



# Ellenborough and Ewanrigg Infant School

Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 112134  
**Local Authority** Cumbria  
**Inspection number** 294551  
**Inspection dates** 17–18 October 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Pat Kime HMI

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>	Victory Crescent
<b>School category</b>	Community		Maryport, Cumbria
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7		CA15 7NE
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01900 812931
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	64	<b>Fax number</b>	01900 812931
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Sue Chapman
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Jose Hodgkins
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 October 2005		

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<b>Age group</b> 3–7	<b>Inspection dates</b> 17–18 October 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 294551
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors. At the previous inspection the school was given a Notice to Improve because it required significant improvement.

## Description of the school

This smaller than average school serves a community in which there are very high levels of social and economic disadvantage and many children face significant barriers to learning. Over 70% of the children have free school meals. This is a very high proportion. A much higher than average percentage of children, 40% has learning difficulties and/or disabilities. For most, these difficulties are social, emotional and behavioural and/or in speech and communication. The number of children with statements of special educational needs is very high for the size of the school. All the children are of White British heritage with English as their first language. There are a lot more boys than girls in the school. Eleven of the children are in the Nursery and they attend part-time. Since the last inspection, the staffing has stabilised and most of the teachers now have permanent contracts.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

- This is a satisfactory school with some important strengths.
- It is much better than it was a year ago.
- The pupils make satisfactory progress in their school work and very good progress in their personal development.
- The teaching is satisfactory overall, but quite a lot of it is good. None is unsatisfactory.
- The school looks after the pupils well and supports them and their families.
- The headteacher and governing body are doing a good job.
- The school knows what it needs to do to get even better. The staff and governors have the capacity to do what is needed so the school should go on improving.

The school has improved a great deal during the last year. It now provides a satisfactory education and has some significant strengths. In accordance with section 13(5) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

The headteacher and staff have tackled the weaknesses identified at the last inspection with energy and determination. Parents and carers have a very positive view of the school. As one parent wrote, 'over the last 12 months the teaching, behaviour of pupils, achievements and expectations have all improved'. What has already been achieved shows that the school is well placed to continue improving.

When children start in the Nursery they can do much less than most children their age. For most, social skills and language development are particularly poor and they have little knowledge about the world around them. Pupils make sound overall academic progress in their time at the school and many progress well in mathematics. Even so, standards are low. When pupils leave the school, they do poorly in the national tests. But standards are getting better. The present Year 2 pupils are on course to do better than last year's leavers. Standards in Year 1 are now much higher than at the same time last year, particularly in writing.

The school's curriculum provides a satisfactory range of opportunities for learning and the teaching is satisfactory overall. Teaching is most effective in the Nursery and Year 2 where much is good. There is also some good teaching in Year 1. Provision for the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception) is satisfactory overall, though the direct teaching of basic skills is better than the provision for children to learn through planned play activities. Pastoral care is of a very high quality and this has a positive effect on children's achievement. The school employs a learning mentor and works well with other agencies, such as Barnardos and Sure Start, and with parents and carers. The support for vulnerable children, such as those in local authority care and those who face problems in their lives, is particularly good. The school supports the parents and carers as well as the children. The systems for helping the pupils know how well they are doing and how to do even better are developing well.

Pupils make very good progress in personal development to reach a satisfactory standard. They enjoy school life. They want to learn and are proud of their

achievements. Behaviour is satisfactory but many of the pupils find it hard to concentrate on work and to behave well without close supervision. The pupils know how to keep healthy and safe in and out of school. The school works hard to promote healthy eating.

The headteacher has been the driving force behind the school's rapid improvement. She has built a strong sense of teamwork among the staff, established good relationships with the children's parents and carers, and helped the governors to fulfil their role well. The school knows its strengths and weaknesses and what it needs to do to improve further. It has sound action plans to support continued improvement. Most subject leaders have only recently taken on their roles. They have benefited from very good support and are getting to grips with their responsibilities well but are not yet fully fledged.

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

- Raise standards, particularly in literacy.
- Improve teaching and raise the quality of the satisfactory teaching to good.
- Develop the roles of subject leaders in improving children's achievement.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Standards are well below average and have been so for several years. However, they are now rising because the improvements made in the past year are starting to push through. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The school's focus on improving literacy and numeracy skills is proving successful. Standards in the present Year 2 hold the promise of considerably better results in the national tests than last year. The present Year 1 children have already reached much higher standards than the previous year group, particularly in writing. All children make at least satisfactory progress from their starting points which, for the vast majority, are very low. The school is quick to spot early signs of potential underachievement and puts in extra support to help pupils get back on course. Most pupils make least progress in writing and most in mathematics.

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

### **Grade: 3**

Many children have very poor social skills when they start in the Nursery. Children make very good progress in their personal development and, as result, reach a satisfactory standard. By Year 2, most are keen to learn. They are attentive in lessons and they get down to their work well. Taken over the whole school, pupils' behaviour and attitudes are satisfactory. Many are consistently well-behaved and hardworking but a significant minority need close supervision to concentrate on work and behave acceptably. The pupils' progress in personal development is the result of the staff's consistent emphasis on this aspect of education. The school provides very effective

support for the many pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. As a result, these pupils gain in self-control and their ability to learn.

The pupils enjoy school. They appreciate the good outdoor facilities. They like the staff who they say are kind, look after them and give them healthy food. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall.

Pupils are developing a sound understanding of what makes for a healthy lifestyle. They know the importance of eating plenty of fruit and vegetables and drinking sufficient water and they are taught about the importance of regular exercise. The school supports healthy lifestyles in many ways. For example, pupils make healthy food like vegetable soup at school and there is a fruit and vegetable cooperative for parents. Pupils follow safe routines in lessons because they understand the need for them.

The pupils learn to contribute to the local and wider communities. For example, they raise money for charitable causes and members of the gardening club sell plants and advise on how to care for them. A school council has been established very recently. This is to enable pupils to contribute to decisions about their school but they receive considerable support to enable them to take on this role.

The progress pupils make in their personal development makes an important contribution to preparing them for their future economic well-being. However, they need to do better in reading, writing and mathematics if they are to be well-prepared to make the most of the next stage of their education.

The school promotes attendance vigorously with incentives and rewards for children and parents and through the work of the learning mentor. As a result, attendance has improved significantly. It is now much higher than at the same time last year.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

In all the classes teaching is at least satisfactory. Evidence from the inspection, frequent checks by the headteacher and local authority show that there is no unsatisfactory teaching.

Teachers and support staff are skilled at managing pupils' behaviour. As a result, although many of the children have behavioural difficulties, lessons are orderly and the work moves along at an appropriate pace. In literacy and numeracy lessons, work is well matched to the pupils' different abilities so all make progress. Throughout the school, teachers make sure that pupils understand what they are to learn in each lesson. The support staff are briefed well by teachers. They are fully involved in lessons and make a good contribution to pupils' learning.

The most effective lessons are very well-organised and have clear well-focused learning objectives. Such lessons are very purposeful and the pupils know exactly what they are doing and how well they are getting on.

The school has made a good start on teaching speaking and listening skills as the foundation for improving reading and writing. Even so, these lessons could be more sharply focused and provide more opportunities for pupils to learn to speak at length. Pupils are taught the sounds made by letters (phonics) but the pace at which these are introduced is not rapid enough. Consequently, pupils do not have the tools they need to work out unfamiliar words.

The day-by-day checks on pupils' learning are generally good but are not consistently detailed and rigorous across classes.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum covers all that is required and is enriched with a lot of visits and visitors to broaden the children's horizons. A particularly good feature is the school's involvement in 'Creative Partnerships', a scheme funded by the Arts Council. This enables an actor and musician to work with the pupils on interesting activities that are planned in conjunction with the teachers. There is a good number and range of after-school clubs. The provision for pupils to learn about different cultures and faiths is adequate.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Pastoral care is extremely good. The school goes to great lengths to overcome barriers to pupils' learning. This extends to running many courses for parents and carers, such as positive parenting and literacy classes, which help them help their children. The school has built strong links with the external agencies that are involved in supporting children and their families. The full-time learning mentor provides a very good level of support for children, many of whom have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements fully. Staff keep a close watch on the progress of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and provide the extra support they need.

The headteacher has introduced good systems for keeping track of how well children are making progress. However, because they are quite new, the information gathered is limited and not yet sufficient to be used to identify trends in pupils' achievement or to underpin planning for improvement. Staff undertake a baseline assessment of children's attainment when they start in Nursery. This is not fully effective because, for most children, it reveals more what they cannot do than what they have already achieved.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher has been tireless in her efforts to improve the school and, as a result, the pupils are getting a much better education than a year ago. The school has received

a very good level of support from the local authority and the staff have benefited from additional training. Nevertheless, half the teachers joined the profession only a year ago. They have brought energy and fresh ideas and made a strong contribution to the school's culture of teamwork. They have been supported very well by the headteacher but they need time to acquire the skills and experience to take a full role in the leadership and management of subjects. The headteacher has continued to support the governing body and keep governors well-informed about the school life and the pupils' achievement. Governors have received training. The governing body now fulfils its role well and works in close partnership with the staff.

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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	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>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4
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	3

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The behaviour of learners	3
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
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>	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

The School Council

Ellenborough and Ewanrigg Infant School

Victory Crescent

Maryport

Cumbria

CA15 7NE

17 October 2006

Dear Children

As you know, I visited your school recently. I came to find out how well all the children are learning. Everyone made me welcome and helped me find out about your school. I was very grateful to all the children who talked to me about school and their work. Please thank them for me.

This letter is to tell you what I found out. Please make sure that all the children know what it says.

Your school is much better now than last time an inspector came, a year ago. It is now giving you a satisfactory education. You are making better progress now in reading, writing and mathematics. Your school does some things really well.

- The grown ups look after you very well. They make sure that if you find something hard or you have problems you get the help you need. Sometimes they help your families too.
- The headteacher is doing a good job. She is always busy doing things to make your school even better. She, the teachers and the governors know what to do to make it better still.
- There are lots of clubs for you after school. You get to go on lots of visits, like on the bus up town, and to Windermere. Some interesting people come to visit you and help you with your learning. It was good to meet Ian and his colleague from the theatre and I enjoyed looking at the photographs of the day an Indian dancer came.

To make your school even better Mrs Hodgkins and the teachers are going to:

- help you to reach higher standards, especially in reading and writing
- improve the teaching so all your lessons are good or better
- help the teachers who are subject leaders to make work in every subject as good as it can possibly be.

I am confident they can do this. I know you will all play your part by working hard and coming up with ideas of your own to improve the school.

You all have my very best wishes for the future. I hope you continue enjoying school and that you do as well as you can.

Yours sincerely

Pat Kime

Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools