

Cumwhinton School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112108
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	378424
Inspection dates	26–27 March 2012
Lead inspector	Clive Petts

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	153
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Angela Fullerton
Headteacher	Diane Urwin
Date of previous school inspection	7 November 2008
School address	School Road Cumwhinton Carlisle CA4 8DU
Telephone number	01228 560400
Fax number	01228 562824
Email address	admin@cumwhinton.cumbria.sch.uk



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.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 assesses 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



© Crown copyright 2012

Introduction

Inspection team

Clive Petts
Patrick Hargreaves

Additional inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed 16 lessons taught by 6 class teachers and a specialist teacher of autistic children. They also observed a range of intervention activities for small groups of pupils, including pupils in the resource provision, talked to different groups of pupils about their learning and scrutinised in detail the work in pupils' books. The inspectors checked pupils' reading across the age range. In addition, the inspector held discussions with pupils, parents and carers, members of the governing body, staff and the designated school general adviser. The inspectors observed the school's work and examined a range of documentation, including the school's records relating to pupils' progress and achievement, evidence relating to leadership and management, monitoring and evaluation, behavioural records and safeguarding. They also took into account the questionnaires returned by 71 parents and carers, 81 pupils and 17 staff. The inspectors looked at the online questionnaire (Parent View) but there were insufficient responses to aid inspection planning.

Information about the school

Cumwhinton is a smaller than average-sized primary school. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage with very few who speak English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is average, with an above average number with a statement of special educational needs. The school meets the government's current floor standard which sets out the minimum expectations for attainment and progress. The school includes designated special provision for pupils with autism. The privately-run Cumwhinton After School Club, which includes breakfast provision, is based in the school: it is subject to a separate inspection and its report will be available on the Ofsted website. The school has achieved the Inclusion Quality Mark award.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

- Cumwhinton is a good school. The school has made substantial progress improving the quality of learning. The excellent drive and passion of the headteacher and the high quality of pupil care and support are strong features. The school and the designated special provision are not yet outstanding because, although teaching is good, there are a few inconsistencies in the quality of provision, such as in the teaching of letter and sound relationships.
- Pupils' achievement by the end of Year 6 is good. Positive action has led to rapid progress in improving basic skills, especially in mathematics, resulting in the closing of the gap between mathematics and reading and writing. Designated specialist provision pupils make good and in individual cases excellent progress from their starting points.
- Teaching is good and occasionally outstanding. In the best lessons, resourceful approaches capture the pupils' interest and questioning relentlessly checks their understanding. Intervention and support is usually well matched and targeted to meet individuals needs to ensure disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make the same good progress as their peers. The school acknowledges that the examples of inspiring teaching provide a model for professional development, with a view to eradicating inconsistencies in the level of challenge presented to pupils.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy their lessons and this is reflected in their high attendance. Almost all parents and carers appreciate that their children are kept safe. Pupils' extremely positive attitudes in classrooms, tolerance and great willingness to work together and cooperate, underpin their outstanding behaviour. Although designated specialist provision pupils are occasionally demanding, they make excellent progress in developing self-control.
- Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has driven school improvement doggedly. Teaching, including that in the designated specialist provision, is well led and performance managed effectively. The good curriculum provides a variety of interesting experiences. The strong sense of family promotes pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the amount of outstanding teaching by:
 - building upon the existing inventive and thought-provoking practice in the school to further boost achievement and attainment
 - making certain that open-ended and challenging questioning is continually used by all staff
 - intensifying the programme of spreading best practice in the designated specialist provision by coaching all staff in the teaching of early reading and writing skills
 - making the most of the interesting curriculum experiences when Reception children learn outside.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils make an excellent contribution to the school's positive climate for learning. From broadly average starting points, pupils achieve well because concerted action has been taken to ensure that activities are carefully shaped to match the age, ability and needs of all pupils. The rigorous monitoring of pupils' development ensures that those who require extra help and those whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable are quickly identified. A sharp focus on basic skills has improved the reading and writing of boys and the application of mathematical skills for all pupils, eliminating any gaps in attainment. Despite improvements in the teaching of letter and sound relationships, a few inconsistencies remain, especially in the support of early reading to designated special provision pupils. Well organised, imaginative opportunities for active learning capture and hold the interest of pupils well. For example, a group of Year 1 pupils were completely absorbed listening to the story of the Dinosaur Detective and confidently answering testing questions. This group included pupils from the designated special provision.

Children enter the Reception class with skills broadly typical for their age. They settle happily and confidently and make good progress in the warm, friendly atmosphere. Clear expectations for classroom routines promote self-control really well. Children are encouraged to pursue their own curiosity, although opportunities to explore and investigate when outside are insufficiently developed. The good curriculum promotes basic skills well, providing frequent opportunities for pupils to practise their skills, for example in their topic work in Year 5 and 6. Good progress is maintained in Key Stage 1, with progress accelerating quickly through Key Stage 2. By the time pupils leave Year 6, attainment is typically above average, including in reading. Almost all parents and carers are, rightly, happy that their children are achieving well. Carefully managed systems to monitor the progress of the designated special provision pupils help to overcome barriers to their learning.

Pupils achieve well to attain above average, and sometimes high, levels of attainment by the end of Year 6. Although attainment in mathematics dipped a little in the 2011 tests, those pupils who joined the school in Reception achieved consistently well. Current Year 6 pupils of all abilities are making rapid progress and are on-track to achieve at least above average attainment in all subjects because their thinking and understanding is constantly challenged.

Attainment in reading at the end of Year 2 is in line with expectations for age. Developing approaches to the teaching of early reading and writing are increasing the confidence of pupils to make sense of new words. In Year 6, excellent progress is being made nurturing a grasp of the importance of reading to discover and question. For example, a group of Year 6 eagerly discussed how reading about Smaug, the powerful dragon, had fostered an interest in reading fantasy and science fiction tales. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, including those in the designated special provision, also make good progress because their learning and support is so well targeted.

Quality of teaching

Good and occasionally outstanding teaching and support are decisive factors in the pupils' good achievement. An overwhelming majority of parents and carers agree. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and thoughtfully match the curriculum to capture their interest and meet their particular needs. For example, lesson planning systematically uses progress information to plan lively activities for different levels of ability and need. Teachers plan in close partnership with the staff from the designated special provision and other support staff to provide suitable activities and resources, such as providing visual prompts for reading text. In lessons, pupils talk enthusiastically to their partners, confidently justifying their ideas, using vocabulary accurately and helping each other to consolidate their understanding and extend new learning. Even younger children enter into conversations with each other unprompted. Additional adults are deployed well to support and prompt learning. Occasionally, when the pace of learning slows, opportunities are sometimes missed to probe pupils' thinking more, through the use of challenging questioning, and to further reinforce basic skills.

In the outstanding lessons, imaginative approaches continually encourage pupils to analyse a problem, justify their ideas and solve problems. The whole planned curriculum is used creatively to enable pupils to apply their literacy and numeracy skills to practical contexts, continuously building upon their prior learning. More-able pupils are expected to work things out 'in their heads' and challenge their partner's thinking. Thoughtful planning ensures that designated special provision pupils are able to achieve success alongside their classmates.

Pupils know their targets, receive frequent oral comments on the quality of their work and are given clear pointers for improvement in written feedback in their books. Effectively targeted professional development has ensured that the legacy of inaccurate teacher assessment has been eradicated. In Reception, children's development and well-being is well recorded and assessments accurate. Pupils' high levels of enjoyment, pride in their work, willingness to engage in partner talk, work individually and enhancing the pace of learning are strong features of their excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' behaviour is typically outstanding. Pupils' excellent attitudes and their very tolerant, thoughtful and considerate behaviour create a happy atmosphere in classrooms and outside and have been sustained for some time. All are able to thrive, including pupils in the designated special provision. Pupils value having many friends and they rarely disagree or argue. In discussion, they demonstrate a good appreciation that bullying can take many forms and describe confidently how they would deal with any bullying. They described how, if it happened, they would tell a friend first, then either a teacher or a parent. In lessons,

pupils cooperate exceptionally well and show that they are perfectly capable of resolving any disagreements; they calmly managed the occasional animated episodes of individual classmates. Almost all parents and carers believe that behaviour is at least good. Pupils are understanding and safety-conscious when moving around the building and playing outside. All are aware of strategies that can keep them safe, such as when using new technology. Pupils enjoy excellent relationships with the staff and the trust they have in them is evident throughout the day. The breakfast club provides pupils with a calm start to the day. Pupils' attendance is high and they are punctual arriving to school and their lessons. Their keenness to participate in a wide variety of activities enhances their artistic, sporting and cultural experiences. This supports their personal development and well-being really well and includes a residential experience for older pupils.

They take pride in their strong pupil voice, which contributes effectively to school improvement. Pupils' high levels of enjoyment, pride in their work, and willingness to work together, support and help each other, are strong features of their learning.

Leadership and management

The headteacher's determination and very clear vision for continued improvement has proved to be successful. The committed and enthusiastic staff share her resolve to improve. Well managed professional development is eliminating any pockets of inconsistency in pupils' achievement. The checking of pupils' progress and the monitoring of teaching and learning are rigorous and inform improvement priorities well. Staff are confident reflecting on their practice and respond positively to evaluation feedback. The developing expertise and experience of middle leaders is adding to the drive to sustain further improvement.

The governing body has been galvanised since the previous inspection. They demonstrate an accurate view of the school's strengths and are proactive in shaping its strategic direction. They challenge and hold the school to account in positive and constructive ways. Together, this demonstrates that the school has a good and continually strengthening capacity to improve. Senior leaders ensure that safeguarding requirements are met, with good day-to-day practice adopted.

Following the parent and carer concerns expressed at the time of the last inspection, senior leaders have systematically gained their confidence and trust. Despite this improvement, a few parents and carers expressed concern about the consistency and quality of the information they receive. The inspection team found past inconsistencies, but as one parent governor described, 'There has been a dramatic improvement in the last six months', especially since the texting service and website have been launched. The school is highly successful in making certain that every pupil has an equal chance to be happy, learn and succeed. Any sign of inequality and discrimination is tackled promptly and decisively. Added to the high quality of care and support, this ensures that help for pupils and their families is quickly and correctly provided. The good and developing curriculum provides rich and active learning opportunities for lively, high-quality learning. It contributes very well to the pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The effective use of partnership working increases opportunities for learning and development, for example using specialist expertise to adapt the learning for designated specialist provision pupils. The developing international links, such as celebrating a school link with Peru, promote a good awareness of global issues.

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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



28 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Cumwhinton School, Carlisle, CA4 8DU

Thank you all for the really friendly and polite welcome you gave the inspection team when we visited your school to see how well you were learning. We really enjoyed our time talking to you.

Cumwhinton is a good and improving school. We were very impressed by the high quality care and support provided for you. You told us that your staff continually encourage and support you to do as well as you possibly can. We were pleased by your excellent behaviour and high attendance. You explained that you feel safe, are encouraged to value your friendships and respect the feelings of others. You clearly feel happy in school. You also told us of your pride in helping your school to improve, such as your positive contributions as school council members.

The headteacher and the governing body are taking positive action to ensure that the school continues to improve and this can be seen in your improved mathematical skills. We have asked the school to reduce any variations in the quality of your learning in lessons and check that your teachers continually test your thinking and understanding. We would like them to share their best practice, make the most of the interesting experiences provided for you and make certain all of your activities challenge your thinking. This includes activities for younger children when learning outdoors. We have also asked that your staff ensure that you are given frequent and intensive help when you are learning to read, especially those in the special teaching group.

You can all play your part by continuing to work as hard as you possibly can.

We wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Clive Petts
Lead Inspector

