



# Pennington C of E School

## Inspection Report

---

**Unique Reference Number** 112284  
**Local Authority** Cumbria  
**Inspection number** 289237  
**Inspection date** 21 September 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Geoffrey Yates

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Pennington
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled		Ulverston, Cumbria
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4-11		LA12 0RR
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01229 894133
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	172	<b>Fax number</b>	01229 894133
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Sue Carey
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Jennifer Boothman
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected		

---

<b>Age group</b> 4-11	<b>Inspection date</b> 21 September 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 289237
--------------------------	---	------------------------------------

---

---

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## **Description of the school**

Pennington Church of England Primary School is a small school but numbers are rising. It is situated just outside Ulverston in the rural village of Pennington. The surrounding areas are characterised by private property and established communities. The percentage of children eligible for free school meals is below that in most schools. The school has an average number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. When children start school they have broadly average skills. The school has won many awards for its achievements.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

The school evaluates itself accurately as outstanding. The consistently high levels of attainment over several years and the overall outstanding rate of pupils' progress confirm this. Attainment on entry is broadly typical for children of their age and, by the end of Key Stage 2, pupils reach well above average standards, especially in mathematics and even more so in science. The school benefits enormously from the outstanding leadership of the headteacher and from the strong teamwork of the staff. A crucial factor in the school's success is the determination to continue to improve.

Pupils' achievement is outstanding as many pupils reach the higher levels of attainment expected at the end of both key stages. Outstanding provision in the Foundation Stage ensures that children get off to a very good start and this is built upon year on year. By the end of Year 2 pupils' attainment is above average, though fewer boys than girls reach the higher levels for writing. The good support provided for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities ensures that they achieve well.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding, and is supported by the exceptional quality of classroom assistants. There is a strong emphasis placed on ensuring that the work set challenges the pupils and it is exciting and interesting to do. Most of the marking guides the pupils well to improve, though it is not as effective in Years 1 and 2.

The curriculum is outstanding because it is very well planned and every opportunity is provided for pupils to use and develop their creative skills. The captivating art and craft displays in the school hall bear testimony to the importance placed on this aspect of pupils' education. The level of care, guidance and support that pupils receive is outstanding. Parents feel that the school meets their children's needs very well indeed. One parent commented, 'this is a very caring school'.

Pupils have a very good understanding of the need to keep healthy and talk with great authority about the 'evils' of eating 'fatty' food. Pupils enjoy school and this is demonstrated by their good attendance and in conversations held with them during the inspection. Opportunities for pupils to act as 'buddy' partners to other pupils and to be school council members ensure that they develop the skills to enable them to make a positive contribution to the school community. Pupils display a very good sense of responsibility for their school and enjoy being involved in decision making. Children say they feel safe in and around school and they show a very high degree of care for each other. Their well above average skills in information and communication technology (ICT), literacy and numeracy ensure they are developing the skills they need for future economic well-being.

The school is too modest in judging leadership and management as good. They are outstanding. The evaluation of pupils' progress is accurate and drives the effective whole-school improvement plan. The monitoring of teaching and learning and other areas of the school's work is rigorous. Governors carry out their duties very well and have a very good understanding of the school's priorities. The record of continued improvement stemming from the outstanding leadership of the headteacher, with the

support of the staff and governors, demonstrates that the school has outstanding capacity to improve further. It gives outstanding value for money.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Increase the proportion of boys reaching higher levels for writing in Key Stage 1 by ensuring that teachers' marking of all their work helps them to improve.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' achievement is outstanding and standards are high. Children start school with broadly average skills and make outstanding progress overall. This judgment is reflected both by the school's national test results and the inspection findings. It is brought about by very high quality teaching and the pupils' very good attitudes to learning. Standards in English, mathematics and science were well above average at the end of Year 6 in 2005. Results for the 2006 national tests show that these high standards have been maintained. Pupils who are gifted and talented make very good progress, as do those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The challenging targets in national tests in 2005 and 2006 were securely met.

Pupils get off to a strong start in the Foundation Stage and, by the end of Reception, pupils meet and exceed the nationally expected learning goals, but boys' writing skills are less well developed than those of girls. At the end of Year 2, standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics, although fewer boys than girls achieve the higher levels in their writing. By the time pupils leave at the end of Year 6, boys and girls achieve as well as each other.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Pupils are well prepared to become healthy, safe and environmentally aware adults. The school's Healthy Schools Award, the first in the county, reflects the effectiveness of the work in this area. Pupils are very well behaved, very caring and polite and get on well with each other and with adults. They are proud of their work and of their school. One child commented, 'I am happy here and try to do my best'. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Acts of worship reflect the school's Christian Foundation and contribute significantly to the pupils' spiritual awareness. Pupils have a good knowledge of other cultures and how beliefs guide how people live. They are keen to accept responsibility and take an active part in the running of the school, for example, by being members of the school council. This results in pupils quickly becoming responsible members of the school community. Attendance levels are above average. Parents are very supportive of the school and appreciate all that the school does.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Highly trained teaching assistants give excellent support to pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Teachers use information about pupils' progress to plan work that matches their needs and enables them to succeed. Pupils respond very well to what they are expected to do and make excellent progress in developing the skills they need for future success. Teachers have high expectations of the pupils, reflected in the brisk pace of lessons and challenging activities which encourage pupils to think for themselves. For example, in a science lesson, pupils were highly motivated when challenged to use their investigative skills to identify which sample of liquid was fit to drink; the task was made even more interesting by linking it to a fictitious accident involving damaged water tanks on a space shuttle. In the Foundation Stage, very good links with the pre-school agencies and home visits ensure that children settle in quickly and, from the very start, are challenged to do their best.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 1**

The curriculum is outstanding. Carefully planned activities offer pupils of all capabilities a variety of rich experiences. The staff are always looking for ways to improve what is on offer and take all possible steps to link subjects together in a meaningful way. The priority given to the development of the pupils' literacy and numeracy skills through other subjects is very good. Work in the creative arts is of a very high standard. Outstanding partnerships with local schools and agencies help to provide a very wide range of additional activities. Many special events, visits and visitors contribute to the development of pupils' skills and enjoyment of learning. The Foundation Stage curriculum is very well planned and provides children with a very good start to their education. Across the school, there is a strong emphasis on developing pupils' understanding of citizenship, life and social skills. For example, pupils meet with Japanese students to learn about Japanese customs. Overall, the curriculum is very effectively planned.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 1**

Within its Christian ethos, the school provides outstanding care, support and guidance for pupils and, as a result, their personal development and academic achievements are outstanding overall. Strong partnerships with parents and external agencies are utilised well to ensure that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make excellent progress. Good relationships with the pre-school and secondary schools also work well to ensure that pupils are supported effectively when they move between schools.

Excellent assessment and tracking of pupils' academic progress and personal development helps teachers to plan challenging work. Pupils know their targets and they are encouraged to assess for themselves how well they have achieved. Most pupils know what they need to do to improve their work.

Arrangements for child protection, safeguarding pupils and health and safety are in place. Adults are highly vigilant in ensuring the welfare of all pupils.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

Leadership and management are outstanding, which is better than the modest evaluation made by the school of good. The headteacher sets high expectations which are very well respected and met. She leads with enthusiasm, fully involves staff in all aspects of the school's work and successfully encourages a team approach. As a result, the pupils benefit from an abundance of opportunities to develop their potential, both personally and academically. This approach leads to the very successful outcomes enjoyed by the staff and pupils. All members of staff feel valued and, as a result, will 'go the extra mile' if it means the pupils benefit. Both pupils and parents have their views taken into consideration. The monitoring of all areas of the school's work is rigorous, ensuring a climate of continuous improvement. Self-evaluation processes are thorough and steer the effective school improvement plan. Governance is very good. The governors have a very clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are increasing their involvement in long-term planning. The school has built on the strengths highlighted in the previous inspection report.

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**



## Inspection judgements

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

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	1
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	1
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1

<sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
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

Pennington C of E School

Pennington

Ulverston

Cumbria

LA12 0RR

23 September 2006

Dear Children

Thank you for helping me during the inspection. I would like to tell you about my findings. You will not be surprised to know that I found many good things out about your school. In actual fact, your school is one of the best schools, not just in Cumbria, but in the whole country! I enjoyed being with you, watching you learn and talking to you. The list below shows some of the many things I liked about your school.

- You work hard and are very polite and friendly.
- You sing well in assemblies.
- The school's council members enjoy having a say in what goes on in your school.
- Older children use their writing and mathematical skills very well and that should help them to get a good job in the future.
- You like your headteacher, teachers and other members of staff and the way they make learning exciting.
- Teachers expect you to behave well and work hard. All the adults in school work very hard to care for you.

So how can you get even better?

- Some of you could improve your writing even more so I have asked that you receive more helpful guidance on how to improve your work even further.

Yours sincerely

Geoffrey Yates

Lead Inspector