

Petteril Bank School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112220
Local Authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	337870
Inspection dates	29–30 September 2009
Reporting inspector	Tom Grieveson HMI

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	102
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Stuart Young
Headteacher	Mrs Josie Hodgkins
Date of previous school inspection	2 July 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. The inspectors visited 11 lessons and held meetings with the headteacher, middle leaders for literacy and numeracy, the chair of governors, staff, school council members, other pupils and a local authority officer. The inspectors observed the school's work, looked at a range of documents, including assessment and tracking evidence, and a large sample of pupils' workbooks. Twenty five parental questionnaires were received and these were fully considered.

- how successfully the school has tackled the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection
- the extent to which all groups of pupils are making progress commensurate with their capabilities and starting points
- how well teachers, and other staff, use the school's assessment and tracking evidence when planning lessons so that the needs of all pupils are consistently met
- whether actions taken by the school's leadership are leading to sustainable improvements in the quality of provision and pupils' outcomes.

Information about the school

The school is situated on the south side of Carlisle just under two miles from the city centre and about one mile from the junction with the M6. Petteril Bank is much smaller than average in size and numbers have declined in recent years reflecting demographic changes in the local area. The pupil roll is constantly changing because there is regular movement of families both into and out of the area. A very high proportion of pupils are entitled to a free school meal. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above average. The school has achieved Healthy Schools Status and has maintained the Activemark for the last three years. Both awards reflect the commitment of staff to supporting improvements in pupils' well-being. The headteacher has been in post since September 2008.

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?**4****The school's capacity for sustained improvement****3**

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to the standards which pupils attain and the progress which they make.

The school's long-standing commitment to supporting the emotional and social needs of pupils is a major strength and contributes to pupils' positive attitudes to learning and the constructive relationships within the school. The current headteacher is building successfully on this strong base through a resolute determination to tackle the legacy of significant underachievement which has characterised pupils' performance in this school for several years, and to raise expectations of their capabilities. With the support of governors and staff the strategies now in place are showing positive signs of impact, with important improvements made to teaching and learning and the curriculum and more significantly to pupils' outcomes. The school has satisfactory capacity to improve.

Most lessons observed during the inspection were satisfactory and elements of good teaching were evident particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Nonetheless, further improvements are still required to strengthen teaching to ensure that the emerging good practice becomes consistent in all classes. While all teachers make use of assessment information when planning lessons, not all use it effectively to ensure that all activities are suitable for pupils of all abilities and this limits their progress. Improvement is also required in the way lessons are organised and adults are deployed so that pupils derive maximum benefit from the skills which teachers and support assistants have to offer. Furthermore, while there are good examples of written feedback which pupils receive about their work, this is not consistent in each year group leaving too many pupils with little guidance about how to improve.

Standards remain considerably below average, particularly in writing, although improvements in provisional 2009 Year 6 national test results and in pupils' workbooks are testimony to the impact of the efforts invested to improve results, and particularly during the last 12 months. Furthermore, the assessment and tracking of pupils' performance is now rigorous and routine. The evidence it provides offers the headteacher and staff a detailed understanding of pupils' strengths and weaknesses. They are increasingly effective in using this information to target support for pupils to help them overcome the significant barriers which many of them face in their learning. This information is also used very effectively to support those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and ensures that most make satisfactory progress

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and some make good progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in all subjects and particularly in writing and improve the rate of progress made by all pupils in their learning so that they achieve in line with their capabilities.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that it is consistently at least good. Ensure that all teachers:
 - - make good use of assessment information so that when lessons are being
 - planned the needs of all pupils are understood and catered for
 - - make certain that lesson organisation matches the learning needs of pupils
 - and that all adults are deployed effectively to meet these needs.
- Achieve consistency in the verbal and written feedback given to pupils so that they are clear about how well they have done and what is required to make further progress towards meeting their targets.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

4

In the majority of lessons observed, pupils showed a positive commitment by working productively in completing their tasks. Most work well with other pupils when given the opportunity, showing enthusiasm and a good sense of teamwork. Standards at Key Stage 1 have been significantly below average in recent years in reading, writing and mathematics. The improvements in reading and mathematics in 2009 did not extend to writing, where results remain particularly weak. At Key Stage 2, standards are also well below average, despite the welcome improvement in mathematics' results and in pupils' reading scores. Almost all pupils achieved in line with their targets but significant further improvement is still required to raise standards further in all subjects and particularly in writing. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress, with good gains made by some. This occurs because their needs are well understood and careful, targeted help supports them effectively.

Pupils are confident in their surroundings. They say they feel safe and know that staff will help if difficulties arise. The majority show genuine concern for the welfare and safety of others. Pupils exhibit a keen awareness of how to keep healthy. They are eager to participate in physical activities and can articulate how this helps their bodies to develop and be strong. They have a good knowledge of what constitutes a healthy diet and this is reflected in their meal choices at lunchtime. Pupils are proud of their association with the school. They speak highly of the staff, particularly the headteacher, and talk about how much it has improved. School council members accept their responsibilities with enthusiasm and take pride in representing the views of other pupils. They can point to several examples of how the school has responded to their views. Although pupils' basic skills are weak, their ability and commitment to teamwork is noteworthy. The majority take responsibility for their own learning and exhibit a strong sense of wanting to improve. Attendance rates are satisfactory with persistent

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absenteeism reducing through well-targeted and successful interventions by the school and local authority staff.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	3
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is mostly satisfactory, although there are good features in lessons, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage. However, there are also aspects of teaching which require improvement.

The majority of pupils enjoy their learning and have good relationships with teachers and teaching assistants. This provides a positive context within which learning can occur. Most are eager to make progress and are anxious to please. They respond very well to praise and encouragement.

The headteacher has implemented important changes to the way that teachers use assessment information when planning learning and is rigorous in monitoring its use. Consequently, much greater account is now taken of pupils' needs when activities are being prepared and this leads to them receiving better support. Where it is used most effectively, pupils make better than average progress. However, this information is not

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

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used well enough by all teachers, all of the time, and greater consistency is still required if all pupils are to routinely benefit from the insight it affords.

There are shortcomings in the way in which a number of lessons are organised and these are particularly evident at the beginning and end of sessions. Too often, all pupils are kept together unnecessarily when teachers are setting the context of the lesson. For less able pupils, in particular, the teachers' input is not always sufficiently relevant to the tasks they will undertake and is too difficult for them to understand. It limits the time they have to work with teaching assistants and restricts their progress.

The satisfactory curriculum meets statutory requirements. Changes have been introduced to establish secure links between subjects and to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum with a specific emphasis on raising standards.

The school places significant emphasis on pupils' welfare and upon that of vulnerable pupils, in particular. It offers well-targeted support for individuals with specific additional needs and this has led to improvement in their academic results, attendance and punctuality.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher offers clear, focused leadership which is resolutely aligned to an agenda of raising standards and pupils' achievement. Her ambition for the school is evident in the actions taken during the past 12 months. She enjoys the full support and commitment of the staff and the overwhelmingly confidence of parents.

The headteacher and chair of governors demonstrate an accurate and detailed knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses. School improvement priorities are tightly focused on what requires urgent improvement. Much has been invested in middle leaders to deliver improvements in their areas of responsibility and significant professional development is equipping teachers with the skills to tackle the substantial legacy of underachievement and to raise standards.

There is compelling evidence from both inspection activities and school documentation that weaknesses are being overcome. This is particularly noticeable in improvements to teaching and learning and the curriculum. In addition, the tracking of pupils' performance and the intervention to target underachievement are showing real signs of improvement, although much is yet to be accomplished.

Governance is satisfactory. Governors' role of challenging senior leadership has been

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strengthened since the previous inspection, although greater rigour is required to ensure that all aspects of their monitoring role are conducted effectively. Nonetheless, since the current headteacher has been in post, governors have increased their expectations of the school's performance and of the academic standards pupils can attain.

The school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination well. Community cohesion is promoted satisfactorily and there is a good strategy for engaging with various community groups but greater efforts are required to promote pupils' understanding of the diversity of modern British society.

Safeguarding is satisfactory with appropriate risk assessment systems in place to promote pupils' safety. The school works effectively with other agencies to protect potentially vulnerable pupils.

Value for money is inadequate because the standards pupils attain and the progress which they make are unsatisfactory.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

When children enter the school their skills and knowledge are mostly below or well below those expected for their age. Their literacy skills are particularly weak. As a consequence of the careful and supportive work of the staff, before children start school and during the initial few weeks, they settle quickly, become confident in their surroundings and demonstrate interest and enjoyment of the activities provided. Relationships with adults are strong and during the inspection it was evident that children related well to each other.

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Frequent observations of children's progress are made and information used effectively to plan the next steps in learning for groups and individuals. Staff work hard to provide activities which meet their needs. During the latter part of the inspection, the organisation of learning within the Early Years Foundation Stage was clear and purposeful and built upon staff's knowledge of the children's needs. It was an improvement on the practice observed on the first day. Consequently, the children were fully engaged and well supported by adults, particularly through careful explanation and questioning and very effective work to extend children's speaking skills. This included good use of the outside learning space which attracts children because of the range of interesting activities available. Consequently, the majority of children were making satisfactory and in some cases good progress.

The leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is effective in promoting a well-managed learning environment and promoting better outcomes for pupils. Expectations of children's capabilities are rising and staff are working diligently to help them improve.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. They are particularly appreciative of the leadership of the headteacher. Parents commented strongly on how much their children enjoyed attending Petteril Bank and expressed their confidence in the school's safety routines and in how they are kept informed of their child's progress. A number of parents commented on how much the school had improved and how happy and confident their children had become.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Petteril Bank 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 25 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 102 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	14	56	11	44	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	18	72	7	28	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	18	72	7	28	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	18	72	4	16	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	18	72	2	8	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	20	80	5	20	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	15	60	8	32	0	0	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)	16	64	9	36	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	15	60	10	40	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	17	68	7	28	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	17	68	5	20	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	20	80	5	20	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	13	52	7	28	0	0	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 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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

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 pupil's 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.



1 October 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Petteril Bank School, Carlisle, CA1 3BX

On behalf of the inspection team, I would like to thank you for the way you welcomed us to the school. I particularly thank those school council members who met with us and shared their views about the school and their important work as councillors. The report is now complete and I would like to share our findings with you.

The headteacher, governors and staff are working extremely hard to make your school a better place in which you can learn. We were particularly impressed by the way Mrs Hodgkins and the staff have made improvements to the way teachers plan lessons, provide the more interesting curriculum which you told us about and the way they assess your work. We found these aspects of the school's work to be satisfactory and they provide a secure basis so the school can make further improvement.

You told us that you feel safe and that staff are available when you need help. It was good to observe how behaviour has improved around the school and in lessons – well done! We were impressed by the high number of pupils who have a school meal and your knowledge of how to keep healthy is really good.

Despite what has been achieved so far, the school needs to make improvements, particularly in helping you all reach higher standards and make better progress in your learning. While we were very pleased to see the improvements made by Year 2 and Year 6 pupils in the 2009 tests, not enough pupils are achieving as well as they should. Therefore, we have given the school a notice to improve. This means that the school will be inspected again in about 12 to 14 months time and an inspector will visit in the intervening period to check on the progress being made.

We have asked Mrs Hodgkins, the governors and the staff to make improvements in the following areas:

- to make sure that the standards you reach and the progress you make improve because we know that many more of you could do so much better in your learning
- to help all the teachers so that all lessons can be at least good and that all the tasks you do meet your needs all of the time
- to make certain that when your work is marked, the teachers' comments tell you about how well you have done, but also to include how you can make more

progress particularly towards meeting your targets.

Thank you again for your help during the inspection and to those of you who completed the pupil questionnaire. I am sure you can think of ways in which you can help the governors and staff to make these improvements. We have taken very careful account of your views in completing this report. Please accept our very best wishes for the future in your studies.

Yours sincerely

Tom Grieveson

Her Majesty's Inspector

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