

# Greystoke School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	112111
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cumbria
<b>Inspection number</b>	310786
<b>Inspection date</b>	6 November 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Lynne Read

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 category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4-11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	50
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Fred Dyer
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Jeanette Matthews
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 February 2004
<b>School address</b>	Icold Road Greystoke Penrith Cumbria CA11 0TP
<b>Telephone number</b>	01768 483572
<b>Fax number</b>	01768 483574

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This small school serves pupils from the village and a significant number from the town of Penrith. Pupils come from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds. The proportion taking free school meals is below average, although it is known that many do not claim their entitlement. A below average proportion of pupils has learning difficulties and/or disabilities. All pupils come from White British backgrounds. The school has experienced a period of staffing difficulties with a large turnover of staff which has now stabilised. A significant percentage of pupils either leave or transfer to the school part way through their education.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Greystoke Primary is a good school and provides good value for money. The headteacher provides good leadership and generates good team work among staff. All are fully committed to high standards and providing the best possible provision for the pupils. Parents have very positive views of the school. One wrote, 'This is a fabulous and vibrant school', whilst others praised the 'warm and welcoming atmosphere' and the 'enthusiasm and expert guidance of the teaching staff'. Links with other schools, agencies and the community are good and provide valuable benefits for the pupils' learning.

Pupils make good progress through both key stages. Teachers' assessments at the end of Year 2 show standards are above average in reading and writing but below average in mathematics. Results of national tests for Year 6 pupils in 2007 were not as high as usual because during their time in Key Stage 2, this group of pupils had their learning disturbed by the high turnover of staff. Nevertheless, a concerted effort made by staff and pupils enabled these pupils to make good progress in their latter years at the school. Convincing indicators from the school's records, together with observations, show that pupils are making good progress. Standards are broadly average and are improving. Pupils' personal development is good and behaviour is excellent. The school provides a strong, caring ethos which ensures that pupils feel secure. As a result, there is a calm, productive atmosphere and pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school.

Teaching is good. There is good expertise among teachers who cater well for the mixed ages and ability range in each class. Teachers encourage pupils to be active, enthusiastic learners. To hear learning described as 'fun' by the pupils is not unusual. Expectations are consistently high in Key Stage 2 but sometimes less so in mathematics in Key Stage 1.

The curriculum is good with an interesting range of additional activities, for example in art and sport, and after-school clubs. A strong emphasis on personal education ensures that pupils have an excellent understanding of the principles of healthy living. There are varied opportunities for pupils to experience responsibility and share in decision-making. This prepares them well for their future lives, whilst also contributing to the strong sense of community in school.

Management is good with effective systems for checking on provision and performance. Attention to safety issues, including checking on the suitability of staff and helpers, is thorough. Since the recent staffing difficulties were resolved, the school has made good improvements but the impact on standards is yet to be fully realised. The school has good capacity to maintain its strengths and improve further.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage are good. Children's skills and knowledge on entry to Reception varies widely between individuals and from year to year. The 2006 intake was just below that typical for the age group. Children make good progress in all areas of learning. By the end of the Reception year, the majority of children meet the level expected for their age.

An effective programme of introducing children to school enables them to settle quickly. Children have the benefit of an inviting and stimulating learning environment with good adult support. They also learn a great deal from working in groups alongside infant pupils, especially in communication and collaborative skills. The children do not have a dedicated outdoor learning

area but sessions in the village hall, playground and field ensure that their learning is extended to the outdoors.

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

- Raise expectations and improve achievement in mathematics at Key Stage 1.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Overall achievement is good. The numbers in each year group are very small and the results of national tests do not give the full picture of what is happening in school. School records show that progress in Key Stage 1 is good. Teachers' assessments at the end of Year 2 vary over time but show a pattern of above average standards, especially in reading and writing. Standards in mathematics are below average. The school has started to improve calculating skills but currently there is insufficient emphasis on investigating and problem solving.

Progress is good in Key Stage 2. The school's test results show how standards have been adversely affected by the major staffing difficulties experienced by the school. This led to a loss of continuity of learning for many pupils and also a change in the make-up of the groups. This is clear in the 2007 results of national tests for Year 6 which showed a decline in standards. Of the original group, over 50% had left and around 30% of those who took the tests had arrived in the later junior years. Convincing records show that the pupils made good and often very good progress during their time in this school. They went a long way to filling the gaps in their knowledge and skills in the time available. Pupils continue to make good progress and are well on track to reach the level expected for their age. Pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Personal development and well-being, including social, moral, spiritual and cultural development, are good. Pupils are effectively encouraged through the caring 'family' ethos. As a result, pupils show exceptional enjoyment in their work, their behaviour is excellent and attendance is above average. Pupils say they feel safe and assert that there is no bullying in school. They are extremely well informed about healthy lifestyles. Pupils are able to make sensible choices of diet and know the importance of exercise. They have a good awareness of, and respect for, beliefs that are different from their own. They show good consideration for others by collecting for charities.

Pupils play an important part in making decisions through their elected school council. They run a 'healthy tuck shop' and are current contenders for a competition prize to further improve playground facilities. Posts of responsibility, such as school council member, are keenly sought after and appointed through a well established democratic process. These factors, together with the good progress made, means that pupils are well prepared for future learning.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. The learning environment is stimulating. Useful prompts remind pupils about what is expected and their work is celebrated in eye-catching displays. Teachers make the purpose of lessons clear so pupils understand what is expected of them. Introductions are brisk and include a good amount of collaborative work. The 'brain gym' and other classroom exercises help to refresh pupils and motivate them. Small teaching groups are planned diligently to cater for differing ages and abilities. Support staff provide good support for pupils, enabling them to do well. Throughout the school and across subjects, teachers constantly assess pupils' progress. Expectations are generally high and this is helping to close gaps in prior learning and to accelerate progress. However, in a few instances tasks are not quite as challenging in Key Stage 1, especially in mathematics.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and described by one pupil as 'really enjoyable'. It includes ample opportunities for pupils to extend their English and mathematical skills, and includes French lessons. Creative work and performing arts also feature strongly and help to develop pupils' talents. Improved resources mean pupils have more opportunities to practise and enhance their computer skills when studying other subjects. There is a good emphasis on personal education and the 'philosophy for children' sessions help to develop thinking and questioning skills very successfully. To tackle underachievement, the school provides special intervention courses which successfully enable pupils to overcome their difficulties. Staff have gone to great lengths to overcome the lack of a hall and outside space. Profitable links with the local community provide facilities for physical education and sport. Pupils benefit from a wealth of additional experiences through visits and expert visitors which broaden their horizons. There is an ample take up of after-school sessions, such as those for rugby, tennis or art and opportunities for adventure activities.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. Pupils receive good pastoral support and guidance for their personal development which helps them to grow in their self-esteem and confidence. This aspect of the school's work is highly commended by parents. Staff are diligent and very effective in ensuring the pupils' safety and well-being. Robust procedures for safeguarding pupils are in place. School routines are well established and good arrangements at lunchtimes and breaks ensure that pupils are supervised effectively.

Pupils receive good feedback on how to improve during lessons and teachers routinely include useful suggestions in their marking. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own work and progress in lessons. This is helping them to become independent learners. Individual targets for pupils show them what they need to do to improve and provide a goal to aim for. Occasionally, in Key Stage 1, the pupils are not fully stretched, especially in mathematics.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good and support strong teamwork. The headteacher provides good leadership and has the confidence of parents, staff and governors. Under her direction, the school has re-established a good reputation within the community and numbers on roll are increasing. Subject managers contribute effectively to the school's evaluation of its performance. Detailed assessment and tracking records in English and mathematics are used to keep a close eye on progress and standards as well as the school's provision. As a result, the school has an accurate overview of its strengths and where it needs to improve. The information is also used well to pinpoint, and act upon, specific gaps in learning and to boost progress.

Governance is good. In the short time since the new governing body has been in place, governors have developed an efficient committee structure and secured a clear overview of standards, achievement and provision. Through their active involvement in school, they support the drive for further improvement well.

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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 <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

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
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	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?	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.

## Annex A

**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 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**

7 November 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Greystoke School, Cumbria. CA11 OTP

Thank you very much for your warm welcome and for helping me when I came to visit your school. I would like to tell you what I found out.

Greystoke is a good school. Your behaviour is excellent and you take really good care of each other. You enjoy your learning, try hard and are making good progress. Your teachers and families can be proud of you. I enjoyed chatting with some of you and learning about the exciting things you do. I was really impressed with the work you are doing to win the 'People's Millions' and wish you every success. It is good to know how much you enjoy your 'multi-sports' and to see how much you relish the healthy meals on offer at lunchtimes.

Please thank your parents for sending me lots of replies to the questionnaire. They are very happy with all that the school offers. They are especially pleased with your progress, the teaching and the care that your headteacher and staff take in ensuring you are happy and safe.

You are making good progress and enjoying your learning. I know that you are working hard to improve your mental arithmetic and it's good to know that your parents are helping at home too. In the infants, progress in reading and writing is better than in mathematics. I think this could be improved by doing more work on problem-solving. I know that you like new challenges so you should find this interesting. Many of you take care with your presentation but I saw some books where the work was untidy and the handwriting was not as good as it could be. Perhaps when you are checking the quality of your work at the end of lessons, you might spare a minute to consider whether the presentation is the best you can do.

Thank you once again for the interesting conversations I had throughout the day and for letting me know your views so clearly. Please accept my best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Lynne Read

Lead inspector