



# Askam Village School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 112409  
**Local Authority** Cumbria  
**Inspection number** 289277  
**Inspection dates** 27–28 September 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Heather Evans

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>	Lots Road
<b>School category</b>	Foundation		Askam-in-Furness, Cumbria
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11		LA16 7DA
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01229 462814
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	244	<b>Fax number</b>	01229 462814
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Fiona Priestley
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Myron Hrynkow
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 July 2002		

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<b>Age group</b>	<b>Inspection dates</b>	<b>Inspection number</b>
3–11	27–28 September 2006	289277

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is an average sized primary school. The school serves a socially and economically disadvantaged area. The proportion of pupils claiming their entitlement to free school meals is about average. The percentage with learning difficulties or disabilities is above 40% and is much higher than is found in most schools nationally. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds and the few with English as an additional language speak English well. Children enter the Nursery with language skills at a significantly lower level than those most frequently found for children of the same age.

## 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 and is very much at the heart of the community. Pupils learn effectively and achieve well. Parents and children alike celebrate the school's impact on children's aspirations and achievements. The care for pupils is outstanding and pupils know how to keep themselves safe. Pupils develop into confident youngsters who make the right choices about selecting a healthy lifestyle. The strong focus on personal development enables pupils to increase their social skills in all classes and across every subject. They care for each other and recognise their role in the wider community by raising funds for local and national charities. Pupils have a voice in school and have been instrumental in enhancing provision for play outside, including the giant chess board. This enhances their self-esteem and, combined with their improving academic skills, prepares them well for the future. The curriculum is enriched by an interesting range of visits, clubs and activities and this adds to the pupils' obvious enjoyment in learning.

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. Good teaching enables pupils to make good progress throughout Key Stages 1 and 2 and reach the level expected for their age from a low starting point. Teachers meet the needs of all pupils and are committed to increasing the challenge in pupils' work in order to raise standards. Teachers mark work well and provide clear pointers as to how to improve. At the end of Year 2, standards are broadly average, but more work is required in reading and writing. In classes for older pupils, the push for additional challenge and high academic standards is setting the pace for the rest of the school. The drive for improved writing is proving to be very successful. Test results in Year 6 show standards are average in English and mathematics. Pupils lack confidence in mental calculations. In science, standards are above average and progress is very good.

Leadership and management are good. The dedicated headteacher is ably supported by his deputy, staff and governors. All are involved in self-evaluation and so the school has an accurate view of what is working well and what needs attention. The school has made good improvement since the previous inspection. Its ambition to provide as much as possible for pupils is evident in all planned activities. Consequently, the school shows good capacity to improve.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in reading and writing at the end of Key Stage 1.
- Increase verbal and mental work in mathematics to lift standards to match those achieved in science.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Across the school pupils achieve well. They make good progress because teachers effectively provide work that is matched accurately to what pupils know and

understand. From a low starting point, children in the Foundation Stage make good progress. Teachers' assessments in Year 2 and the results of the National Curriculum tests in Year 6 show that good achievement is maintained across the school. Teacher assessment in Year 2 shows standards are broadly average. Mathematics and science are stronger than reading and writing and the school is working to improve these skills. At the end of Key Stage 2, test results show standards in science are above average, and this reflects very good progress for many. Standards in mathematics and English are broadly average. Skills in mental mathematics and pupils' ability to explain their calculations are not as strong as other aspects of the subject. The school has set challenging targets for 2007 that teachers expect pupils to reach. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language make good progress because work is matched to their needs and support assistants give effective help. Gifted and talented pupils benefit from very close links with the local secondary school and also make good progress. There is no significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls by the end of Year 6.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils say they love school and attendance is above average. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong and behaviour is good. They benefit enormously from the excellent family ethos. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and appreciate the 'dedicated and enthusiastic' staff who work hard to ensure that pupils settle down quickly and make good progress. The focus on promoting healthy eating and developing a range of sporting opportunities is appreciated by the pupils, nearly all of whom enjoy playing an additional sport and have a good understanding of the importance of keeping fit and healthy. Pupils say they feel safe because staff are caring and, especially at play, they are well supervised.

Older pupils are keen to accept responsibility and take an active part in running the school, for example, by being a member of the school council and helping with younger pupils at lunchtime. All pupils have a good understanding that they have a role to play in the wider community. They confidently raise money for charity, organise fêtes and musical entertainments such as their production of 'Snowman'. Multicultural education is much improved and pupils have a good understanding of people from other cultures. Visits to London and Manchester and to places of worship, such as a synagogue, enrich pupils' cultural development. These visits help pupils to make great strides in their self-confidence. Improving academic standards and the ability to work well with others equip pupils well for their future.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Good teaching promotes good learning. This is reflected in the pupils' enjoyment and interest in their work, which enables them to make good progress. Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage because adults have a very secure understanding of how young children learn. The focus on practical activities sustains children's interest and enhances learning. In Years 1 and 2, pupils' concentration span expands as they undertake more formal work. Lessons are not too long and include a variety of interesting activities. A focus on teaching letters and their sounds in a more imaginative way is improving pupils' writing. Pupils who find learning difficult follow a modified programme and effective support consolidates and extends their learning. In Years 3 to 6, teachers provide more challenge and choice, and learning accelerates because pupils develop successfully into independent learners. Pupils learn well because they use enquiry and investigation confidently. This is seen best in science, a subject where children shine. In mathematics, teachers' priorities are now to promote mental strategies and use verbal work more. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively because teachers readily share skills and ideas with them. Careful marking points out where pupils have done well and suggests ways in which they can improve further. Teachers encourage pupils to use skills learned in writing and information and communication technology (ICT) in other subjects. In this way, pupils understand that things they learn in one lesson help them to succeed in other work later on.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The curriculum is good with close attention given to improving pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. Children in the Foundation Stage experience a very stimulating and exciting curriculum which ensures a good start to their education. The school has recently improved planning to link subjects together and this adds interest to pupils' tasks. Pupils say how much they enjoy lessons and really appreciate visitors to the school who stimulate their curiosity. They enjoy visits, in particular the visit to 'Robin Wood'. A very rich range of extra-curricular activities, particularly in sport, music and the arts greatly enrich pupils' experiences. All pupils in Key Stage 2 learn to play a musical instrument, a great achievement. Personal development is a high priority and pupils learn how to relate well to others as well as gaining a good understanding of how to keep fit and healthy. Careful planning and effective support boosts the learning of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, especially those with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties and enables them to have equal access to the curriculum. As a result, they make great strides in their learning and personal development. Strong links with the relevant outside agencies, such as speech therapists, enable staff to offer the best help to pupils.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

This aspect is good overall. The strengths are that the school takes outstanding care of all of its pupils. Staff know the pupils very well and parents say how much they appreciate the sensitive support and care that the school provides. As a result, pupils feel safe and secure at school. Close attention is given to protecting and safeguarding pupils. Procedures are in place and understood by pupils and adults.

Teachers make satisfactory use of the information about pupils' attainment and personal development. Teachers are involving pupils more in their own learning by setting them individual targets. These are helping pupils to improve in literacy, numeracy and science because they know what they have to do to make their work better.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The school is well led and managed. The headteacher has promoted an effective process of shared management which includes consultation with parents. Self-evaluation processes and planning for improvement have been developed successfully and the school has an informed view of how to improve. A clear structure to help raise pupils' attainment is now in place. Governors have a good grasp of the school's strengths and are fully involved in performance management strategies. The learning environment does not encourage the highest standards of care of resources and presentation. Governors are very aware of the need to improve accommodation and there are well conceived plans to remedy this during the next few weeks.

Since the last inspection, the roles of teachers in leading developments in the curriculum have improved significantly. The leadership and management of the school's provision for pupils who have learning difficulties or disabilities are exemplary, as is that in the Foundation Stage. As a result, these aspects are real strengths of the school and contribute well to the good progress being made.

The staff have accepted the challenge with determination to lift standards to higher levels each year. Improvement since the last inspection is good and the school is well placed to move forward.

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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>	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
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

<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	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

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

<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>	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	3
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

Askam Village School

Lots Road

Askam-in-Furness

Cumbria

LA16 7DA

27 September 2006

Dear Pupils

Thank you for welcoming us to your school to see how you work and play with your friends and listen to your teachers. We enjoyed our visit very much. We found out a lot about how you learn and these are some of the things that we liked best.

Your school is a happy friendly place, but you know that already because you told us how much you enjoy school. It was good to see you all coming in smiling and ready to work and learn together. We enjoyed seeing how well you worked with one another in lessons and when playing outside. You have good understanding about healthy living, caring for the environment and helping one another.

You are developing well as thoughtful young people who understand how to live safe and healthy lives. Most of you get pleasing results in your tests because you come to school every day except when you are ill. Lessons are good places to learn because you behave well. Your lessons are interesting, you have good fun with your teachers and your friends and everyone learns well.

You are pleased with how well you are doing in science. Your teachers have some ideas to help you do just as well in mathematics. It will need hard work but I know that you will find ways of making the tasks very enjoyable. Some younger children need to work a bit harder at learning sounds and improving writing and reading. Older pupils would find it useful to help with this work too. You and your teachers have some good plans to get to grips with this work. It won't be easy but you will feel so proud when all of your school work is as good as your sport and music.

You know that the builders are coming to make your school bigger. We hope this will help you all to find places for everything and make your school tidier and help you all to take a real pride in the environment inside your school just as you do outside.

Thank you again for letting us share your ideas and see how much you enjoy your work and play!

Heather Evans

Lead inspector