



Borrowdale CofE Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 112333
LEA Cumbria
Inspection number 278906
Inspection dates 8 March 2006 to 8 March 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Andrew Margerison

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Stonethwaite
School category	Voluntary aided		Keswick
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		Cumbria CA12 5XG
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01768 777686
Number on roll	35	Fax number	01768 777686
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Alan Leyland
Date of previous inspection	1 September 1999	Headteacher	Mrs Helen Richardson

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one additional inspector.

Description of the school

This small primary school is in the hamlet of Stonethwaite, in the Lake District. Most pupils live in the Borrowdale valley, many in small, isolated communities. However, a few parents choose to bring their children to the school from Keswick. Year groups are very small, ranging from one to seven pupils, and varying significantly from year to year in ability. Pupils' socio-economic backgrounds are slightly above average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average, as is the proportion eligible for free school meals. Virtually all pupils are white British and none have English as an additional language. Children start school with standards broadly typical for their age, but this varies significantly from year to year.

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, giving good value for money. Inspection evidence largely confirms the school's view of itself, but shows that the school is too modest in its evaluation on how well pupils achieve, the quality of teaching and the leadership of the school, all of which it judges as only satisfactory. Teaching and learning are good and pupils achieve well in Years 1 to 6 in most subjects. However, pupils do not make enough progress in writing and this lowers overall standards in English. Provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory and pupils make steady progress. However, although lessons ensure that Foundation Stage pupils develop their skills in all the areas of learning, the activities do not always match the full range of ages and abilities in the class. Pupils' personal development is good. Their enthusiasm for school and their contribution to the community are outstanding. The school is well led and managed by the headteacher and governors who have a shared vision for the school. Together they have ensured that school has tackled the issues identified, following disappointing results in 2004. The school also ensures that the community is involved in its work. As a result, parents hold the school in high regard. The school is an integral part of the local community and a focal point for many activities. It is in a strong position to improve further.

not applicable

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that, in the Foundation Stage, activities consistently reflect the full range of ages and abilities in the class.
- Improve pupils' progress in writing by providing more opportunities for them to write extended, creative and imaginative pieces of work in other subjects.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils of all abilities achieve well overall. In the Foundation Stage, they make satisfactory progress and most pupils are working at the expected levels for their age by the end of reception. With the exception of 2002, when standards were below average, standards in Year 2 have generally been broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics. However, small year groups make year-on-year comparisons difficult. Inspection evidence shows that current pupils in Year 2 are making good progress and reaching above average standards in reading and mathematics. Standards in writing are satisfactory. In 2005, standards in Year 6 were above average and inspection evidence shows that this trend is continuing. The current Year 6 group's results were below average in Year 2, but they have made good progress in Years 3 to 6 so that standards are above average, particularly in mathematics and science where a good proportion of pupils are working at levels above those expected. Pupils have also made good progress in speaking and listening and reading, but their progress in writing has not been as good. Some aspects of their writing are good, but their ability to write

extended pieces of work in which they express their ideas, views and opinions in imaginative and colourful ways is less well developed. As a result, fewer pupils are on track to reach the higher than expected levels, this means, standards in English overall are only satisfactory. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Their enthusiasm for school is outstanding. This is evident in their very positive attitudes to school, their above average attendance and the fact that all pupils take part in school events and activities after-school. Parents and pupils agree with inspectors that behaviour is good. Pupils have a good understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle. They take plenty of exercise and eat sensibly. Their understanding of their responsibility to make a positive contribution to the school and the wider community is outstanding. The school council is fully involved in improving the school. It takes responsibility for aspects of the day-to-day running of the school and organises events to raise funds for charity and for various school initiatives such as the outdoor play area. Pupils are also very aware that they have a responsibility to make positive contribution to life of the valley; they take part in many local events, such as the Borrowdale Shepherds' Meet. As a result, the school is a fundamental part of the fabric of the local community. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 visit the local secondary school very regularly and for various reasons. With their well-developed ability to take responsibility, handle money and secure basic literacy and numeracy skills, they are well prepared for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning is good. Lessons are well managed and teachers use information and communications technology (ICT) well to capture pupils' attention and to spark their interest. In the Foundation Stage, reception and nursery children work together as a group in the morning on literacy and numeracy activities. Activities led by the adults are varied. However, follow-up activities, although very suitable for the nursery children, do not always challenge reception children enough to extend their learning. In Years 1 to 6, teachers plan very carefully to make sure that the learning needs of the wide range of ages and abilities are met effectively. Support staff play an important part by making sure that activities are matched to the needs of their group. All adults use questions very well in discussion and teachers place a very strong emphasis on planning activities that enable pupils to use their knowledge in practical situations, for example, in mathematics and science. As a result, pupils are challenged and make good progress. Teachers also expect pupils to record the results of their work in different ways, including using ICT. As a result, pupils' formal and narrative writing is

good. However, they have fewer opportunities to develop their use of expressive vocabulary in write creative and imaginative pieces of extended writing.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and has several excellent features. It is broad and balanced, and enriched by a very good range of additional activities and after school clubs. The school is innovative in its use of visitors and visits to extend pupils' experience. For example, pupils in Years 3 to 6 spend a day each week at a specialist science centre situated at the local secondary school to take part in practical science projects. This leads to good standards of attainment in science. There are also plenty of opportunities for pupils to use their numeracy and ICT skills in other subjects but, in subjects such as history and geography, they do not have enough opportunities to use the full range of their literacy skills. For a small school, the range of after-school activities is extensive. It covers sport, creative arts, music and drama. The 'Stay and Play Club' provides opportunities for younger pupils, many of whom live in remote places in the valley, to socialise with each other outside school hours.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

This aspect of the school's work is good. There are very thorough procedures for child protection, and also for ensuring that the school is a safe place for pupils to learn. Almost without exception, parents have nothing but praise for the very high standard of care provided for their children. Pupils' views are valued and are taken into account. The school recently extended its tracking systems to involve pupils more closely in reviewing their own learning. Pupils are confident that they are listened to and that if they have a problem it will be dealt with promptly and effectively by staff. Very close links have been established with the secondary school. As a result, pupils are very well prepared for moving on to the next phase of their education. The school also makes sure that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported in lessons.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school is well led and managed. The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school and is committed to raising standards and improving the quality of education provided. She has successfully created strong teamwork and all staff make a valuable contribution to the school. This results in new initiatives being planned and implemented decisively. For example, disappointing results in 2004 led to the school analysing pupils' performance thoroughly and altering the teaching arrangement for pupils in Years 3 to 6. This has been effective and led to good results in 2005 and to current pupils making good progress. Staff are well supported by governors who are very committed to the future of the school. They have a broad range of expertise and

contribute well to the day-to-day running of the school. The close working relationships between staff, governors, the community and parents ensure that, overall, procedures to evaluate the work of the school are good. The school knows its strengths and weaknesses well and is in a strong position to move forward.

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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	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	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	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	1	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	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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Borrowdale CofE Primary School

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8 March 2006

Dear Pupils

Thank you very much for welcoming me to your school this week. I enjoyed talking to you and finding out about all the things you do. You were really friendly and I would have liked to have been able to stay longer. I am pleased to tell you that I agree with you and your parents that your school is doing a good job. These are the things I particularly liked.

Your enthusiasm for school and your contribution to the life of the community is outstanding.

Teachers make sure you do well in reading, mathematics and science.

Your school provides you with lots of interesting activities in lessons and after school.

Your school is well led and managed by your headteacher and governors.

You are looked after and cared for very well.

I have asked your headteacher and the governors to do two things to make your school even better.

Make sure that activities for pupils in reception are always right for their age and help them improve their learning.

Providing more opportunities for you to express your ideas and opinions in extended pieces of writing.

Thank you again for helping me so much with the inspection.

Yours faithfully

Andy Margerison

(Lead inspector)