



Silloth Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 112235
LEA Cumbria
Inspection number 278882
Inspection dates 23 May 2006 to 24 May 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Martin Bradley

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Liddel Street
School category	Community		Silloth
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		Wigton, Cumbria CA7 4DR
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01697 331243
Number on roll	254	Fax number	01697 332740
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Susan Draude
Date of previous inspection	1 November 1999	Headteacher	Mr Jonathan Dennison

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Silloth Primary School is situated in a small town on the north west coast of Cumbria. The pupils come from a variety of social class and family backgrounds and most live in the town itself. The great majority of the pupils are of White British origin. Pupil numbers have fallen in recent years to the present 254 on roll. There are 16.5% of the pupils who have identified learning difficulties and/or disabilities, fewer than the national average. Five pupils have a statement of special educational need. The school also has a base for community use which hosts a range of adult education, family learning and drop-in activities.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school has successfully sought to raise the standards achieved by its pupils particularly in the current year, and the school is now providing a satisfactory level of education. The standards achieved by pupils are now broadly in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and 2. The reorganisation of the school's management and the focus of the school improvement plan on raising standards and improving assessment and tracking procedures are beginning to have a positive impact. The assessment and tracking procedures are not consistently applied in all classes. The school is building on previous work to create a unified sense of direction and purpose amongst all staff to improve self evaluation and all aspects of pupils' education and care. Staff know that there is more to do, but teamwork is good and morale is high.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Whilst some is exceptional, too many lessons do not stimulate the pupils or engage them in actively pursuing the subject. Pupils' personal development and the care guidance and support provided by the school are good. The 'emotional literacy' project, which encourages them to consider their own and others' feelings, has had a positive impact on behaviour throughout the school. The curriculum is satisfactory, and previous inspections' concerns about the use of ICT have been well addressed.

The quality of the Foundation Stage is satisfactory: its assessment and monitoring procedures are good. Many pupils enter with below national levels of achievement; however the Foundation Stage raises their levels of attainment so that they are in line with national expectations in most areas of learning. Staff have a good awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision and take effective steps to improve it.

What the school should do to improve further

Raise standards throughout the school by:

- continuing to develop the role of senior and middle managers to ensure that the objectives of the school improvement plan are fully met
- improving the quality of teaching in all key stages
- making more consistent use of the information gained from assessments to promote pupils' progress effectively.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

The standards reached by pupils have begun to rise after a period when they were inadequate at Key Stage 1 and 2. Evidence from the lessons seen and from three local authority review visits in the last sixteen months indicates that the rate of pupils' progress has increased, with more of the oldest pupils attaining at levels in line with national expectations. This has been supported by the introduction, at the start of the present year, of targets for individual pupils in all classes. The oldest pupils are well

aware of their targets and of what knowledge and skills they need to acquire to meet them. The targets are being refined to ensure that they provide appropriate challenge for all pupils. This approach is less evident in the younger classes, although these pupils are also beginning to be aware of targets.

Achievement on entry varies, but is generally below national expectations. The Foundation Stage, which includes the Nursery and Reception classes, develops pupils' learning effectively. These classes plan as a single unit and use common patterns of assessment effectively. By the end of the Foundation Stage, pupils develop good speaking and social skills and their attainment is in line with national expectations in most areas of learning.

In Key Stage 1, the levels attained by pupils in 2005 were generally below national expectations; however, current achievement is better and is close to these expectations. In Key Stage 2, there is evidence of improved attainment in all year groups, particularly in Years 5 and 6, since the start of the present year. The use of targets, related to informed assessments which involve the pupils, has contributed to this improvement. However, their use is not yet consistent in all classes.

Pupils with learning needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress, and all learners gain knowledge, skills and understanding across the curriculum.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Young children are encouraged to consider their feelings and those of others. Attendance is satisfactory. The school has run an emotional literacy project in which pupils are encouraged to consider issues such as bullying, dealing with their emotions and managing their feelings. Its impact is evident in class 'circle time' sessions when such issues are discussed and also in the pupils' behaviour throughout the school. Behaviour is now generally good, and where there have been instances of poor behaviour, the school has dealt with these effectively. Pupils value and respect one another, showing considerate behaviour and working together well on cooperative tasks. These attitudes have improved during the present year. Pupils enjoy lessons, but their attention wanders when lessons do not provide enough stimulation or when chances for active learning are limited. Pupils enjoy the good range of out-of-school activities, and healthy lifestyles are promoted by the good quality school meals. There are quite good links with community groups and services. Basic skills are developed satisfactorily and will contribute to the pupils' future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching is satisfactory overall: a minority of the lessons were good or outstanding; few were inadequate. The best lessons are well paced, with a good variety of challenging

activities for all pupils. In the majority of lessons in Key Stages 1 and 2, teaching is satisfactory but it does not stimulate and challenge the pupils sufficiently, instead requiring them to listen passively for too long. Most teachers have satisfactory subject knowledge and are able to develop pupils' understanding. The current school improvement plan has supported teachers and other staff in developing a critical view of their skills. This raised the quality of teaching in most classes. Linked to this approach, the school has successfully sought to improve pupils' behaviour by managing it more effectively.

Assessment is being developed to inform pupils' future learning. This is well used in Years 5 and 6 and in some other younger classes, but practices are inconsistent. Teaching assistants are well deployed and provide skilful support which contributes effectively to improve pupils' learning. The design of the school sometimes adversely affects lessons when access through one classroom leads to another or to the toilets.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum meets the statutory requirements and no group is ill matched to what is provided. There is satisfactory provision for literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT). Education for safety and health is satisfactory. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities for Key Stage 1 and 2 pupils, and the curriculum is well promoted by the use of sports coaches and specialist music teaching. All learners are encouraged to take a full part in the opportunities provided. Education for safety and health and in preparing pupils for their future economic well-being is satisfactory, but is not part of an overall programme for the issues of 'Every Child Matters'. The school intends to develop this work much more positively by identified staff who are receiving training to do this.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides good quality care for learners and their health and safety is well promoted. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are good and regularly reviewed. Risk assessments are regularly made and concerns expressed by some parents are being addressed. Pupils were set targets at the start of the present year and the school's care and support enables them to reach these, particularly for the older pupils. Systems for tracking pupils' progress are clear, but need to be applied consistently across all classes. Any learners at risk are identified and procedures put in place to meet their needs. The school works well with parents and other agencies to promote learners' progress. Pupils commented that they felt safe and valued by the school, particularly during the present year.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

During the current school year, the senior leadership has focused much more directly on raising standards throughout the school, from a decline to low levels in recent years. Self-evaluation is satisfactory and is beginning to develop greater rigour. The leadership has successfully created a clear, common purpose and unified sense of direction amongst all staff and the governing body: this significant development is building on the staff's agreed aims in promoting the pupils' personal development and well-being. At the start of the year, teaching staff were given new roles and responsibilities. This has helped the school to take a fresh look at how to improve teaching to increase pupils' progress. Along with the introduction of individual achievement targets for all pupils, this has contributed to the rise in standards. However, the impact of these changes varies between classes.

The senior management structure of the school has undergone major changes at the start of the present year in order to deliver the goals of the school improvement plan. This focuses on raising achievement in literacy and mathematics and on promoting inclusion for all pupils. Improved assessment and target setting, particularly for pupils who might be underachieving, is beginning to raise attainment. The role of middle management has been changed to address the Every Child Matters issues: this has yet to be fully implemented.

The school runs smoothly on a day to day basis. Resources are deployed satisfactorily, although aspects of the building's design do not fully support sustained concentration and some investigative work. Value for money is also satisfactory. The vetting procedures for adults working in the school are good. Parents reported that they felt able to approach members of staff, particularly the two assistant headteachers, if they had concerns.

The governing body is playing an increasingly supportive role, building well on its previous work. It is in a good position to act as a critical friend to the school. There is a satisfactory capacity to improve.

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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?	3	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	3	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?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	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	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	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?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	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	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	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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Silloth Primary School

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25 May 2006

Dear Children

Thank you for the welcome you gave Mr Oglesby, Mr Scott and me when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed meeting you and really appreciated the help you gave us, especially in sharing your work and ideas about the school.

We think that your teachers and the other staff work very hard to help you with your work and all the other activities which the school provides. They are very concerned to make sure that you get on well together, and we were pleased to see how well you behaved. We thought that the targets which you are set are helping you do better and that the teaching assistants help the teachers to do their job well. We hope that you enjoy your school meals: the kitchen staff work hard to make them healthy and varied.

The school has improved in many ways recently, and we have asked the staff to continue to do this. In particular, we want them to carry on raising the standards which you achieve by making sure that all your lessons are as interesting as the best ones, especially by giving you varied types of work to do; and by making sure that after they have marked your work, the next activities you are given help you to learn new things and make good progress.

With good wishes for your future success.

Yours sincerely

Martin Bradley

Her Majesty's Inspector