



Clifton Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 112178
LEA Cumbria
Inspection number 278871
Inspection dates 23 May 2006 to 24 May 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Arthur Allison

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Clifton
School category	Community		Penrith
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Cumbria CA10 2EG
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01768 242152
Number on roll	67	Fax number	01768 242152
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Angela Murray
Date of previous inspection	1 October 1999	Headteacher	Mrs Margaret Hartley

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a very small primary school serving a mainly rural area. The children are taught in three mixed-age classes, one of which includes all the pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6. Socio-economic circumstances of the area are close to average. However, the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is lower than in most schools, as is the percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There are no pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. Attainment on entry to the school fluctuates, from average to, more frequently, below average, with language skills being weakest.

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 and very welcoming school that gives good value for money. Leadership and management are good. The school's thorough analysis of its effectiveness is accurate. All shortcomings identified in the previous inspection have been tackled successfully, as have other shortcomings identified by the headteacher after taking up her appointment. Led by a charismatic and dynamic headteacher, the school has the capacity to improve further. The overwhelming majority of parents have every confidence in the school. One parent wrote, 'I cannot speak too highly of the school. It is a wonderful, safe environment for any child.' The pupils are very friendly and talk enthusiastically about what the school provides. They want to do well and understand why teachers make them work hard. The school is strongly committed to helping all pupils to do their best, drawing on outside expertise and participating in initiatives such as the Primary Leadership Strategy to help in this aim. The school provides good levels of care, guidance and support for all pupils. The pupils' personal development is good and their behaviour is exemplary.

Standards of attainment are broadly average and all groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, are making good progress and achieve well. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. The children settle quickly into school, make good progress and attain standards close to those expected for their age. Teaching is good, but the school knows that it needs to make further use of information from assessment and to provide additional training for staff to support individual pupils of all abilities who need extra help to raise attainment. The curriculum is good and provides rich experiences for pupils.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make increased use of information about levels of attainment to address the needs of individual pupils.
- Provide training for staff to implement strategies for addressing individual learning needs.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards of attainment are broadly average and the pupils' achievement is good. The results of the 2005 national tests for eleven-year-olds in English, mathematics and science show that the pupils made good progress in Years 3 to 6. The school exceeded its challenging targets. Although the children's skills in language are weak when they start school, pupils in Year 6 in 2005 reached the standards expected for their age in English.

Because this is a very small school, the attainment of children starting school varies from year to year from broadly average to well below average. Those who left the

Reception class in 2005 made good progress and attained standards that were close to those expected for their age.

In 2005, the Key Stage 1 results were broadly average, but better in aspects of English than they were in mathematics, where no pupils attained the higher Level 3. The school has analysed the test results thoroughly and is taking steps to raise standards. The good progress in lessons seen reflects the school's own view that pupils are achieving well.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make similar progress to other pupils because they are identified early and given good help.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The personal development and well-being of all pupils is good. Spiritual development is good. The assembly seen during the inspection, including the singing, was a moving and uplifting experience for all. Moral, social and cultural development is also good. Pupils learn about our culturally diverse society, respecting different cultures and beliefs, for example in a good religious education lesson. Pupils enjoy their learning and work hard to meet the targets set for them. Attendance is above average. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary in and out of the classroom and pupils were adamant that there is no bullying. Pupils have very good relationships with each other and with staff, and this makes a positive contribution to their learning.

Pupils willingly take on responsibilities, such as being members of the recently formed school council or as 'bus buddies'. The school councillors proudly described how they had contributed to making the school a safer place. This supports the smooth running and happy atmosphere of the school. Pupils have a good understanding of the need for a healthy lifestyle. They take plenty of exercise and make healthy eating choices. Most pupils enjoy a school lunch, prepared in the new kitchen. By Year 6, pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. The good teaching is characterised by teachers ensuring all pupils are aware of what they should know or be able to do by the end of the lesson. Teachers have high expectations of work and behaviour, set challenging tasks, work at a good pace and use careful questioning to check on learning. Resources are used effectively, and teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to learning. Pupils rise to the challenge with enthusiasm. In all classes good relationships support pupils who try hard to please their teachers. Pupils set to work promptly on tasks, making good use of the time available, which helps their learning. This was particularly true of a mathematics lesson with the older pupils.

The school recognises the need to increase the use of intervention strategies, based on a more rigorous use of assessment of pupils' needs, to support individual pupils of all abilities who need extra help. Also, the school knows that while teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning, there is a need to provide more training for all staff before the school can increase its use of intervention. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported by teachers and teaching assistants. As a result, they learn as well as others.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum, fulfilling all statutory requirements, is good because of the wide range of worthwhile and interesting activities that enrich pupils' learning. It meets the needs of all pupils, including those in the Foundation Stage, and enables pupils to make good progress both personally and academically. The extension of the school grounds has been carefully planned to enrich the outdoor education opportunities for all pupils. The school makes good use of visitors to extend pupils' skills and their knowledge of the world. The school also has links with other schools to provide such activities as the African dance afternoons. The range of out-of-school clubs, well supported by pupils, develops new skills and interests. Planning for the main curriculum is thorough and reflects the school's determination to raise standards, for example in mathematics. Good provision is made for pupils to learn about personal and health issues. The curriculum is appropriately adapted for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides good care, guidance and support for all pupils. Arrangements for the health, safety and security of all pupils are very effective. Child protection systems are appropriate. Risk assessments are in place. Pupils and their parents agree that the school is a safe and happy place to learn. The after school club and other out-of-school clubs are valued by parents and children.

Teachers know their pupils well and show high levels of concern and care if they are hurt or upset. Pupils are adamant that there is no bullying; they say they would readily turn to an adult if they were worried or upset. Pupils' progress is carefully monitored and targets are set. They know what they have to do to improve. Pupils who have learning difficulties or who are gifted or talented are identified early. There are strong links with parents and external agencies to support the good help given in school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The charismatic and dynamic headteacher is very strongly committed to the personal and academic development of all pupils. In this, she has the full backing of the whole staff. The strong emphasis on personal

development which clearly underpins learning contributes to the good progress of pupils. The headteacher, well aware of the needs of the pupils, has been instrumental in enriching the school's provision; for example, by successfully implementing a guided reading programme to raise standards in reading. A recovery programme has been introduced to raise standards in mathematics. With the support of all staff, the headteacher promotes strategies to prepare pupils well for life; for example, through encouraging them to take on responsibilities and to work well in pairs or small groups. The assembly seen emphasised the benefits of being in a team.

The school has accurately assessed what needs to be done to raise standards, particularly in mathematics and science, but these plans have yet to have their full effect. The school promotes equal opportunities well and deploys teachers and teaching assistants well to help raise achievement.

All shortcomings identified by the previous inspection have been successfully tackled. The school has also tackled other shortcomings identified by the present headteacher, notably the school's assessment and tracking systems. This illustrates the capacity to improve further.

Systems for self-evaluation are well established and take account of the views of parents and pupils. Governors, several of whom are recent appointments, are committed to helping the school and have plans to develop their roles. Governors manage the school's finances well.

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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	2	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	3	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	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	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?	2	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	2	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	3	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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The School Council

Clifton Primary School

Clifton

Penrith

Cumbria

CA10 2EG

25 May 2006

Dear Children

I thoroughly enjoyed my visit to your school. I was very impressed by your friendliness, politeness and your excellent behaviour which is why I wore my special tie on the Wednesday. I enjoyed talking to you and seeing you at work in lessons.

I can see why you are proud of your school and enjoy attending.

You enjoy learning, settle to your work quickly and behave extremely well in class and in the playground.

You are very proud to take on responsibilities and, through the school council, put forward suggestions that make the school safer and better.

You enjoy taking part in extra activities and your singing in assembly was really lovely.

Your teachers and other adults in the school work hard to help you.

Your headteacher knows what the school should do to help you do better and the other staff fully support her in this.

As a result of what I saw and what you said to me, there are two things I have asked the school to do to make it better.

Keep an even better check on what you know and can do and use this information to plan better activities in lessons to help you learn.

Provide training for all staff so that they can give more help to those who need it so you can all do your very best.

Thank you again for making me welcome. Keep trying to do your very best.

Yours faithfully

Mr Allison

The inspector