



# South Walney Infant School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 112212  
**LEA** Cumbria  
**Inspection number** 278878  
**Inspection dates** 9 March 2006 to 10 March 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mrs Carole Cressey

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Infant	<b>School address</b>	Amphitrite Street
<b>School category</b>	Community		Walney
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 7		Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria LA14 3BZ
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01229 471457
<b>Number on roll</b>	185	<b>Fax number</b>	01229 471457
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Rev John Hodgkinson
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	1 November 1999	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Judith Wray

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

This average sized infant school is located on Walney Island near the centre of Barrow. Most pupils are white British and come from a variety of social and economic backgrounds. A few pupils come from minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is much lower than average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above the average for a school of this type. Following a period as acting headteacher, the headteacher was appointed in November 2005 bringing to an end a period of considerable instability where standards declined and pupils did not achieve as well as they should.

## 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 that provides good value for money. Standards have improved significantly in the last two years and are now well above average. Progress in the Foundation Stage is good. The parents are rightly confident that their children are safe, exceptionally well cared for, work hard and do well. The quality of the education, including teaching, is good. As a result, pupils make good progress and achieve well. Personal development is good. Pupils are well behaved and enjoy their lessons. They learn to be responsible members of their school community but would like more opportunities to put their ideas on how to improve their school into practice. The school is well led and managed. The headteacher's enthusiasm, professional skills and commitment in the face of recent turbulence have brought improvement to all aspects of the school, most notably to pupils' progress and standards.

This is a rapidly improving school that has quickly and accurately through its own evaluation identified its strengths and weaknesses. It correctly regards itself as being a good school. It has implemented a range of strategies to ensure that pupils achieve well in a stimulating learning environment. It is aware that the recently introduced assessment systems are not yet used as effectively as they could be to track pupils' progress and set targets for pupils. South Walney Infant School is very well placed to become even more successful in the future.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Make better use of assessment information, including marking, to track pupils' progress and set individual targets so that pupils know how to improve their work.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to express their ideas on how they would like to improve their school.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Standards have improved rapidly over the last two years from being significantly below average to being significantly above. The improvements in 2004 and 2005 are being sustained and the pupils are achieving well. Children start school with skills and knowledge which are below average for their ages. The good teaching in the Foundation Stage enables children to make good progress and, as a result, most reach the standard expected of them by the time they enter Year 1. This good start and the consistently good teaching in Years 1 and 2 enable pupils to continue to make good progress and achieve well. Standards in mathematics and reading are particularly high. The school is not complacent about its improving standards and is working hard to improve them further. There are excellent strategies being implemented to improve standards in writing. These are having a very positive impact and, as a result, pupils are writing for an exceptionally wide range of purposes and are producing work of a very high quality. Parents of pupils with learning and/or behaviour difficulties speak highly of the support their children receive, which enables them to achieve the targets set for them. The

few children learning English as an additional language receive good support and settle quickly into school and make good progress.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being along with their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school engenders in pupils a desire to learn and builds on their successes very effectively. At all times, pupils behave well and show a good understanding of right and wrong. They are thoughtful and sensitive to others and work together well in lessons and in the playground. There is a strong awareness that bullying causes unhappiness and is not to be tolerated. This was illustrated well by the thoughtful responses to a recent anti-bullying day. Pupils are eager to come to school as shown by the above average attendance. They enjoy learning and take an active part in all the tasks and activities the school provides for them. However, pupils would like more opportunities to have a say in the running of the school. Pupils learn to reflect on their own uniqueness. They have a growing understanding of their island's history and are developing an awareness of international cultures, for example their recent celebration of the Chinese New Year. Healthy snacks and lunches and the well-planned opportunities to take part in sport and exercise in lessons and at break times ensure that pupils are developing a healthy lifestyle.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are consistently good throughout the school. As a result pupils are becoming very successful learners who work hard and achieve high standards. Classrooms and shared spaces are an Aladdin's cave of exciting displays and activities, which entice children to become eager learners. Beanstalks, giants and houses made of sweets stimulate pupils' imagination and encourage them to become good readers and writers. This was evident in the high quality posters the pupils designed to advertise 'a job vacancy for a giant or a wolf'. Teachers plan each lesson carefully to meet the abilities and learning styles of all pupils, particularly those of boys and those who learn at a faster rate. Pupils who learn more slowly and those who have English as an additional language receive beneficial help from their teachers and teaching assistants. The lessons' overall learning intentions are explained clearly to the pupils and teachers use the interactive whiteboards very effectively to show pupils how to complete their tasks well. Teachers do not yet use assessment information to set individual targets for pupils and the marking of pupils' work does not provide enough guidance on how to improve further.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good and all children experience a broad range of relevant activities. The Foundation Stage provides a rich environment where children learn through play and where each child's needs are met. The emphasis through Years 1 and 2 is, appropriately, on literacy and numeracy but the school also takes pupils on a wide range of visits and frequently invites visitors into school to make learning more relevant and interesting. The school successfully promotes creative aspects of the curriculum; for example, a recent dance performance was led by boys from a local secondary school. The curriculum is enriched by linking subjects together well. For example, the 'building bridges' project in Year 1 presented pupils with opportunities in English, history and personal and social education. The school is actively seeking to raise standards by developing the opportunities in writing and by developing the creative and physical curriculum to increase motivation. The range of extra-curricular activities is good. Pupils eagerly participate in the computer club.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Care offered by the school is very good and makes a significant difference to children's lives. It is a strength of the school. Parents are quick to praise the school in this respect and the vast majority of the pupils believe they are well cared for. When asked what is best about their school they replied, 'how the teachers look after you'. The quality of relationships among pupils and between adults and pupils is of the highest order and contributes significantly to the well-being of pupils and their families.

The school has a welcoming and ordered ethos. The headteacher and special educational needs co-ordinator liaise closely with a range of service providers to ensure the care and support of vulnerable children. Good efforts are made to remove all risks and eliminate dangers in all aspects of learning. From the youngest of ages, pupils are given a good awareness of the importance of behaving safely. Outdoors, during play and lunchtimes, good supervision and robust child protection and safety procedures ensure the well-being of all pupils.

The school is beginning to provide guidance on how pupils can make the best progress in their academic work. Assessment data and other information are not yet sufficiently used in planning pupils' progress and their targets for learning are often too general to provide clear guidance on what to do next.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good with one outstanding feature. There is an exceptionally strong vision and commitment shared by the headteacher, staff and governors to do the best for all pupils. The headteacher has been pivotal to the school's

success in bringing about significant and rapid improvements after a period of instability.

The school knows itself well. The very good support from the local authority has enabled the school to be rigorous in its evaluation of test results and of teaching and learning. This is reflected in the school improvement plan which is sharply focused on what needs to be done to raise standards. The newly implemented assessment and recording arrangements are beginning to provide staff with an overview of pupils' attainment and progress. The school recognises that the rigorous use of this information is the key to improving standards of achievement even further.

The governors are very well informed about how the school is performing through regular reports from the headteacher, the analysis of test results and by observing lessons. The school works well with parents and sees them as vital partners in evaluating its provision and striving towards improving standards. Parents welcome the many ways they receive information about their children's education. However, many of them are unsure how their children's views are taken into account. Parents' views are very positive and almost all of them think the school is well led and managed. The inspection agrees with them.

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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>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	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

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

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	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	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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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10 March 2006

Dear Children

Thank you so much for being so friendly and welcoming when we visited your school a short while ago. We really enjoyed talking with you and your teachers.

You obviously enjoy learning especially when your teachers make lessons more difficult so you have to really use your brains well. We particularly liked all the wonderfully exciting displays which show off your work so well. You are all working hard to improve your writing. We were also very pleased with your good behaviour and how very kind you are to each other. It was so good to hear from you that there is no bullying in your school. You also said that if there was, your teachers would quickly sort it out. We thought the posters you designed as part of anti-bullying week were exceptionally good and showed that you really understand how much unhappiness bullying can cause.

You have some really good ideas on how to improve your school even further and so we have asked your teachers to talk with you about how you can all share these ideas with the grown ups.

We have also asked your teachers to give you more help in knowing what you need to do to improve your work. We think this will help you become even more successful.

We hope you will always enjoy school as much as you do now and that it will help you become sensible and happy adults.

Best wishes

Carole Cressey and Mike Onyon