

Crosscanonby St John's CofE School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112273
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	378452
Inspection dates	28–29 June 2012
Lead inspector	David Law

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	53
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mary Day
Headteacher	Stephen Mitchelhill
Date of previous school inspection	17 September 2008
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Introduction

Inspection team

David Law

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Seven lessons were observed and four teachers were seen teaching. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, the governing body and staff. The inspector took account of the responses to the on-line Parent View survey in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at documents such as the school improvement plan, the school's self-evaluation and assessments of pupils' achievement. There were 20 parental questionnaires received and there were 32 questionnaires from pupils and five from staff.

Information about the school

Crosscanonby St John's is smaller than the average-sized primary school. There are three classes and children start the Early Years Foundation Stage in the Reception Year in a class that also has Year 1 and Year 2 pupils. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average. There are few pupils who speak English as an additional language and few from minority ethnic groups. The school has achieved Healthy School status. The school meets the current floor standards which are the government's minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

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	2
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

- This is a good school. It is not yet outstanding because teaching and pupils' achievement, although good, are not outstanding. Pupils are eager to learn and staff show high levels of commitment. Although pupils make good progress in mathematics overall, too few reach higher levels. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress but use of the outdoor area is not fully effective in supporting learning.
- Achievement is good and pupils make good progress throughout the school. They enter the Reception Year with abilities broadly typical for their age and leave Year 6 with above average attainment. Progress in reading and writing is good. By the end of Year 2, most read with fluency. Across Key Stage 2 comprehension skills develop well.
- Teaching is good and pupils find lessons interesting. Classrooms are efficiently organised and lessons often proceed at a brisk pace. Teachers' assessment of pupils' progress is accurate and used effectively to plan learning. Reading and writing are taught consistently well and consequently pupils make good progress.
- Behaviour and safety are good. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and behaviour is often outstanding. They are respectful and helpful to each other. The school is a happy place where pupils feel safe. Attendance is average.
- Good leadership and management include the effective leadership of teaching. Both achievement and teaching have improved since the last inspection. Self-evaluation is thorough and accurate and priorities for improvement relevant. All leaders are effective in carrying out their responsibilities and this has also improved since the school was last inspected. The governing body knows the school well and has a secure strategic grasp. Further training and performance management have developed the capabilities of staff, for example, in assessing pupils' achievement to arrest underperformance.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in mathematics by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to use and apply their knowledge and skills across the curriculum
 - ensuring learning is well matched to pupils' different abilities, particularly so the more-able can reach higher levels
 - sharing good practice within the school in relation to planning learning to meet pupils' different needs.

- Improve the use of the outdoor learning area by:
 - ensuring it consistently represents all areas of learning for the Early Years Foundation Stage with sufficient coverage of creative development and knowledge and understanding of the world
 - making sure access is provided to the outside for Years 1 and 2
 - introducing more opportunities for role play, particularly to support children's language acquisition.
 - sharing good practice about curriculum planning and teaching with other schools locally.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils enjoy learning, work hard and are productive in lessons. They cooperate well and are persistent if faced with a difficulty. Pupils show a good ability to work independently. Most children enter the Reception Year with knowledge and skills broadly in line with those expected for their age and make good progress working and playing well alongside each other. They take pleasure in learning about letters and sounds and are keen to use their developing reading skills. They enjoy using the recently improved outdoor area but this provision does not consistently enable them to acquire the full range of skills expected, particularly in creative development and knowledge and understanding of the world.

Pupils continue to achieve well through Key Stage 1. They make particularly good progress in their reading and by the end of Year 2 most are confident readers with good fluency and their attainment is above average. They are skilful in using their knowledge of the sounds letters make (phonics). Good achievement through Key Stage 2, particularly in English, ensures that, by the end of Year 6, attainment in reading is above average and pupils are reading with good understanding and are able to use their skills well to inform their learning in other subjects. Writing skills develop well, particularly in the Year 3/4 class where pupils acquire the ability to write in a neat and fluent script and use punctuation accurately. Disabled pupils, and those with special educational needs, make good progress in their learning. Their personal development progresses well and they become more confident learners. Some pupils whose circumstances make them more vulnerable make exceptionally good progress. Boys and girls learn equally well. However, at both Key Stages 1 and 2, despite good progress in mathematics overall, too few more able pupils reach higher levels in national tests because work is not matched precisely enough to their particular needs.

Attainment in English and mathematics is above average by the end of Year 6. This has been the situation in English for the last few years. In contrast, mathematics attainment has usually been average but rose to above in the national tests last year. Indications, from a scrutiny of pupils' books and school assessments, are that this trend of improvement has been sustained, but achievement in mathematics is not as strong as English. In particular, pupils are less adept than they should be at applying their mathematical knowledge and skills to solve problems with number, shape and space and in using mathematics skills across the curriculum, for example in science. Parents and carers justifiably feel their children make good progress and are helped to develop key skills.

Quality of teaching

Good teaching is based on effective classroom organisation, clear instructions, skilful questioning and high expectations. For example, in one outstanding French lesson, excellent subject knowledge and a brisk pace ensured rapid learning and the lesson was enlivened by games to capture pupils' interest. Lessons are broken into short sections to keep pupils involved. Teachers skilfully organise groups for learning and smoothly manage change from one activity to another. They are good at getting pupils to work independently and this enables them to focus on those that need the most help. Consequently, pupils apply themselves well and learning proceeds at a good rate. The management of behaviour is effective and unobtrusive. Teachers have high expectations about behaviour and pupils frequently respond in an excellent fashion.

Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are taught well and make good progress as a result. In the Year 3/4 class for example, the teacher organised her time efficiently so that she was able to support individuals whilst ensuring that other pupils could complete tasks independently and learn quickly. Reading is taught well across the school. Teaching is effective in assessing pupils' reading progress and information and communication technology is used well. For example, Year 2 pupils were engrossed in searching the internet to read about sharks.

Teaching effectively develops pupils' ability to work together and this promotes their social development. Assessment is accurate and the information accrued is used well to plan future learning. The marking of work is careful and helps pupils to improve and know if they are reaching their personal targets. This is particularly effective in English where progress in reading and writing is carefully tracked and where pupils are taught to apply their skills. In mathematics, teaching enables pupils to make good progress but learning is not always sharply matched to pupils' varying abilities, especially for the more able and particularly in relation to problem-solving activities. There are some good examples, however, at Key Stage 2 of mathematics activities being well planned so pupils acquire the ability to solve problems, for example in Years 5 and 6 when pupils were using their knowledge of rotation to construct a Spanish floor pattern. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage receive good teaching and effective support from the teaching assistant. However, opportunities are missed to use the outdoor area to fully support all areas of learning. Children have too little opportunity to engage in role play to support language acquisition. Parents and carers feel their children are well taught and inspection findings support this view.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Good behaviour and provision for pupils' safety supports their good achievement and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. In lessons and around the school, behaviour is frequently excellent and pupils are considerate of others. There have been no exclusions. Pupils understand school rules, comply with them and manage their own behaviour well so that a calm and orderly atmosphere is the norm. Lessons proceed without interruption because pupils are keen to behave well and learn. Pupils feel safe and there are effective systems to keep them safe. Pupils have a sound sense of how to keep safe, for example, when using the internet. The school has appropriate policies to deal with bullying. A few parents and carers commented that instances of bullying had not been dealt with well. In contrast, pupils said that the school deals well with all types of bullying and that they are typically seen to get on well with each other and to treat each other respectfully.

Despite some improvement over the last three years, attendance remains average, largely because a small number of absences adversely affect overall levels. Pupils are keen to get to lessons and punctuality is excellent.

Leadership and management

Good leadership and management ensure a clear focus on improving achievement and teaching. At the last inspection, both were satisfactory and they are now good. Attainment has risen at the end of Key Stage 1 and has been sustained at above average in national tests for Year 6 pupils, particularly in English. Achievement in mathematics has improved but is not as strong as English. There is effective professional development, for example, in the use of assessment information. The performance of teachers is managed well and they are held to account for the standards pupils reach. A robust system to track pupils' progress has been introduced and is understood well by teachers and the governing body. This forms part of the school's accurate and comprehensive self-evaluation, which also checks out the quality of teaching and the standard of work in pupils' books. The headteacher and all other school leaders are involved in monitoring both quality and standards and carry out their roles well. The role of subject leaders has developed since the last inspection and, alongside better teaching, shows the school is able to sustain its own improvement and systematically tackle priorities.

The governing body is committed and supportive and challenges school leaders where it is needed. Members have a secure strategic grasp of the issues affecting the school and manage budgets carefully to ensure good value for money. For example, they have invested wisely in the Early Years Foundation Stage, including the outdoor area. This is better equipped but it does not yet cover all areas of learning well. The school recognises this point and has established useful links with other schools locally to share ideas and good practice about making improvements to curriculum planning and teaching.

The good-quality curriculum is well organised to provide a broad, balanced and relevant experience for pupils. It is enhanced by a range of interesting visits that pupils find highly enjoyable, for example, when learning about the history of the Romans locally. There are strong links with the church and pupils learn about faiths and cultures other than their own. This supports their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. The school effectively promotes equality and tackles discrimination so all pupils have the opportunity to achieve. Arrangements for safeguarding are effective and meet current requirements.

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.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
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.



2 July 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Crosscanonby St John's CofE School, Maryport, CA15 6RX

Thank you for the friendly welcome you gave me and for contributing so willingly to the inspection. I enjoyed my visit to your school and think that it is a good school.

You get on really well with each other and are right to be proud of what you achieve. You make good progress with your learning and are especially good readers. I am grateful to those of you who read to me and told me about how much you like reading, particularly pupils in Years 1 and 2. Congratulations to Years 3 and 4 for your neat and careful handwriting. Also well done Years 5 and 6 for so skilfully rotating shapes to create a floor design. You told me you find lessons interesting and that you learn a lot and I am pleased to agree that good teaching is helping you to achieve well.

Adults take good care of you and you say you feel safe in school. You told me you behave well and I think you do. The headteacher, school leaders and governors are doing a good job. They make sure that learning is interesting for you, especially by arranging lovely visits to exciting places like mountain tops and forests.

I have asked the school's leaders to do the following to help you learn even better:

- help you to learn even more in mathematics so that you reach higher levels
- make sure the outdoor learning area is used as well as it can be to help children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1.

You can help by continuing to show good attitudes to learning and trying your best to succeed. Best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

David Law
Lead Inspector

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