



Croftlands Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 112197
Local Authority Cumbria
Inspection number 289198
Inspection dates 12–13 October 2006
Reporting inspector Martin Bradley HMI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Oakwood Drive
School category	Community		Ulverston, Cumbria
Age range of pupils	3–7		LA12 9JU
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01229 894181
Number on roll (school)	173	Fax number	01229 894183
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Colin Hewson
		Headteacher	Mrs Jane Smith
Date of previous school inspection	1 March 2003		

Age group 3–7	Inspection dates 12–13 October 2006	Inspection number 289198
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Introduction

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

Description of the school

Croftlands Infant School is in the small market town of Ulverston. It is about average size, although numbers have fallen in the current year, reflecting a general trend in the area. Thirty one children attend the Nursery part time. Almost all the children are from White British backgrounds and the school serves an area of mixed privately owned and rented housing. The percentage of children eligible for a free school meal at 9% is broadly average. Approximately 7% of children are currently identified as having additional learning needs and/or difficulties. This is below average, as is the proportion of children with a statement for their additional learning needs and/or difficulties. Attainment on entry to the nursery is average. Attainment on entry to the Reception classes is also average, but with a wider range. The after-school provision, which is managed separately from the school, was inspected at the same time as the school, and is reported on separately.

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. The children enjoy their education. They behave well, show very positive attitudes, cooperate well and show initiative where appropriate. They report that they like coming to school and speak warmly of it. Many children have attended the pre-school which is adjacent to the infant school and on the same site. Links between the two are satisfactory, if limited. Liaison with the junior school, again on the same site, is also satisfactory. Efforts are being made to develop further the links between these providers as well as with the after-school care. As there are several forms of provision on the one campus, good consideration has been given to maintaining the children's safety. Their awareness of good practices in this regard is successfully promoted. The children have good relationships with adults and with each other, and they are confident members of the school community. The children make good progress in literacy and numeracy and by the end of Key Stage 1 achieve at above national average levels. The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage are good. As elsewhere in the school, shared approaches to planning, teaching and assessment enable the children to make good and often particularly good progress, although children's targets from one class are not always passed onto the next. The school's management has very effectively established a shared understanding of good practices. These are linked to high levels of staff commitment to promote the children's learning and development. In some aspects of management, the absence of review dates hinders clear planning. The school's self-evaluation is good and it has good capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the targets given to children are passed from one class to the next, enabling the new teachers to establish further challenging targets more rapidly.
- Provide all documents with review dates where appropriate, linking these to management cycles.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The standards achieved are good and the inspectors agree with the school's judgement. Standards on entry are broadly average overall. Attainment on entry to the Reception classes varies, reflecting both the small number of children who have previously needed specialist support for additional learning needs and/or disabilities as well as a number of higher achieving children. The Nursery class's good organisation enables the children to develop independence in their learning as well as good social and language skills. Subsequently, good use is made of the Foundation Stage Profile supplemented by reading and other assessments to devise indications of the children's likely achievement by the end of Key Stage 1. Evidence from the 2006 Year 2 assessments indicates that there was a major improvement in reading, so that the school is now well above the national average, having been slightly above this in 2005. Standards in writing showed

a fall but remained above the national average, and in mathematics a rise has increased the extent to which the school is above national average standards. These results have yet to be fully confirmed.

The children's achievement, including those with additional learning needs and/or disabilities, is good. They have made good progress during the present term. Last year children were provided with challenging targets to raise their rate of progress and overall attainment. These targets achieved their purpose and there are plans to set challenging targets again this year. Some children have been given specific targets when their work is marked; for example to write in sentences. This practice applies the school's marking policy very effectively. Some classes have whole class targets. Parents spoke warmly of the past use of targets, recognising their impact on children's attainment. The school does not have any records of children's targets from last year, although teachers' assessments of the children's achievement levels are passed on. This means that their new class teachers have to establish targets from scratch, rather than build upon last year's success. The delayed start to target setting in the current year has slowed the particularly good momentum established last year. Evidence of the children's progress clearly indicates that the targets set are challenging and effective.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The school evaluated the provision for children's personal development and well-being as good and the inspection team agrees. Moral and social development is particularly good: the harvest assembly which was attended by members of the local community, was a good opportunity for the children to share their ideas and work with people from outside the school. It was followed by the 'Harvest café' where the children helped to serve food and collect contributions to a local charity. Spiritual development is well supported although not all opportunities are fully exploited. The school seeks to develop the children's awareness of other cultures through its use of play materials, stories and other activities: overall this is satisfactory. The children's behaviour and attendance is good and they show consideration for each other. The children enjoy coming to school and recognise that their contributions to lessons are valued by the staff. Discussions with the recently formed school council indicate that the children have good awareness of healthy lifestyles: this has been supported by the school's recent re-accreditation with the healthy schools award.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The school considers that the quality of teaching is good and the inspectors agree. A significant feature of the school's teaching is that all staff have a clear and shared vision of good practice. This is supplemented by shared planning between classes with

the same age children. In each class teachers are able to interpret this planning with their own teaching approaches and to meet the needs of particular children. Outstanding support is given by teaching assistants. They have particularly good knowledge of the teacher's intentions and show excellent initiative by supporting individual children when this is needed. The combination of this support and good planning engages the children and encourages them to work independently in a variety of situations. In Year 1 the children showed significant maturity in moving quickly from whole class discussions to paired discussions which enabled them to clarify their ideas for story making. They were also able to distinguish between direct speech and other forms of writing. Planning for this work, as in the other year groups, identified the different levels of attainment amongst the children and effectively provided challenging activities for all abilities. Children with additional learning needs and/or difficulties are well supported both in class and by regular reviews of their progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good, and the school has evaluated this accurately. The school's clear vision of its curriculum has enabled it to provide a broad range of experiences, including dance and gymnastics as well as visits to the local countryside. Such lessons are supplemented by clubs which generally last for about six weeks. At this stage of the school year, they are mainly for Year 2 children. The statutory requirements for the curriculum are well met. There is good provision for literacy, numeracy and ICT. The curriculum provides opportunities for all learners, including those with additional learning needs and/or disabilities. There are good links with a local special school. Some of these children attend Croftlands part time and receive good support from Croftlands staff as well as from their own school's liaison teacher.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school considers care, guidance and support to be good and the inspectors agree. All staff demonstrate a high level of commitment to the children's care and to their health and safety. The children are very aware of who they can turn to if they need support and indicated that they felt safe in school. Looked after children are extremely well cared for. Parents commented on how effectively any incidents of poor relationships between children were dealt with. Their concerns were sympathetically listened to, the bullying policy was shared and implemented and difficulties were quickly resolved. Such care is also reflected in the support given for pupils' learning which focuses well on individuals' attainment.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school evaluated its leadership and management to be good and the inspectors agree. There is clear direction based upon the staff's support for the headteacher's

educational vision and knowledge of good practice for the school's age group. Managers at all levels promote high quality education. This includes: subject leaders' monitoring of their areas throughout the school; the headteacher's monitoring of teaching; and the governors' careful overview of the school, ensuring that they act as a critical friend. The management of support for children with additional learning needs and/or disabilities is also good. The clear management oversight has resulted in maintaining the good standards achieved by many children, as well as successfully raising these where necessary. The school's leadership reacted very quickly when some new children were admitted in early 2006, providing them with additional learning support and so raising their achievement. In some aspects of management, the absence of review dates hinders clear planning, affecting areas such as curriculum policy reviews, staff job description reviews, and some lesson observations. Resources are well deployed and achieve good value for money. The procedures for safeguarding children are generally good; however risk assessments made for school visits are too cursory. They are in contrast to the other management features of the school and the school has already begun to address this point.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Croftlands Infant School

Oakwood Drive

Ulverston

Cumbria

LA12 9JU

12 October 2006

Dear Children

Thank you for the welcome you gave to Mrs Cooper and myself 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 you go to a good school, where your teachers and the other staff work very hard to help you with your work and 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.

The school is working hard to make sure that you all do as well as possible. We have asked the staff to make sure that you all have targets for your work as soon as possible so that in all classes you can be given work to help you to learn more.

With best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Martin Bradley

Her Majesty's Inspector