



# Dean Barwick School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 112343  
**Local Authority** Cumbria  
**Inspection number** 289252  
**Inspection date** 12 December 2006  
**Reporting inspector** John Heap

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Witherslack
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Grange-over-Sands, Cumbria
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4-11		LA11 6RS
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01539 552298
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	35	<b>Fax number</b>	01539 552298
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr Jolyon Dodgson
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Linda Graves
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 September 2001		

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This is a small school with two classes, each with more than one age group. It serves a rural area with little social and economic deprivation and only a very small number of pupils are currently entitled to a free school meal. All children are from White backgrounds and the vast majority are British. The proportion with learning difficulties and disabilities is above average. The school has Healthy Schools and 'Artsmark Silver' status. Since the last inspection the school has had three headteachers and a complete change of teaching staff. The new headteacher was appointed in September 2005.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The school is right to judge itself as satisfactory and it gives sound value for money. Significant disruption to both the leadership and management of the school and the staffing has meant that progress since the previous inspection had stalled. The pace of improvement has quickened in the last 15 months since the appointment of the new headteacher. She has quickly gained the support of the school community, as this typical written comment from a parent shows: 'The school is a lot better since the new head has taken over just over a year ago.' Her good leadership has brought about significant improvements in areas such as the tracking of pupils' progress. As a result, improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory and the school is on a sound footing to move forward.

Pupils' personal development is good because of strong aspects in the otherwise satisfactory curriculum and the school's caring ethos. Plenty of activities reinforce pupils' knowledge and understanding of the importance of leading healthy and safe lifestyles. Pupils have many opportunities to contribute to the school and the wider community. The 'family' atmosphere in the school is no accident and older pupils do a great deal to help the younger ones to settle in quickly. Parents and pupils are delighted with all of this and the evidence points clearly to pupils thoroughly enjoying their time in school. In discussion, pupils rightly point to the good contribution made by external providers, visits and visitors. As a result, pupils are developing some independence but not in all aspects of their learning. For example, basic skills in writing, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) are not used widely in other subjects. In relation to writing, this is one of the main reasons why standards and progress are not as good as they should be.

Achievement is satisfactory and standards are average. Children get a steady start in the Foundation Stage (Reception) and make satisfactory progress towards expected attainment. Standards in Years 2 and 6 are average and pupils make satisfactory progress. Nevertheless, progress in writing continues to be slow, even though pupils are on track to meet targets. The combination of good attitudes to learning and average standards means that pupils are being prepared for their future schooling and life beyond education.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory and promotes achievement and standards which are around average. The strongest practice is in Years 3 to 6. Teaching assistants provide effective support for pupils with additional learning needs and this represents good improvement on the findings in the previous inspection report. Assessment and the tracking of pupils' achievements are very recent developments in the school. The procedures are good but the use of the information to match work to pupils' individual needs is not yet effective. As a result, the level of challenge is lower than it should be, particularly in writing. Marking does not give an accurate picture of what pupils have achieved and what they need to do to reach the next level of learning. The school's accurate self-evaluation shows that the headteacher has a clear understanding of development priorities but her teaching commitment is too heavy. Consequently, progress is slower than is necessary because the headteacher does not have the time

to manage initiatives and closely monitor and develop colleagues' skills, knowledge and understanding.

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

- Improve the quality of pupils' writing and quicken their progress in this subject.
- Enable pupils to use and develop their skills in writing, mathematics and ICT across the full range of subjects.
- Make sure pupils fully understand what they already know and what they need to do to improve further.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Achievement is satisfactory. By the end of Reception, children reach nationally expected standards and have made satisfactory progress. Most progress is made in their personal, social and emotional development with children maturing well because of the strong support that is available to them. Small numbers of pupils in each year group mean that each pupil's results have a significant impact on the pattern of attainment for the whole year group. Even a single pupil with extra learning needs could lead to severe fluctuations in national test results. Nevertheless, standards over time at Years 2 and 6 have been broadly average. National data and the school's tracking show that pupils make satisfactory progress. Standards and progress in writing are not as good as they could be. The school recognises this and is beginning to take effective action to improve the quality of work, particularly in poetry and in accounts about visits. Good basic skills of handwriting, spelling and punctuation are not consistently expected from an early enough age. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. The few pupils with extra learning needs make good progress because they are well supported.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Moral and social development is very strong and this leads to very good behaviour and positive relationships among pupils and with adults in the school. Pupils are respectful of others and of rules and they play safely and well together. Pupils are reflective thinkers about important issues, such as the environment.

Pupils' thorough enjoyment of school is reflected in their regular attendance. Parents are pleased about this and it encourages their own strong support for the school. Pupils are fully aware of the desirability of eating healthily and they take advantage of the various opportunities to engage in vigorous exercise. The school council actively consults all pupils and, on their behalf, makes a good contribution to the school and wider community. They suggest ways to improve playtimes and identify resources that they judge to be good purchases. Furthermore, they recognise that others are less

fortunate and all pupils work hard to raise money for worthwhile causes. The youngest children also benefit from the willingness of older pupils to support them and take some responsibility for their settling in. Pupils' positive attitudes and adequate basic skills mean that they have a satisfactory foundation for their future.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The best teaching was seen in the junior class. Lessons typically include:

- detailed planning, but too little about what is expected of individual pupils, particularly in writing
- effective support by classroom assistants that enables pupils with additional learning needs to make good progress
- strong classroom management, so that pupils participate and learn without disruption
- effective use of the interactive whiteboards, especially in mathematics, which leads to challenging work being illustrated and understood; for example, the junior class's work on graphs.

A recent national subject survey judged the teaching of music to be strong with outstanding features, particularly the quality of singing. Learning targets are too general because the good information from tracking of prior levels of attainment is not always used to set challenging tasks. The marking of work is regular, but does not provide clear guidance as to how well each pupil is doing and what is needed to improve further, notably in writing.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

Pupils' good personal development is fostered well by the curriculum. There is plenty of emphasis on health, safety and the environment. The grounds and surrounding woodlands are used well to broaden learning. Visits and visitors are very enjoyable for pupils and increase their knowledge and understanding. For instance, multicultural understanding is developed by a visit to a Temple and people from India visiting the school. Enrichment activities are very good and there is a significant input from external providers. The local language college makes a good contribution to French. Considering the small size of the school, the range of out-of-school activities is very broad because of strong support from staff, parents and external sports coaches. Despite these strengths, the various subjects are not linked together well enough to maximise the use and development of basic skills and thereby raise standards. This has the biggest effect on the quality of writing.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 3

This is a caring school. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are adequate. Child protection and health and safety systems are robust. Pupils say that they feel safe and secure in the school and parents are satisfied. Documentary support for vulnerable pupils is detailed and staff provide them with effective assistance. The youngest children settle into school quickly because procedures for their induction work well. The headteacher has introduced good systems for tracking pupils' progress and achievements. She has rightly made this a priority, but the introduction has been so recent that it is too soon to judge the impact on standards. However, it is clear from teachers' lesson planning that the information from tracking is not being used fully to match work to individual pupils' needs.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

The leadership of the headteacher shows a strong vision. This includes further strengthening of pupils' personal development and their academic achievements. It is clear from the available evidence that this vision for the school is strongly supported by staff, governors, parents and pupils. Management is sound, with:

- improvement planning identifying the right priorities
- sound performance management supporting staff in the improvement of their practice
- satisfactory monitoring of improving systems and frameworks.

Governance is satisfactory. Some useful monitoring of teaching and standards provides governors with an adequate knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Nevertheless, they are too reliant on the headteacher for their information and do not use enough of their own processes to monitor the work of the school. Financial management is prudent and the school obtains satisfactory value for money in its purchasing of supplies and services. Governors have shown effective leadership in the good development of the premises.

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## Inspection judgements

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

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
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	3

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3

<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>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

Dean Barwick School

Witherslack

Grange-over-Sands

Cumbria

LA11 6RS

12 December 2006

Dear Children

It was really good to be in your school this week. It was a privilege to meet you and I am very grateful for your warm welcome, courtesy and the help you provided. Please give a special thanks to those who talked with me.

What I really liked about your school:

- the very good behaviour and relationships you develop with all in the school
- your good attitudes to school and your work
- the way that you all contribute to an effective, safe and caring atmosphere in the school
- the good range of activities that enrich your curriculum
- the effective way that music is taught in the school
- the recent improvements that have been brought about have been rightly noticed by your parents.

We have asked your teachers to make sure that your writing improves. I have also suggested that you have even more opportunities to use your literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in other subjects. Finally, I have asked that teachers to spend a little more time marking your books, so that you are sure about your strengths and what you need to do to improve. You can be a great help by always doing your best work and following the advice from your teachers.

The inspection team wishes you well and good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

John Heap

Lead inspector