



Allonby Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 112100
LEA Cumbria
Inspection number 278848
Inspection dates 28 September 2005 to 28 September 2005
Reporting inspector Jennie Platt

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Allonby
School category	Community		Maryport
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Cumbria, CA15 6QG
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01900 881324
Number on roll	38	Fax number	01900 881324
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs P Taylor
Date of previous inspection	1 February 2000	Headteacher	Mrs G Martin

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 28 September 2005 - 28 September 2005	Inspection number 278848
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one additional inspector.

Description of the school

This is a small school in the village of Allonby in Cumbria. The school serves an area of mixed social and economic circumstances with many families living temporarily in rented accommodation. This does lead to difficulties for the school as pupils start and leave school at different times in the school year. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average. The small number of pupils from minority ethnic groups does not need extra help in learning English as an additional language. For such a small school, a high number of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. A building programme has greatly improved the building and raised morale for pupils and staff.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. Standards are rising and are above average. The achievement of most pupils is good although some lack of challenge in Key Stage 1 means higher attaining pupils do not always make enough progress. Children in the Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress although the planned curriculum is not closely matched to their age and experiences. The school is a warm and friendly community and pupils behave well and say they enjoy school. They are enthusiastic and work hard but are not always clear about how to make their work better. The school has overcome many of its previously identified weaknesses. Standards are now satisfactory in information and communication technology and resources are much better. The headteacher works well with governors and the local authority. Together they have a well informed picture of the school and the next steps to be taken. The leadership management group has the capacity to improve the school. Value for money is good.

not applicable

What the school should do to improve further

- Extend the good practice of the use of assessment in Years 4 to 6 more securely to Years 1 to 3, particularly to ensure work challenges the higher attaining pupils.
- Make the experiences for the children in the Foundation Stage more relevant to their needs and experiences by increasing resources and providing staff training.
- Extend the good practice in target setting in English in Years 4 to 6 to other subjects so that all pupils know how to improve their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The small numbers involved make it difficult to be exact about the attainment of pupils on entry. Attainment is generally similar to what is usually seen, although the school has a high number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Children settle well and make satisfactory progress towards the standards expected by the end of the reception class. In Year 2, many are working at the level expected, and national test results in 2004 in mathematics show a high number exceeded this level. The higher attaining pupils could achieve more, especially in reading and writing. Pupils in Year 3 are not always set hard enough work, and this is slowing down their progress. Progress accelerates in Years 4 to 6 in response to challenging teaching, better use of assessment and additional help from well-qualified support staff. The small numbers of pupils, and the fluctuations in each year – there can be between three and six pupils a year – mean that statistical analyses of trends are unreliable. However, recent test results and work in lessons show good achievement for the older pupils and high standards in the core subjects. The school is reaching challenging targets. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are fully included and often make very good progress and reach the expected level.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development is good, and focuses effectively on treating each child as an individual. Pupils work hard and behaviour is good. When pupils who have difficulties sustaining good behaviour become restless, staff respond sensitively so that learning is not disturbed. Children new to school quickly make friends because of the school's welcoming atmosphere. Pupils have a strong sense of commitment to the school. Older pupils found it difficult to select one favourite aspect because they enjoy all aspects of school life. School council members take their role very seriously and other pupils approach them confidently with concerns or opinions knowing they will be listened to. Pupils have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and are eagerly anticipating the opening of the new sports hall. Attendance is similar to the national figure. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Visits extend pupils' knowledge beyond the village but they lack a deeper understanding of the diverse nature of modern British society.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The good teaching and learning is the main reason for the improved standards. Lessons are well managed and run smoothly. Teaching enthuses pupils and they are eager learners. In Years 3 to 6, lessons are brisk and sharp questioning keeps pupils attentive. The use of interactive whiteboards clarifies new learning as was very evident when explaining fractions. Assessment guides teachers well in their planning. The effect of this is more apparent in Years 4 to 6 because tasks are pitched at the correct level. In Years 1 to 3, the concentration on the need to provide work for a wide range of ages and abilities has been at the expense of setting sufficiently challenging work for the higher attaining pupils. Pupils have individual targets in English in Key Stage 2 and know how to improve but this good practice is not established in other subjects. Teaching assistants contribute greatly to the good progress by leading small groups in many subjects as well as successfully helping pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory with a sensible balance between teacher-directed and free choice activities. However, not all activities are purposeful or meet the needs of pupils in the Foundation Stage. This is especially the case for role play where more imaginative resources are required.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum fulfils most of the nationally expected requirements except for gymnastics, although this will be remedied shortly with the completion of the sports hall. The school considers the curriculum to be good but the inspection judges it to be satisfactory. The school tries to plan carefully to match work to the needs of pupils

of different ages but, in practice, work does not always fulfil pupils' current needs, especially in Year 3. Although children in the Foundation Stage enjoy what they do, the planned activities do not always match their age and experiences. The school recognises that the newly developed outdoor space needs more attention to promote children's physical and social development fully. The school is very aware of the isolation of the village community and extends pupils' experiences through a series of carefully planned visits. Clubs for physical education are good and encourage an enthusiasm for sport and team games. The variety of other clubs is limited although pupils enjoy learning to play a brass instrument.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school sees the support of all as a strong feature of the school. Certainly, it is good and pupils say they feel safe and have easy and swift access to help when needed. Pupils appreciate that staff have their interests at heart. This is very evident in the excellent new toilet and cloakroom which delight the pupils, and make them feel highly valued. Governors take their role in ensuring pupils' safety seriously and ensure all required checks are carried out. External support is used most effectively to safeguard pupils and ensure they are well equipped when they move on to their secondary education. Child protection procedures are in place although the lack of a staff handbook means guidance is not easily accessible for new or temporary staff. The support for vulnerable pupils is sensitive and the school ensures help is available and their needs are met.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are highly effective and have provided the drive for improvement since the last inspection. The headteacher's energy and enthusiasm to provide the best for the pupils are impressive and have earned her the respect of staff, pupils and parents. Pupils say that she is always happy. She is ably supported by the leadership management team which includes governors who play a pivotal role in moving the school forward. The school's commitment to welcoming all pupils and ensuring equal access to the curriculum is outstanding. Evaluation of how well the school is doing is a collaborative process including consultation with pupils and parents. All opinions are considered and acted upon and the school has an accurate picture of its strengths and areas for development. The school's improvement plan is a clearly set out document but the criteria for success are often too general and not sufficiently linked to how plans will improve standards. Professional training has improved teaching but has not paid enough attention to the Foundation Stage. The school's capacity to generate additional funding is impressive and, as a result, significant rebuilding has improved the school and given the community access to a sports hall.

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

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Allonby Primary School

Allonby Maryport

Cumbria

CA15 6QG

29 September 2005

Dear Pupils,

Thank you for the friendship you showed to me when I visited your school. It made my visit most enjoyable. I would like to tell you what I found out. You told me you liked your school and it will be no surprise to you that I agree with you that it is a good and welcoming school.

I liked these things the most.

You behave well and work hard.

Most of you make good progress and achieve well.

Teachers make lessons interesting and help you if you do not understand.

Staff look after you well and encourage you to be healthy.

You work in a happy school and are a pleasure to talk to.

Your headteacher and governors lead the school well and have greatly improved the building for you.

I have asked your teachers to look at the following things to make school and your progress even better.

To make activities in the reception class even more interesting.

To check that the work set is always hard enough in Years 1 to 3.

Older pupils told me they had targets in English. I would like to see this practice extended to all pupils and other subjects so that you can check how well you are doing by yourself.

I wish you every success in the future and am sure you will all carry with you many happy memories of your time at Allonby Primary School.

With best wishes

Jennie Platt

Lead Inspector

Annex B

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