

Yarlside Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112214
Local Authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	301713
Inspection date	4 October 2007
Reporting inspector	David Earley

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	219
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gillian Hull (Acting)
Headteacher	Mrs Pauline Hagan
Date of previous school inspection	1 June 2003
School address	Red Oak Avenue Barrow-in-Furness Cumbria LA13 0LH
Telephone number	01229 894610
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: standards in writing at Key Stage 1; consistency in teaching and learning; personal development and well-being gathering evidence from: the observation of lessons; discussions with staff, pupils and governors; scrutiny of pupils' work; school assessment data and documentation. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This is an average sized school on the edge of Barrow-in-Furness. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is below average. Most pupils are of White British origin. A small minority learn English as an additional language. There are a small number of children who are looked after outside the family. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. Skills on entry to the school are generally in line with those typical for children of this 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 and improving school which gives good value for money. There are aspects which are outstanding. The headteacher, well supported by her deputy, provides very strong leadership and has a clear vision for raising standards and improving provision which is shared by staff and governors. This is significant in the improving standards and good achievement.

Most children make good progress in the Foundation Stage so that by the time they enter Year 1 most exceed the goals set for their learning. Good progress is maintained in Key Stage 1 and all pupils achieve well. Teachers' assessments in 2006 showed standards in reading, writing and mathematics were above average, as they have been for the last five years. Indications are that this was maintained in 2007. The school had identified writing as an area for development in order to further raise standards in Key Stage 1. The strategies it has implemented have been successful so writing is improving.

The results of the national tests in Year 6 in 2006 were significantly above average overall as they have been for most of the last five years. Indications are that the 2007 results improved and pupils exceeded the challenging targets set for them. Inspection evidence and school data show that pupils make good progress and achieve well. Pupils in the current Year 6 are working at standards that are well above the expectation for their age. Throughout the school, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress.

Underlying factors in the improving standards are pupils' very positive attitudes to learning. They clearly enjoy coming to school. Relationships are very good and work is interesting and challenging. This enhances their confidence and curiosity and provides a firm foundation for improving standards. This is one reason why the inspection evidence agrees with the judgement of the school that personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils have an excellent understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and the school has achieved the 'Healthy Schools' award. Attendance is good. Exemplary behaviour leads to pupils feeling very safe and they say they are well cared for. There are many opportunities for pupils to take responsibility, whether it is through participation in local community projects, the school council, or as peer pals or peer buddies. The poise and self-esteem most pupils develop as they move through the school, together with high standards in skills of numeracy, literacy and information communication technology (ICT), prepare them extremely well for their future learning and adult life.

The quality of teaching and learning is good and this is why pupils make good progress. Teachers make effective use of assessment to provide work which is well suited to differing abilities. Lessons are usually lively and interesting so that pupils want to learn and do well. The pace of lessons is typically brisk, and explanations clear, encouraging pupils to work hard and respond to the high levels of challenge presented to them. Occasionally, explanations are less clear and then the pace of learning slows and pupils make slower progress. Teachers generally make good use of marking to inform pupils on how they might improve, but this is not used consistently throughout the school so there are some missed opportunities to extend learning. Teachers work closely with teaching assistants, ensuring that pupils of all abilities are well supported. Teaching and learning are enhanced by the good curriculum. It is rich and stimulating so that horizons are widened and learning is extended. Many visits and visitors and a very popular programme of extra curricular activities enrich the pupils' experiences. For example, when pupils visit a Buddhist centre or work with a visiting artist, their curiosity is aroused and their

understanding is deepened. A very good programme of personal and social education helps pupils to have an excellent understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle. The curriculum is well planned and ensures that literacy, numeracy and ICT are effectively used in other subjects, extending learning and giving a purpose to lessons.

Underlining the good progress and excellent personal development is the excellent care, support and guidance provided by the school. All pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, children looked after outside the family and those who learn English as an additional language, are very well supported. This means they achieve well academically and personal development is excellent. The very caring atmosphere pervades all that the school does and there is a clear determination to provide the best for each pupil. For example, at the beginning and end of each day, pupils' feelings are monitored through the 'check in' and 'check out' system. There are very good links with parents and outside agencies to support and extend learning. Child protection, risk assessments and procedures for safeguarding children are in place. Excellent systems for assessing and tracking progress ensure additional help is provided where it is most needed.

Leadership and management are good. The drive and determination of the headteacher, shared by staff and governors, help to create a very positive approach to learning which encourages everyone to give of their best. The school evaluates its performance rigorously, leading to a good improvement plan which is clearly based on raising standards and improving provision. Teaching and learning are effectively monitored and the school is extending the brief of subject co-ordinators in checking progress in their subjects. Most parents have positive views of the school. A parent commented that, 'Yarlside is an excellent school which openly encourages parental involvement'. Governors know the school well and are effective in holding the school to account for its performance and in helping to shape its direction. The budget is well managed to support improvements and issues from the previous inspection have been tackled successfully. Strong leadership, good evaluation of performance and a relentless commitment to raise standards and improve provision give the school good capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good and children make good progress. Children settle quickly into the Nursery because relationships are very good and the curriculum is rich and stimulating. Teachers know the children very well and keep a careful check of their progress so that work is well suited to their abilities. Teachers and teaching assistants work very closely together, bringing continuity and consistency in their approach to learning. The establishment of a Foundation Stage unit and the close collaboration between Nursery and Reception staff ensure that transition between the two is smooth.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that in all lessons the pace of learning is brisk and teachers' explanations are clear.
- Ensure consistency in the marking of work so that it shows pupils how to improve.

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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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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	1

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

5 October 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Yarlside Primary School, Cumbria, LA13 0LH

Thank you for making me so welcome when I came to visit your school. I really enjoyed my visit because you were all so polite and courteous. I was pleased to hear that you all have a superb understanding of how to keep healthy and that you feel very safe and really well looked after at school. You told me that you enjoy coming to school because everyone is so friendly and there are lots of interesting things to do. I was very impressed by the way the school council helps to improve life in school and by the way you are kind and helpful to each other. You also help to raise funds for those who are not as lucky as you are. Here are some of the best things about your school.

- Your behaviour is excellent.
- All the visits and visitors and after school clubs help to make learning exciting.
- The teaching is good so that you make good progress and your work is getting even better.
- You are very well looked after and teachers keep a good check on how well you are doing.
- Teachers and governors look after the school well and work hard to make improvements.

These are some of the things that could be better.

- In some lessons, explanations could be clearer to help you learn at an even faster rate.
- Marking needs to tell you what you need to do to improve.

You can do your part by continuing to work hard and by reading the comments your teachers make in your books.

Thank you once again for making me so welcome.

Yours sincerely

David Earley

Lead inspector