



# Brook Street Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 112231  
**LEA** Cumbria  
**Inspection number** 278881  
**Inspection dates** 7 March 2006 to 8 March 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mr Dave Byrne

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Edward Street
<b>School category</b>	Community		Carlisle
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11		Cumbria CA1 2JB
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01228 607503
<b>Number on roll</b>	140	<b>Fax number</b>	01228 606473
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Lynn Savage
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	1 October 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Janet Ditchburn

<b>Age group</b> 3 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 7 March 2006 - 8 March 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 278881
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

Most children are of white British heritage, although some, of Polish and Portuguese origin, have English as an additional language. A high percentage start and leave school at times other than the normal. Attainment on entry is well below average. Deprivation is high, qualifying a very high percentage of children for free school meals. The proportion of children with learning and behavioural difficulties is twice the national average. The number of children on roll is falling rapidly because of changes in the use of housing in the area.

## **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. It does well in educating children with a wide range of personal, emotional and academic needs. Levels of personal support and welfare are very good. A good grounding is provided for children in the Foundation Stage. This contributes to good behaviour, secure relationships and positive attitudes throughout the school. Progress is good across the school given the very low standards with which children start school. Good teaching successfully meets all children's needs. As a result, children overcome many challenges to achieve well by the end of Year 6. They gain average standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT). The use of assessment is satisfactory but current systems are inefficient and cumbersome. Children benefit from good links between the school, parents, the local community and support agencies in the fields of education and health. Although the curriculum is good overall, links between subjects are not well planned. This reduces scope for children to fully develop their skills of speaking, reading, writing and ICT. The headteacher and key staff provide effective management and leadership. The school's self-evaluation is accurate. The governing body meets statutory requirements but is not involved enough in monitoring the school's performance. Improvement since the last inspection has been good and the school currently gives good value for money. Future improvement, however, could be impeded by the negative impact of the budget deficit.

not applicable

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards particularly in speaking, reading, writing and ICT by devising and implementing strategies for linking subjects together and refining assessment systems.
- Improve the role of the governing body and senior management team so that it keeps a closer eye on the school's performance and takes steps to balance the school's budget.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Achievement is good overall. Children do well to move from well below average attainment on entry to average standards at the end of Year 6. Standards are improving overall and are better than they were at the last inspection. The 2005 results for Year 6 and Year 2 were disappointing but were lower because of the impact of the high proportion of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

- Good progress occurs in the Foundation Stage but the impact on standards of learning and behavioural difficulties is significant. As a result, by the start of Year 1 the majority of children attain standards below average. In Key Stage 1 good progress occurs, given pupils' starting points, but most children still do not make

enough progress to reach average standards by the end of Year 2. Children make good progress in Years 3 to 6 and standards in the current Year 6 are average in English, mathematics and science. Good progress is made by children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also those with English as an additional language. Standards in ICT and religious education are better than at the last inspection. They now match expectations.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Inspectors agree with the views of the school and parents that personal development and well-being are good. Children enjoy school. They participate in lessons enthusiastically and behave well. The 'You can do it' programme has contributed significantly to the confidence and high esteem shown by most children and has reduced incidents of poor behaviour significantly. Children say they feel safe and that bullying is rare and racism non-existent. If bullying happens children are confident that it is effectively sorted out. Children know how to lead healthy lifestyles and work safely. The accreditation as a healthy school shows in the good quality lunches and daily provision of fruit, vegetables and milk. Most children are polite and courteous and willingly help others. Given the chance, they accept responsibility and use initiative. This is demonstrated by the high profile of the school council and the play leader schemes. Children think of others. They are proud of the funds raised for a variety of charities, such as the Carlisle Floods appeal. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Children know the difference between right and wrong and generally get on very well with each other. The strong emphasis on the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT, coupled with the development of good social skills, gives children a good grounding for their future economic well-being. Attendance is below average but improving. This is because of the implementation of a good range of strategies to encourage good attendance.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good overall. Staff cope well with the high number of children starting and leaving the school partway through their primary schooling. Imaginative initiatives introduced in the last three years have improved the quality of teaching and learning. Initiatives, such as the Nurture Group and the 'You Can Do It' strategy, successfully boost children's self esteem. This has been so successful that teachers are now able to concentrate on academic issues in lessons more than on behaviour management. As a consequence, standards have improved, particularly in Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 1 teachers are working very hard to improve children's basic skills, but it is not until half way through Key Stage 2 that the fruits of their labours are evident with standards rising to broadly average. In the Foundation Stage, teachers work very closely with teaching assistants to provide lively and exciting activities.

Across the school, work is carefully planned and tailored to meet children's needs, particularly in English, mathematics and science. As a result, children learn well and the vast majority respond well to the stimulating lessons. Good use is made of questioning but at times opportunities for extended discussions are limited. This holds back aspects of achievement. The use of ICT is satisfactory but not enough use is made of computers or of literacy and numeracy skills in all subjects. Teachers know children well but assessment is inefficient as a way of defining details of individual progress.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good and has improved since the last inspection. The Foundation Stage gives children a good start and in Years 1 to 6 subjects are carefully planned to meet the children's needs. A strong emphasis is given to the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT, but planning is weak for linking subjects together. This holds back pupils' achievement in speaking, writing and aspects of ICT. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good and for those with English as an additional language it is satisfactory. Imaginative schemes successfully promote personal, social and health education and make a significant contribution to children's academic and personal achievement. The curriculum is enriched by a good range of out of school visits and visitors such as artists and musicians. The range of extra-curricular activities, however, is very limited, particularly in sport.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Inspectors agree with parents and the school that care, guidance and support are good with a particular strength in personal care, guidance and support. Each child is valued and child protection and health and safety arrangements are thoroughly implemented. Staff know each child very well and good links with outside agencies complement the support given to children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There is, however, limited support for children with English as an additional language; despite this they progress well. The Nurture Group makes a particularly strong contribution to the achievement of children with emotional difficulties. Close links with parents includes workshops to show how they can help their children at home. Well constructed individual education plans effectively target the needs of children with learning and behavioural difficulties. The use of assessment is satisfactory across the school. Children are involved in setting and evaluating their own targets for improvement but the current assessment systems are difficult to use.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management is good overall. The headteacher is highly regarded by parents and staff because she has implemented effective systems to support children's personal development and satisfactory systems for supporting academic achievement.

The senior management team, although large for the size of the school, is effective. It gives a clear educational direction but the contribution of the deputy headteacher to school management is less than normally found. Subjects are well managed and staff are skilled at finding the best way to improve progress and raise standards. The Foundation Stage is effectively managed, despite limitations of the accommodation. The provision for learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well managed but the management of support for children with English as an additional language is only satisfactory. The governing body is satisfactory. It is supportive and gets involved in school life but is not involved enough in monitoring the school's performance. Although resources are adequate, the range of library books is relatively narrow and the number of teaching assistants is small. The budget is in deficit and increasing financial pressures threaten continued improvement in the future.

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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	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

<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	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	3	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	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	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

<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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8 March 2006

Dear children

You were very welcoming to Mr Early and me during our visit to your school. You are fortunate to attend a good school which is steadily improving. It is getting better not only because of the efforts of your teachers but also because of the contribution you make. Your good behaviour, politeness and willingness to help others all combine to make your school a good place to be. You enjoy your lessons and work hard for most of the time. By the end of Year 6, most of you can read, write and do mathematics and science at standards expected for your age. Many of you also seem to do a good job using the computer.

Your headteacher leads the school well and your teachers and support staff give you interesting lessons. It is good to see that you often go on visits to local places such as Tullie House Museum because this adds interest to lessons. We are disappointed, though, that you don't have a better range of extra-curricular clubs, especially in sport. Even though teachers know each of you very well, we have asked the school to find ways of making better use of assessment to help you. We have also asked the school to find ways of giving you even more opportunities to use your skills of speaking, reading, writing and ICT in all lessons. Because the numbers of children coming to your school is falling, we have also asked the school to make sure that the money it spends is reduced to make sure that it doesn't get into debt.

Thank you again for your friendliness and good company. We have lovely memories of enjoying your excellent lunches whilst chatting with you about all sorts of things. Good luck to each and everyone of you for your future. It is always worth remembering that to have a friend, you first have to make others want to be your friend!

Best wishes

David Byrne

Lead inspector