

Patterdale CofE School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112326
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	395362
Inspection dates	25–26 April 2012
Lead inspector	Sue Sharkey

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	33
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Michelle Castles
Headteacher	Elizabeth Stewart
Date of previous school inspection	9 April 2008
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Introduction

Inspection team

Sue Sharkey

Additional Inspector

The inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed three teachers while visiting six lessons. Discussions were held with the headteacher, school staff, pupils, parents, carers and members of the governing body. The inspector observed pupils' work and looked at a wide range of documentation including the school's system for tracking children's progress, documents regarding the safeguarding of pupils and key policies. Inspection questionnaires from 24 parents and carers were scrutinised and those from school staff and pupils were also taken into account.

Information about the school

This is a much smaller than average sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds with very few speaking English as an additional language. The proportion of disabled pupils and those supported by school action plus is above average. Pupils are taught in two classes: Reception with Years 1 and 2; and Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 together. The number of pupils in each year group can be less than five.

The school meets the current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress. The school has the Gold Sing Up award for their work in the arts, The Royal Horticultural Society Campaign for School Garden Level 4 and the Global Link award. An independent management committee provides a nursery on the school site. This setting receives a separate inspection and a separate report which 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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

- This is a good school. It is not an outstanding school because pupils' achievement is not outstanding and teaching is good. It has a happy and vibrant atmosphere where pupils flourish. It is at the heart of the local community, providing a rich context for learning and contributing well to village life. Pupils make good progress through the school so that attainment at the end of Year 6 is broadly average.
- Parents and carers value the school climate saying, 'The atmosphere and ethos of the school are extremely friendly, caring and children are very happy.' Parents' and carers' responses to the questionnaire show that they are extremely pleased with all the school does for their children.
- Consistently good and sometimes outstanding teaching ensures that pupils are motivated, engaged and enjoy their learning. Teachers use questions skilfully to develop pupils' knowledge and move them on to the next level in their understanding but in marking, particularly in mathematics, this is not always reinforced. Teachers make good use of assessment to plan work suited to the pupils' differing needs and ages but occasionally there is insufficient challenge to enable pupils to reach the higher levels.
- Behaviour in lessons and around school is exemplary over time. Pupils feel secure because they say school is safe and everyone looks after each other well. Attendance is above average, reflecting pupils' very positive attitudes to learning.
- The headteacher knows the school's strengths and weaknesses well and as a result the school's self-evaluation is accurate. Good procedures for monitoring teaching quality and managing performance are in place and the school works in close partnerships with other schools to share good practice. The curriculum has a wealth of enrichment activities but there are missed opportunities for pupils to practise their mathematical skills in other subjects.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching even further and thus accelerate pupils' achievement by:
 - ensuring that pupils are consistently challenged so that they can achieve the higher National Curriculum levels
 - ensuring that the marking of pupil' work, particularly in mathematics, consistently helps pupils to recognise the next steps in their learning
 - ensuring that pupils can practise and reinforce their mathematical skills in all subjects, particularly in relation to problem-solving linked to real-life situations.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Children are enthusiastic learners when they start school in their Reception Year. They are keen to be engaged in all activities, and happily look and read a book to themselves, share responsibilities in the chocolate shop or sit attentively while listening to new letters and sounds. When children enter school their skills can vary from year to year, due to small numbers in each year group, but they are usually below age-related expectations in social and emotional development, speaking and listening as well as in reading, writing and calculation. Children make good progress in the Reception group, giving them a good start to their school careers.

Progress for all groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, is good with some pupils making outstanding progress. Attainment by the end of Year 6 is broadly average. Regular assessment informs teaching when intervention is needed to maintain pupils' good progress. The school's focus on writing across the curriculum is bearing fruit. However, pupils do not have enough opportunities to practise and reinforce their mathematical skills through real-life problem-solving in all subjects.

Pupils enjoy reading both fiction and non-fiction books and by the time they reach the end of Year 2 their reading skills are broadly average. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 say they enjoy historical books and are able to talk about different characters with enthusiasm. Through learning letters and sounds, pupils are able to work out new words ensuring that the flow of their reading is well maintained. As pupils move through the school they develop and extend their vocabulary to enrich their reading. The school has a wide stock of books from which pupils choose and good use is made of the visiting library van. Pupils enjoy selecting their own books or recommending one to a friend. When they leave school at the end of Year 6 pupils' reading attainment is approaching above the national average.

Parents and carers who spoke with the inspector as well as those who returned the questionnaire are justifiably pleased with the progress their children are making. The school makes very good use of their outdoor learning environment for enrichment activities as well as daily lessons. During a Year 3, 4, 5 and 6 lesson, for example, pupils worked in groups to scrutinise a grass turf to find different kinds of plants and insects. They talked with excitement as they used magnifying glasses to find very small creatures and plants discussing whether worms were vertebrates or invertebrates and why. Working in this way and exploring nature contributes well to pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Quality of teaching

Teachers' and teaching assistants' natural enthusiasm engages pupils in their learning. They have very good relationships with pupils and this helps to promote pupils' excellent behaviour. Teaching assistants are well trained, often working with pupils who have special educational needs in very small groups or on a one-to-one basis. They ensure that pupils receive extra support that is tailored to their individual needs. Teachers have good subject knowledge and a good understanding of pupils' performance, but there are occasions when tasks are not challenging enough to help pupils reach the higher National Curriculum levels. Work is marked regularly, giving encouraging comments, although there are inconsistencies, especially in mathematics, in guiding pupils as to how they can move on in their learning. Parents and carers rightly value the good teaching their children receive.

Pupils know their individual targets in English and mathematics and understand their importance in helping them to improve. Clear objectives are shared at the beginning of lessons and pupils recognise that this helps them to be aware of what they are learning. Reading is taught each morning through a range of activities. For example, children in the Reception group can be learning new letters and words while pupils in Key Stage 2 are reading books or responding to the teacher's questions in order to develop their understanding of the text.

Pupils collaborate well when they are working in pairs or groups. During a Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 English lesson, for example, pupils drafted a letter to convince a buyer that their chocolate product was the best. From talking as a class at the beginning of the lesson, pupils moved swiftly to their letter, keen to start and share their ideas in writing. In the other class, younger pupils were excited when they were mentally exploring numbers. They had to count on in 2, 3 and 5 and record their answers. Their competitive spirit meant that, whilst being accurate, they worked quickly in order to challenge each other. Pupils' enjoyment of learning filters through the school. They cooperate well with each other during lessons and at break times, discussing issues relevant to their work and play.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils behave extremely well, work hard and try to do their best because they say learning is fun. They are proud of their school and talk confidently about the way the 'buddy system' works, where pupils from Key Stages 1 and 2 'keep a look out' and help if anyone has a problem at break or lunch times. They also say if a 'buddy' is not about all pupils are kind and will help each other. They know the difference between bullying and disagreements saying that they are aware of this through the many opportunities they have to learn about different kinds of bullying in the curriculum, for example, cyber-bullying. Pupils are proud to have written the school's anti-bullying policy, enabling everyone to have had the opportunity to contribute and be more aware of what bullying means and how to deal with it if it occurs. They report that they can turn to any adult in school if they have a problem and their concerns will be taken seriously and dealt with readily. The vast majority of parents and carers agree with their children's view that they feel safe in school.

Pupils arrive at school promptly. The walking bus, supported by parents and carers and the community, enables many pupils to arrive at school safely, ready to work and meet their

friends. They have extremely positive attitudes to learning, settling quickly into lessons, and are soon engrossed in their work.

Leadership and management

Team work is strong and staff and members of the governing body share a united ambition to ensure every child achieves as well as possible. A typical comment from parents and carers is, 'The whole staff team work with children and families to offer the very highest standard in all respects.' Parental partnerships are strong. Over 73% of parents and carers responded to the Ofsted survey and their views were mostly very positive. Links with parents and carers start in the Reception class. They are able to stay at the start of day to share letters and sounds their children are learning or to listen to them read.

The school's development plan provides clear success criteria for targets based on a careful analysis of the school's strengths and weaknesses. It provides a good basis for the school's monitoring and evaluation. Members of the governing body are often visible around school and have an astute awareness of strengths and areas of development, using this knowledge well to challenge and monitor school performance. Secure procedures are in place for the safeguarding of pupils and staff. Pupils are known and valued as individuals and the school is free from discrimination. Equality of opportunity is strongly promoted and is evident in the good progress of different groups of pupils.

The school works closely with local schools and professional development for staff is often shared. Through this, the school has reviewed the curriculum enabling positive changes to the way it is now planned. The skills pupils need to learn are matched to different themes, but as yet mathematics is not threaded through other subjects sufficiently for pupils to be able to solve problems linked to real-life situations. The curriculum is broad and balanced, and incorporates many opportunities for pupils to visit and use their local area. The many visitors who work with pupils share their skills so that pupils learn new ones. For example, dry stonewalling or different styles of art. Members of the local community lead enrichment activities, such as gardening, cooking or chess. Pupils are able to learn about people in other parts of the world through writing to their school friends in Darjeeling. The curriculum, therefore, provides a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	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 to 31 December 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 (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.

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.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures
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.



27 April 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Patterdale CofE School, Penrith CA11 0NL

Thank you for making me feel so welcome when I visited your school recently. I thoroughly enjoyed talking with you and watching you learn in lessons. It was wonderful to learn that you feel very safe in school and I was very impressed to hear about your 'buddy system'. I thought your behaviour was outstanding in lessons and outside. I was also impressed with the work that your school council members do to help your school. I enjoyed watching you learn in lessons and was pleased to see how well you work in groups as well as by yourself and how sensibly you talk with each other when you are sharing ideas, thinking through problems. Overall, I found that your school provides you with a good education and the progress you make is also good.

There are three things that I have asked the school to do to help to make it better. Firstly, 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. Secondly, to make sure that when teachers plan tasks for you in lessons they always remember to challenge you so that more of you can reach higher levels. Thirdly, I have asked them to make sure that you can practise your skills in mathematics in all the subjects you study.

Congratulations on all you do to help your school. I was really delighted that you said that you enjoy coming to school. Remember always to do your best and help your teachers and each other. Thank you for helping me and for being so polite.

Yours sincerely

Sue Sharkey
Lead Inspector

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