pupils' work, especially in mathematics, is inconsistent which means that not all pupils are clear about what they have to do to improve their work. A review of the curriculum has enabled links to be made between subjects. At present, there is not enough embedding of English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) within other subjects for pupils to practise and consolidate their learning in these areas.

The acting headteacher, well-supported by the deputy headteacher, has made a good start in implementing a firm structure for school improvement. Her evaluation of the school's performance is accurate, although prior to her appointment it was inflated. As a result, changes implemented are already having a positive impact on staff development. The monitoring roles of subject leaders and the governors are developing, but these responsibilities have not yet had enough impact to accelerate school improvement. The school has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Raise the quality of teaching to consistently good or better by:
  - ensuring that work is always well-matched to the needs of pupils, especially the more-able, to accelerate their progress
  - ensuring consistency in marking, particularly in mathematics, so that all pupils understand precisely what they must do to improve their work
  - sharing good practice across the school.
- Further develop the monitoring role of subject leaders and governors in order to accelerate school improvement.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to practise and consolidate their English, mathematics and ICT skills across the curriculum.

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

<b>3</b>
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Pupils' enjoyment of school life is evident in their supportive approach towards each other which helps to make the school a safe and welcoming place. This was evident in Years 1 and 2 when, following on from a visitor who had brought sea-life and rock pool creatures to show the pupils, they created their own models from clay. Although working individually, pupils shared tools and they talked excitedly with each other about what they were making and how they were creating appropriate shapes and patterns for the creatures. Pupils commented positively on each other's model and praised each other for their results.

Overall, children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are lower than those usually expected for their age. They make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes. Although there is evidence of good learning in a number of classes, pupils' overall progress through Key Stages 1 and 2 is satisfactory rather than good. By the time they leave school in Year 6, pupils' attainment is broadly in line with the national average. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress because support for them is readily available.

Pupils say they like coming to school because they are cared for and feel safe. They are unanimous in the view that if they have a problem they can talk to any adult in school. Pupils are developing a good awareness of the importance of being healthy. From an early age pupils know how to eat healthily and they appreciate the many opportunities that they have to take part in fitness activities, particularly the many clubs after school. Pupils participate keenly in the school council and are proud of the important role that they play in helping the school to improve. Pupils take their roles and responsibilities in school very seriously. Behaviour is satisfactory overall. There is good behaviour in some classes and at break times but this is not consistent

throughout the school. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

## How effective is the provision?

Teachers know pupils well and the good support of teaching assistants means that adults often work effectively with pupils in small groups. Where teaching is good or better, as seen during the inspection, good pace motivates and engages pupils well, teachers' expectations are high and discussions are lively. However, the quality of this good practice is not shared across the school. Teaching is inconsistent across year groups and, as a result, pupils' progress is better in some lessons and classes than in others. All teachers regularly check how well pupils are doing, but there is not sufficient, accurate use of information to set suitably challenging work for pupils, particularly the more-able. This hinders the progress for some pupils. Marking, whilst up to date, varies in quality and does not consistently help pupils to know precisely how to improve their work, particularly in mathematics.

The curriculum is appropriately adapted to meet the needs of different groups of pupils. The school is moving towards a curriculum where different subjects are taught through a topic approach. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to practise and consolidate skills learnt in English, mathematics and ICT in other subjects. A wide range of enrichment activities offers pupils the opportunity to add to their skills and interests. Visits complement classroom work and Key Stage 2 pupils take part in residential visits. Such activities help to raise pupils' awareness of different people's needs and life experiences, helping to ensure that they are satisfactorily equipped for their future life.

The good care that pupils receive is reflected in the way adults respond to pupils' worries and cater for any incidents that arise around school and in the playground. The school is aware that further guidance and support is needed to ensure that the learning needs of all groups of pupils are met well. The school works with a range of agencies to support pupils, including those with additional learning needs. Good links

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

are made with families when children start school and transition for Year 6 pupils to secondary school is well-organised.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## How effective are leadership and management?

The acting headteacher is successfully galvanising the staff into a stronger team in order to bring about improvements. She has already implemented effective procedures to evaluate the school, to improve provision and to raise attainment and achievement. The school leadership team is now embedding ambition and drive throughout all areas of the school. The deputy headteacher tracks the progress of all pupils. Recent changes to the system have enabled her to be more aware of the progress of different groups of pupils so that any gaps in performance can be reduced. Currently the school’s promotion of equality of opportunity is satisfactory. The school recognises that there is more to be done to ensure that more-able pupils achieve as well as they should. Appropriate measures are in place to tackle any form of discrimination. Monitoring carried out by both subject leaders and the governing body is developing but the impact is not enough to accelerate school improvement. Subject leaders carry out their monitoring, for example, through observing lessons, and have good action plans for their subject. The governing body gives sound support. It knows the school’s strengths, weaknesses and areas for development. Members of the governing body monitor the school's work and are active in ensuring that safeguarding meets requirements, ensuring that pupils are safe. The school’s promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory because it has yet to develop both further partnerships and pupils’ understanding of the wider national and global communities. The school’s relationship with parents and carers is good. They speak highly of the school and the way that staff care for their children.

*These are the grades for the leadership and management*

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

## Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage provides a very warm, welcoming and vibrant environment for children and their families. Children settle quickly into the nursery because of the quality of care and support they receive, as well as the effective partnership with parents and carers and good induction processes. Children enjoy both their Nursery and Reception years, sharing space and resources in their secure setting where they behave well and make good progress. Teachers’ good planning ensures that there is a good balance between indoor and outdoor learning, and adult-led and child-initiated activities, which promotes good learning. For example, children in the nursery explore the story of the Three Bears, wearing appropriate costumes and making porridge. Children in the Reception class drink their milk whilst enjoying singing action songs and adding their own individual words. Children are well-taught and good use is made of assessment in helping to identify what children need to do next. As a result, they make good progress during their Reception year so that by the time they reach Year 1 they have reached the levels expected for their age in all areas. Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good, exemplified by high expectations and the well-tailored curriculum designed to meet each child’s needs.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

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

## Views of parents and carers

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who returned the questionnaire are positive about the way the school cares for and educates their children. They feel that their children enjoy school, are kept safe and they are pleased with their children’s progress. Some took time to add comments to the questionnaire they returned, many to reinforce the strength of their positive views, which inspection findings support. There was also a very small minority of parents and carers who raised concerns and these were looked into by the inspection team. A few parents and carers were concerned about how the school deals with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors found that behaviour in school is satisfactory; the school does have a system in place that includes working with both pupils, and parents and carers and has a range of sanctions for the small number of pupils who do not always behave well.



## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Aspatria Richmond Hill 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 56 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 192 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	34	61	21	38	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	31	55	25	45	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	22	39	32	57	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	25	45	30	54	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	28	50	28	50	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	31	55	24	43	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	26	46	27	48	2	4	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)	27	48	26	46	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	29	52	26	46	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	22	39	27	48	5	9	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	21	38	30	54	3	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	23	41	32	57	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	29	52	26	46	0	0	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	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](http://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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



30 November 2011

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Aspatria Richmond Hill School, Wigton, CA7 3BQ**

Thank you for making the inspectors so welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking with you and watching you learn in lessons. We found that you have a good understanding of the importance of keeping healthy and we were impressed with all the activities you do in school to keep you fit. Your behaviour overall is satisfactory, but we were pleased to see that some of you do behave well in lessons. We also enjoyed seeing children in the Nursery and Reception classes where they work and play well, both in the classroom and outside. It was good to see all the activities they join in with, helping them to make good progress. Overall, we found that your school provides you with a satisfactory education, so that you are able to make satisfactory progress in your work. We were impressed to see many of you enjoying your work and sharing ideas.

There are some things that we have asked your teachers to do to help to make your school even better. First, for teachers to challenge you more in lessons so that some of you can achieve higher levels; second, for teachers to mark your work differently so that they add comments to let you know what you need to learn next, particularly in mathematics; third, we have suggested that teachers watch each other teach so that they can learn new ideas; fourth, we have asked the school to include English, mathematics and ICT much more in other subjects and lastly, for teachers and governors to continue to check how well your school is doing so that it can get better quickly.

We were pleased to hear about all the things you enjoy in school and to hear from the school council about what you do to improve the school. Keep this up. We were really delighted that you said that you enjoy coming to school and that you feel safe. Remember always to do your best and help your teachers. Thank you for helping us.

Yours sincerely,

Sue Sharkey  
Lead inspector

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