



Dean Church of England School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 112336
LEA Cumbria
Inspection number 278908
Inspection dates 9 February 2006 to 10 February 2006
Reporting inspector Mrs Delia Hiscock

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Dean
School category	Voluntary aided		Workington
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Cumbria, CA14 4TH
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01946 861408
Number on roll	96	Fax number	01946 861408
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Dave Hammond
Date of previous inspection	1 November 2000	Headteacher	Mr Nicholas Fish

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 9 February 2006 - 10 February 2006	Inspection number 278908
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Dean is a small primary school in the rural village of Dean close to the town of Cockermouth. It provides full-time education for about 100 pupils between the ages of 4 and 11. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is lower than the national average. No pupils are eligible for free school meals. Pupils are from a range of backgrounds. There are relatively few signs of deprivation. When children start in Reception, their skills are often higher than is typical for their age. A tiny number of pupils are learning to speak English as a second language.

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 knows itself well and provides a good education. It is a friendly, welcoming place where all pupils are valued and want to learn. Since the previous inspection, the school has faced unavoidable problems for more than two years. These difficulties have been overcome and the school has gained ground and direction under the successful leadership of the acting headteacher and the newly appointed headteacher. Strong governance, outstanding teamwork and hugely supportive parents have maintained the strengths of the school and made substantial improvements. The school now has good provision for ICT, a stunning sports & arts hall and better communication and partnership with parents.

Effective management action has halted the underachievement of a small proportion of pupils in Key Stage 2. From their above average skills on entry to the school and their good progress in Reception and Years 1 and 2, pupils go on to achieve high standards in reading and in some aspects of ICT. Standards are rising generally because improvements in teaching have increased the rate of progress. Achievement is now good. The strong commitment to pupils' personal development and the outstanding level of care provided are reflected in the high level of attendance and in pupils' good personal and social qualities, although they have little awareness of the cultural diversity of British society. The curriculum has good breadth and enrichment, but challenge could be greater at times for some pupils, and in writing in particular. There is good capacity to improve further and good value for money in this small school.

What the school should do to improve further

To raise standards further the school should:

- provide more opportunities and challenge for pupils to write in other subjects
- develop the use of assessment information, targets and marking so that pupils have a clearer understanding of how to improve their work
- carry out plans to raise pupils' awareness of life in today's diverse and multi-ethnic Britain.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Inspection findings confirm the school's view that standards achieved at the end of Year 6 are high in reading and just above average in mathematics and writing. Pupils make good progress. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well, as do pupils in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 to 6 pupils make good progress now from their attainment in Year 2. This is an improvement as a result of action taken by management and teachers following analysis of attainment. On the few occasions when, at Key Stage 2, pupils' achievement stalls, their work is watched closely to ensure better progress. Most pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well, as do pupils for whom English is a second language. Targets set for pupils to achieve are usually

challenging and effective, but those set for writing in Years 5 and 6 do not give pupils enough help to become better writers.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good. They really enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in their high level of attendance, their outstanding behaviour, and their eagerness to learn. Relationships between pupils and staff are excellent. Pupils feel safe and secure and know that any worries are dealt with quickly. They understand the importance of keeping healthy, and they adopt healthy lifestyles and know how to avoid risk. They benefit from the increased opportunities for sporting activities in the school's new hall. The school council gives pupils an influential voice in the running of the school and they are proud to hold this responsibility. Pupils use their skills in numeracy and ICT in lots of ways but have too few opportunities to use and develop their writing skills. That said, pupils work cooperatively, collaboratively and with courtesy beyond their years. Their spiritual, moral and social development and their awareness of European cultures are good; their awareness of the multi-cultural richness and diversity of our own society is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Children in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 learn well because teaching is effective, individual needs are met well and learning is engaging and fun. Relationships between teachers and pupils are outstanding and contribute to the good conditions for learning in all classes. Teachers use a good range of teaching methods and their use of interactive whiteboards helps pupils learn productively. Teaching assistants provide good support and pupils add much to their own learning. They respond eagerly to the interesting challenges set. In the past, teaching in Years 3 to 6 has not stretched pupils enough; a factor that the school is dealing with successfully. Teachers now plan work that takes better account of pupils' abilities rather than just their year group, and individual targets for pupils to attain are shared with parents. Where these are used well, as in the best examples of teachers' marking of work in Years 3 and 4, learning has been boosted and progress has accelerated. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive good support and make good progress in lessons, as do the tiny number of pupils who use English as an additional language.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. Statutory requirements are met. A particular strength is the many opportunities provided for pupils to enrich their learning from visits, visitors and

a range of exciting activities beyond the school day and in the community. Many of these strengthen pupils' zest for school, their healthy lifestyles and their knowledge of the local area. Pupils' participation in these activities also promotes their good social skills, their lively outlook on life and their good personal development. Activities for children in the Foundation Stage and all the mixed-age classes are well planned and organised to ensure good progress. Provision for literacy, numeracy and ICT promotes good development of basic skills, though in writing pupils could achieve even better with better opportunities to write in other subjects.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides good guidance and support for pupils. The quality of care is outstanding. Child protection procedures are clearly established. Risk assessments are thorough and show a strong commitment from governors and staff to pupils' safety. Pupils say they are well supported and feel they can confide in a member of staff should they have any worries. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive good support from staff, who deal effectively with their different problems. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language are well supported. Procedures for monitoring academic achievement and personal development are satisfactory, but these are improving rapidly because the school has taken full account of fresh and more rigorous evaluations. The use of assessment information gives pupils satisfactory guidance to improve their learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. In just over one term, the leadership of the new headteacher has galvanized the school team and already built on the successful work of the acting headteacher. Helped by the effective action of governors and the good support of the local authority, the school has successfully steered through a prolonged period of difficulty and undertaken substantial developments. The excellent new hall for sports and arts already contributes tremendously to the life of the school. Standards are rising because leadership has thrust to the fore the need for shared evaluation and rigorous assessment. These build well on the outstanding quality of care and a renewed commitment to give all pupils an equal chance to achieve their best.

Monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance include everyone who might have a say. They build successfully on work that has improved communications with parents, who are hugely positive about the school. Leadership has energized teaching staff and sparked professional discussions between subject leaders about what next needs to be done to improve still further subjects and features of learning and assessment. The strong leadership of the Foundation Stage ensures a good start to children's school life.

The governors fulfil their responsibilities well and are very active in the life of the school. They have a good picture of how the school performs and know how the quality of provision and expenditure impacts on standards. These features of leadership are evidence that the school is ably moving forward and has a good capacity to continue to do so. As a governor commented, 'We have a glorious new chapter in the life of the school'.

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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	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	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	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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Mr Nicholas Fish

Dean C of E School

Dean

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Cumbria

CA14 4TH

10 February 2006

Dear Pupils

We really enjoyed our visit to your school. Thank you for being so friendly and talking to us about all you do there. I would like to tell you what we thought about your school. We agree with you. 'People are really friendly' and, as you say, 'Teachers make lessons interesting'. In fact, all the adults in the school care a lot for all of you and try to make sure you do well in your lessons.

The teachers do a good job of providing lots of interesting and exciting things for you to learn. You behave very well in lessons and around the school, and you are very sensible and kind to each other. We can see that you enjoy your school. It has plenty of good qualities, especially the way everyone cares for each other.

To help make sure that all of you can do your best, I have asked Mr Fish to:

make sure you know exactly what to do to improve your work

make more time for you to write about the different things you learn

carry on with his plans to help you to know more about the lives and traditions of different people in Britain and around the world.

You can help too by trying hard to achieve the targets that your teachers and parents think you can reach. Good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

Delia Hiscock Inspector

Mark Williams Visiting HMI