



# Penny Bridge CofE School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 112360  
**LEA** Cumbria  
**Inspection number** 278914  
**Inspection dates** 24 January 2006 to 25 January 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mr Simon Camby

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

|                                    |                    |                           |                      |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Type of school</b>              | Primary            | <b>School address</b>     | Mount Pleasant       |
| <b>School category</b>             | Voluntary aided    |                           | Greenodd             |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>         | 4 to 11            |                           | Ulverston, Cumbria   |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>            | Mixed              | <b>Telephone number</b>   | 01229 861307         |
| <b>Number on roll</b>              | 81                 | <b>Fax number</b>         | 01229 861307         |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>       | The governing body | <b>Chair of governors</b> | Reverend Gary Wemyss |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b> | 1 October 2000     | <b>Headteacher</b>        | Mrs Gina Brierley    |

|                             |   |                                    |
|-----------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| <b>Age group</b><br>4 to 11 | <b>Inspection dates</b><br>24 January 2006 -<br>25 January 2006 | <b>Inspection number</b><br>278914 |
|-----------------------------|---|------------------------------------|

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one additional inspector.

## Description of the school

This is a small village Church of England primary school in south Cumbria. Attainment on entry overall is above that found in most schools. All pupils are white and come from families where English is the first language. The school has a higher than average number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The school has experienced some turbulence because it does not have a permanent headteacher. Since the previous headteacher left in May 2004, the school has been led by three different people. At the time of the inspection the school was led by an associate headteacher working in the school for the equivalent of 2 days each week.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school which provides an adequate standard of education and satisfactory value for money. Because of the temporary leadership arrangements, the school does not have a clear view of its overall effectiveness. There has been a period of considerable turbulence but the school is now stable.

Attainment is broadly in line with the national average by the time the children leave the school. Children in the foundation stage make satisfactory progress. Throughout the school pupils' personal development is satisfactory. There is a strong commitment to ensuring good behaviour. Attendance is satisfactory.

The teaching ensures that most pupils' learning is effective as well as enjoyable. However, better use of assessment would ensure that pupils made increased progress. The curriculum now emphasises raising standards of literacy and numeracy.

The work of the associate headteacher over the past year has made the school well placed to continue its improvement. The governors support the school well but need to make sure that they become sharper at understanding how the school can improve. Most parents are supportive of the school and report they are happy with the quality of education and care that their children receive.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Develop effective self evaluation so that the school can understand its strengths and weaknesses and identify priorities for improvement.
- Improve learning by making more effective use of assessment and by involving pupils in the evaluation of their own progress.
- Arrange training and support for the governing body so that it can carry out its roles and responsibilities more effectively and support the new headteacher in setting the future direction for the school.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

In 2005 the standards attained by pupils in Year 6 were above average in English and science and average in mathematics. These were the highest outcomes since 2002 and a marked improvement over the previous year. From entering the school, pupils make consistently satisfactory progress because of the satisfactory teaching they receive. As a result most pupils reach the learning goals expected of them by the time they start Year 1. Results by the end of Year 2 have fallen over recent years but pupils attain broadly in line with national averages. The school is working to raise standards in English and mathematics.

Pupils with special learning needs make satisfactory progress. Some pupils make good progress. Pupils' targets for the standards they should achieve are set at a reasonable level. The school has begun to develop systems to analyse assessment outcome but

it does not yet use this information to check that all pupils are making the maximum progress. This is necessary to raise the achievement of all pupils, in particular the more able ones.

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

### **Grade: 3**

Personal development and well-being are satisfactory. Pupils enjoy school and behave well. This reflects the view of most parents. Pupils show consideration towards each other and adults. The older pupils take their buddying responsibilities seriously and provide good role models for the younger pupils. Attendance is satisfactory.

Attitudes to learning are satisfactory overall. In lessons where attitudes to learning are good, the learning moves at a brisk pace. Where the pace is slower, pupils are not involved enough. Pupils are not clear enough about their learning targets to become independent learners.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are satisfactory. Pupils work well in pairs during lessons and play well together on the playground. Opportunities are provided for pupils to take part in community projects and they demonstrate a growing responsibility for the environment and for others less fortunate than themselves. Pupils have a satisfactory awareness of other cultures and how religious beliefs can influence the way we live. The satisfactory provision means that children are developing personal qualities, such as independence, responsibility and co-operation, in preparation for their future education and life. However, pupils do not have enough understanding of how their learning will have an impact on their future life.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. This is shown by the satisfactory progress that pupils make by the time they leave the school. Resources are used effectively; in particular the staff have worked hard to develop their use of the newly installed interactive whiteboards. These are being used well to improve the quality of learning. Where teaching is good, all pupils are involved in whole class sessions and this results in a higher level of engagement.

Pupils respond positively to the work set and show a willingness to concentrate. However, assessment information is not used well enough to guide teaching and ensure that all pupils are given work which is challenging. In particular, the work for some higher attaining pupils is not challenging enough to produce the progress those pupils could make. Learning objectives and success criteria are not clear enough for pupils to understand the learning that is expected in each lesson. As a result, the pace of learning is too slow and pupils cannot evaluate their own progress.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory and meets statutory requirements. The recent focus on literacy and numeracy has been driven by analysis of test results. It is helping to raise achievement. There is a coherent plan for the curriculum in each year group and the curriculum is enriched by a range of other activities which take place within and beyond the school day. As a result pupils enjoy learning. There are opportunities for pupils to learn French in key stage 2. There is a strong emphasis on keeping healthy. The range of sporting activities on offer encourages children to take regular exercise and provides opportunities for them to compete with other schools.

Children in the reception class have a varied and interesting range of activities which provide a good start to their time in school. This could be further improved by creating a specific outdoor area for the youngest children to access during teaching sessions.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Provision for the welfare, health and safety of pupils is satisfactory. There are comprehensive health and safety procedures and risk assessments are carried out. All staff understand child protection procedures. Pupils enjoy a smooth induction to school due to the good pre-school arrangements on the school site.

A caring pastoral system provides effective support for all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Pupils feel that they can turn to an adult for help and advice if they need to. However, systems to support and track the pupils' academic progress are weak. The assessment of pupils' learning has yet to become embedded in practice and the pupils' own involvement in this process has only just started. The marking of pupils' work does not give the pupils a clear idea of how to improve their work. The school promotes the well-being of the pupils well. Healthy eating is promoted and pupils receive a comprehensive health education programme, supported by the school nurse.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The overall leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. After a period of turbulence during the absence of a permanent headteacher, the associate headteacher has put systems in place to enable the school to check its own performance. These recent changes have yet to have their full effect, but they have laid solid foundations for further improvement. Leadership by other staff is developing and the combination of these two factors means that the school has satisfactory capacity to improve.

The associate headteacher has set a clear lead on raising achievement and stabilising the staff team. Future leadership must ensure that the raising of achievement is a high priority if the school is to ensure better progress for all its pupils.

Although the governors support the school well on a day-to-day basis, they do not always fully exercise their strategic responsibilities. They do not have a sharp enough view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and have allowed the school to become isolated. The governing body needs external support to ensure it fully understand its role in setting the future direction of the school. The monitoring of finance is secure and the school provides satisfactory value for money.

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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> |
|--|-----------------------|--------------|

### 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> | 3   | NA |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?  | 3   | 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

|  |   |    |
|--|---|----|
| <b>How well do learners achieve?</b>   | 3 | 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 | 3 | NA |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress                              | 3 | NA |

### Personal development and well-being

|   |   |    |
|---|---|----|
| <b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>                           | 3 | NA |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development                                     | 3 | NA |
| The behaviour of learners   | 2 | NA |
| The attendance of learners  | 3 | NA |
| How well learners enjoy their education   | 3 | NA |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices   | 3 | NA |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles   | 3 | NA |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community                                    | 3 | 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>          | 3 | NA |
| <b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b> | 3 | NA |
| <b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>   | 3 | 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>                                       | 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 |

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| <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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Mrs G Brierley – Associate Headteacher

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LA12 7RQ

24 January 2006

Dear Children

Thank you for welcoming me when I visited your school this week. As you know, I came to check how well your school looks after you and helps you with your learning. I was really pleased to hear that you enjoy coming to school. The adults in your school look after you and help to keep you safe. Your behaviour around school and in the playground is good. Please keep this up as it really helps you to learn. Some of the older children told me about your buddy system and said that they felt very privileged to be able to help the younger children. Your buddies provide good role models.

We have asked Mrs Brierley and your teachers to work on a few things to make your school even better. You will also be able to help Mrs Smolinski, your new headteacher, when she joins your school. These are the things that your teachers will be working on:

finding ways to make sure that you can all take part in lessons as this will help everyone learn even more

sometimes giving children in the class different types of work to make sure that everyone can learn as much as possible

making sure that you know exactly what it is that you are learning in every lesson so that you can check for yourself how well you are doing.

Finally, I know that your school works hard to make sure you keep healthy and fit; many children take part in after-school clubs in order to exercise. I hope that you continue to enjoy coming to school and I wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Simon Camby

Lead inspector