

Lazonby C of E School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112304
Local Authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	289243
Inspection dates	19–20 June 2007
Reporting inspector	George Crowther

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	66
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Gordon Nicolson
Headteacher	Mr Rod Rogers
Date of previous school inspection	1 February 2003
School address	Lazonby Penrith Cumbria CA10 1BL
Telephone number	01768 898458
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a small village school. The pupils live mainly in the village although a few travel from further away. The local area is relatively advantaged and very few pupils are eligible for free school meals. Pupils' attainment when they start school is broadly average but varies with each small year group. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. All the pupils are from White British backgrounds and none are at the early stages of learning English. The school has ActiveMark and Healthy Schools awards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Lazonby is a good school. It has a number of outstanding features. The staff are very successful in their aim 'to create a happy and secure learning environment in which all children feel valued and respected'. They are particularly adept at meeting the individual learning needs of the pupils. The school has excellent partnerships with outside agencies to support pupils learning and well-being. Parents think the school is doing a good job and feel it is a happy, caring place in which their children thrive. Based on these firm foundations, pupils achieve well across the school. By Year 6, they attain above average academic standards and pupils are confident, articulate and well prepared for the next stage in their education.

Pupils generally achieve well because good teaching helps them learn confidently and quickly. They have a good start in the Reception year where well-planned, interesting activities help them to succeed in all aspects of their learning. Within the same class, the Year 1 and 2 pupils also make good progress. Good teaching encourages positive attitudes to learning. Basic skills are taught well, often as part of interesting topics, and this provides a good foundation for future learning. In Years 3 to 6, pupils continue to make good progress because skilful teaching encourages them to be confident and successful. As a result, pupils achieve at least as well as expected and many do better. Throughout the school, the quality of teaching is good. Occasionally, however, learning lacks the pace and challenge that enables all pupils to progress as quickly as they could.

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. The close-knit nature of the school community nurtures pupils' personal skills and they respond admirably to the staff's high expectations of effort, participation and behaviour. Pupils enjoy all aspects of school life, particularly the wide range of interesting activities in and out of lessons. Their behaviour is impeccable. Pupils know a lot about being healthy, and they feel safe and cared for. Pupils, particularly in the upper juniors, make a significant contribution to the school community, for example by taking on lots of extra responsibilities. Pupils are also involved in the wider community; for example, by contributing to and distributing the local newsletter. Exceptional levels of personal skills and good academic standards prepare pupils well for the future. A good curriculum, with some very strong features, promotes pupils' enjoyment well through interesting lessons and a rich range of clubs, visits and visitors. Pupils' success at school is fostered by outstanding levels of care, guidance and support.

Good leadership and management is a team effort shared by all the staff. The headteacher promotes a very clear view of the school's values and leads from the front in seeking the best possible education for the pupils. Considerable action has been taken to develop aspects of teaching and learning but the impact of some of these on pupils' achievement has not always been evaluated rigorously enough. Nonetheless, leaders have an accurate view of the school's effectiveness, which provides a good platform for further improvements. The school provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that in as many lessons as possible the pace of learning and the challenge of the work enables pupils to make rapid progress.
- Evaluate actions taken to raise standards more systematically so that leadership and management can be sure it has been successful.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Each small year group varies considerably in the level and spread of ability so generalised judgements about achievement and standards need to be treated with caution. However, attainment when pupils start school is broadly average and by Year 6 pupils have achieved well to reach above average standards. They do well in the Reception year because good teaching challenges them with a rich range of new experiences. By the time children join Year 1, standards are usually slightly above average. Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 1 and 2, responding to good teaching and building their basic skills well. Results of national tests at the end of Year 2 have varied from average to high. Current standards in Year 2 are above average. National measures of pupils' progress in Years 3 to 6 have been average, but they do not take into account the considerable mobility in recent groups of pupils. The school's own data shows clearly that pupils who have been at the school throughout Years 3 to 6 achieve well. Information showing the current progress in these classes and observations of lessons confirm this view. Standards in Year 6 are above average. Pupils of all abilities, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make the same good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Throughout the school, pupils thoroughly enjoy lessons and by Year 6 display very mature and positive attitudes to learning. A typical comment was, 'I like the lessons because there's always something different and exciting to do'. Pupils contribute to lessons enthusiastically and work hard on their tasks. They are friendly, polite and exceptionally well behaved. Relationships are excellent. One pupil spoke for many when she said, 'Everyone in our school is always friendly'. Pupils of all ages readily mix together and the older pupils particularly enjoy looking after the younger ones. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The day-to-day life of the school and the curriculum, such as work about India in Years 3 and 4, give pupils a strong understanding of themselves and their place in the wider world. Pupils know how to look after themselves. They know that eating the right things and exercise are important for good health. They feel safe in school and know how to stay safe out of school. Pupils make an excellent contribution to the school community; for example, as Playground Pals or as members of the school council.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Good teaching and learning, with interesting activities and effective support for individuals, ensure that pupils make good progress. Lessons are planned carefully and generally meet the wide range of pupils' needs. Teachers make learning interesting through lively whole-class sessions and by using a good range of methods to involve the pupils and stimulate their enthusiasm. For example, Year 1 and 2 pupils generated good ideas for their poems through paired discussion. Lessons are managed well because the teachers have built excellent relationships with their pupils. Good support for learning from teachers and teaching assistants helps pupils to do their best, particularly those who need extra help and encouragement. Occasionally, the pace of learning slackens because work with the whole class moves too slowly

or tasks are not quite challenging enough for some pupils. Good systems for assessing pupils' attainment and tracking their progress help teachers to pitch work at the right level. Pupils have learning targets but these are used more systematically in some classes than others. Careful assessment of pupils, who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and careful checks on their progress towards learning targets, help them to make the same good progress as their peers.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

A good curriculum, with outstanding features, provides a wide range of experiences that meets the needs of all pupils well. For example, all classes contain pupils from more than one age group and teachers adapt the curriculum successfully to ensure that all have the right diet of work. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities benefit from appropriate tasks and good support. The curriculum for English and mathematics helps pupils to make good progress. Skills in information and communication technology are developed well through work in other subjects; such as, when Year 5 and 6 pupils used a program to generate a range of mathematical shapes. Pupils' outstanding personal development owes much to a strong programme of personal, social and health education. A good range of activities outside lessons is much enjoyed by the pupils and helps them to learn new skills. Sport and music clubs, as well as educational visits to places of interest, enrich the curriculum significantly. For example, a lot of good work is on display following pupils' visit to Silloth where they explored the coastal environment.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school is a warm and welcoming community where pastoral care is outstanding. Parents particularly value the way in which each child is nurtured and given the confidence to succeed. This is because the staff know the children very well and work hard to ensure that each pupil is safe, happy and ready to learn. The pupils also recognise that the staff give them lots of support. A typical comment was, 'I like the teachers because they'll solve any problem you have'. The school is a secure environment where the required safeguarding procedures are in place. Academic guidance is very good because the school checks regularly on pupils' progress to ensure that they are doing as well as they can. If they are falling behind, the school provides extra activities and additional support so they can catch up. Gifted and talented pupils are recognised and challenged effectively to extend their learning. Pupils who join the school settle quickly and make friends.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Good leadership and management ensure that the school capitalises on its strengths and is constantly seeking to improve the quality of education for its pupils. The headteacher's strong leadership is based on very clear values about the importance of pupils receiving a well-rounded education, academic and personal. In this, he has the support of the staff, governors and parents. The whole of the teaching staff is involved in leading and managing various aspects of the school's work and they carry out these responsibilities with great enthusiasm. Team work is a significant strength. Leaders have a good understanding of how pupils' learning can improve further, based on accurate evaluations of the school's performance. In some areas, action has

led to marked improvement. For example, since the last inspection, the quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage has improved significantly. In other areas, however, action to improve aspects of pupils' achievement has not been evaluated rigorously enough so leaders can be sure that the right steps were taken. For example, the school is not certain why considerable work to raise standards in mathematics has not been as successful as they had hoped. Governors provide considerable support and have a good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are not afraid to ask challenging questions about the school's performance and they are increasingly focused on pupils' achievement and helping to raise standards. The strengths in leadership and management put the school in a good position to improve further.

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Annex A

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?	1
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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
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	2
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	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?	1

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.

Annex A

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

21 June 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Lazonby C of E School, Penrith, CA10 1BL

Thank you for being so friendly and helpful when I visited your school to find out how well you are doing. There are lots of good things about your school but I also found a few ways in which it could be even better.

The first thing that struck me about your school is the fact that you are all so happy to be there and you really enjoy your lessons. You are polite, friendly and exceptionally well behaved. You all get on very well together and the school council said this is one of the best things about your school. From visiting some of your lessons and looking at your work, it is clear you are making good progress, which is helping you to reach standards that are better than expected. Your teachers are doing a good job in helping you to learn quickly but you must keep working hard. You say there are lots of interesting things to do in lessons, and I agree. The work you have been doing following your trip to Silloth is particularly good. The tasks your teachers give you in lessons make you think hard but they are usually good fun and you are keen to learn. The jobs you do around school help you to make a good contribution to your community. All the staff look after you exceptionally well and make sure you are happy and ready to learn. Your headteacher is doing a good job in helping your school to get better and all the staff are working hard to help him.

I would like you to work with your teachers to improve the way you learn.

- I have asked your teachers to make sure that all lessons move at a good pace and the work is challenging. You must try your best to rise to the challenge.
- Your teachers try new ideas to help you learn more quickly. I have asked them to check more carefully that new ways of learning really do make a difference to how rapidly you learn.

Thank you for helping me with the inspection of your school.

Yours sincerely

George Crowther

Lead Inspector