

Crosby Ravensworth C of E School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112315
Local Authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	310849
Inspection date	3 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Jackie Barnes

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	48
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Simon Asquith
Headteacher	Mr Tim Ayre
Date of previous school inspection	1 October 2003
School address	Penrith Cumbria CA10 3JJ
Telephone number	01931 715265
Fax number	0000

Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school is situated in a sparsely populated rural area south of Penrith. It serves the small village of Crosby Ravensworth and the locality. The building is in the process of being extended and the new classroom for children in the Reception and Years 1 and 2 has just come into use. The remaining year groups are taught in the school's other classroom. An independent nursery is also housed in the building. All the pupils are from White British backgrounds. None are entitled to free school meals. A very small number of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

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. Pupils' personal development and the pastoral care and support they receive are outstanding. The school has successfully ensured that, despite having few local amenities and a small staff, the pupils have a wide range of experiences including regular contacts with other schools and adults. Pupils are full of ideas and have the confidence to share them; they are exceptionally independent and organise themselves well. Their behaviour is good and they care for each other. They clearly enjoy school, with much excitement, discussion and laughter, and this is reflected in above average attendance. Pupils are knowledgeable about how to keep safe and healthy. The school supports them well in the food and physical activities provided, and in the attention given to safety.

The number of pupils in each year group rarely rises above ten and is usually much smaller. As a result, the school sensibly focuses on setting targets for individual pupils. This is effective and, although occasionally the rate of progress is not consistent across subjects and year groups, most pupils make good progress overall. Although standards are average by Year 6, the most capable pupils attain above average standards. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have each stage of their learning carefully planned, are very effectively supported and they achieve extremely well.

Teaching and learning are good. Although pupils have the same class teacher for several years they have a good variety of successful learning experiences. They regularly work with staff and children from other schools including the secondary school, and have specialist tuition for music and sport. Good relationships and mutual respect encourage pupils to be confident in sharing ideas and keen to do their best. Staff have a good knowledge of the subjects and age groups they teach, and lessons are well organised and purposeful. The support provided by teaching assistants working with different groups of pupils contributes well to keeping pupils interested and making progress. Information on the progress of individual pupils is collected regularly. It is not always used well enough by staff to ensure that lessons planned lead to good progress for every pupil. Consequently, there are occasions when the pace of learning slows for some pupils.

The school has an excellent curriculum that includes all the required subjects with a suitable emphasis on literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT). It is exceptionally wide ranging for a small school, takes good account of the different ages and capabilities of the pupils, and makes a major contribution to their confidence and independence. Pupils are used to adapting to different circumstances and people, and are enthusiastic when approaching unfamiliar opportunities. The school also makes good use of the varied natural environment in the area and the expertise of members of the community. As a result, pupils have a strong sense of responsibility to the school and community. Parents rightly value the school's success in counteracting any sense of isolation in their children's experiences.

The school is well led by an experienced and effective headteacher with active support from the governing body. The staff is small so all have substantial responsibilities and the level of commitment is high. Finances and the day-to-day affairs of the school are well managed; this was particularly evident during the inspection when arrangements for teaching and learning progressed smoothly despite extensive internal building work. The school's self-evaluation is good and based on a wide range of views including those of the pupils. The governing body and headteacher know the school well. They work closely together to set the school's priorities

and make the necessary improvements. However, the school improvement plan lacks precision, particularly in how to measure success in raising standards and achievement. This makes it difficult for governors to monitor the impact of the action taken accurately. Good progress has been made since the last inspection; pupils' attainment is now tracked systematically and additional in-class support has been provided.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

When they start school there is wide variation between what individual children know and can do. However, most children have skills that are typical of this age. Good teaching results in the small number of children in the Reception year making good progress. They work well with the Year 1 and Year 2 pupils, benefiting from watching and conversing with older and more competent pupils. Good use is made of teaching assistants and the available indoor and outdoor play areas to provide activities suitable for the age group. By the end of the Reception Year most children are working at least at the level expected for their age although this varies from year to year depending on their competence when they started school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Use assessment information more effectively to ensure that all pupils are making the best progress they can.
- Improve the school improvement plan so that it identifies more precisely the success of actions taken to raise standards and achievement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement is good and standards are broadly average. Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage and by the time they enter Year 1 their levels of development are, at least, typical for their age. Their good progress continues in Key Stage 1 and by Year 2, pupils reach average standards overall with reading and mathematics being stronger than writing.

Pupils in Key Stage 2, including the more able, continue to make good progress and meet their challenging targets. The school's results in Key Stage 2 national tests vary year by year because of the small numbers and the range of ability of pupils in each year group. In the 2006 national tests, overall standards were average. School records show that by Year 6 pupils' achievement is consistently good. Pupils with learning difficulties receive the extra support they need and make excellent progress. Occasionally, pupils' progress slows for a short time mainly because assessment data is not used well enough to link planning to pupils' learning and progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils make good use of the wide range of activities the school provides during and after lessons. They participate in sport and the arts including music. They have received national acclaim for the imaginative newsletter they produce regularly for parents and the local community. They successfully represent the school in competitive sport and other challenges. Their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good. They are well supported by the local faith community and regularly meet artists and performers from other cultures and countries. Pupils clearly enjoy school, as demonstrated by their good attendance, and behaviour.

They recognise their responsibilities to the school community through respecting each other and equipment as well as making good efforts to see no one is lonely or unhappy. Pupils know the difference between bullying and boisterous play or thoughtless actions. They feel safe and well supported in school. Pupils show concern for people locally and around the world who live in challenging circumstances of ill-health or conflict. They are exceptionally independent and usually make good decisions, coping well with the changes in their routines that the building works have required. Involvement in the school council successfully introduces an understanding of democracy and representation, as well as managing a budget. Overall, pupils are well placed to use their personal skills and knowledge to support their future well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good. Strong relationships, careful preparation of lessons, and good knowledge of the children combine to produce positive attitudes to learning. Pupils confirm lessons are interesting, although they have their preferences, and they are delighted with the technology of interactive white boards and easy access to computers. Assessment systems have been improved since the last inspection so pupils' progress can now be tracked. Pupils know their targets, some of which they have set themselves, and work towards them. Teachers' knowledge of what each pupil needs to do next is good overall, but the new data is showing occasional 'flat spots' where progress could be better. The challenging task of teaching several age groups within one class is eased by the good contribution made by well deployed teaching assistants. The teaching teams work well together and involve parents in their children's development.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstandingly successful in broadening pupils' experiences, developing their personal skills and providing opportunities for academic achievement. The school works very closely with its pre-school provider and receiving secondary school. This prepares pupils very well for the next stages of their education. The extended school provision is very well attended. Pupils of all abilities and ages are included in the whole school approach to being curious about the world beyond the school, and the interests and skills of other people. The impact shows clearly in the eagerness of most pupils to ask questions and approach new ideas. The school is a calm and purposeful place in which pupils with different abilities can learn.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care and support provided by the staff and volunteers is excellent. Each pupil is well known to staff, and parents report that they are welcome and kept well informed of their child's welfare. Conscientious attention is given to safety and to the pupils' emotional well-being. Parents are confident their children are well cared for; one remarked that the school 'is just like an extension of the family'. The school has excellent partnerships with external agencies and this makes a real contribution to the care of pupils with learning difficulties. All pupils have very good support for their personal development, and those pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are exceptionally well served. The academic guidance provided is good,

particularly in setting individual targets, and is improving as more data on pupils' attainment and progress is generated by the tracking system.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school is well led and managed. It makes the best possible use of its resources. The good leadership of the headteacher has resulted in a wide range of additional experiences and expertise being available to the pupils from sources beyond the school staff and facilities. The significant additional funding raised by parents and the community is put to good use. As this is a small school, targets in terms of National Curriculum results can be difficult to set; for example last year there were only eight pupils in Year 2. However, the school sets challenging targets for Year 6 and usually meets them. Targets for other aspects of education, notably those related to pupils' enjoyment, safety and health, and their personal development have clearly been a successful part of the school's work for some time and are continuing. The school improvement plan is very detailed and covers many areas of the school. It is not precise enough in identifying how successful the action taken has been in raising standards and improving achievement. The governors have recognised the need for review. The school provides good value for money and has good capacity 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?	1
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	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	1

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	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
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?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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

4 October 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Crosby Ravensworth C of E School, Cumbria, CA10 3JJ

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school. I was pleased to see how well behaved you were and how you cared for each other, especially the safety patrol that helps to make sure no one is sad or lonely at playtimes. The teaching in your school is good and you are keen to learn. Most of you work hard and make good progress. You are very knowledgeable about how to stay safe and healthy, and you make good choices. You clearly enjoy school, and receive exceptionally good care from the staff when you are there. I was so surprised to see how many exciting experiences you have, including sport, writing newsletters and working with children from other schools.

I feel you could do even better. So I have asked that all the information there is from the school's improved assessments is used to make sure that all of you have just the right challenge to make the very best progress you can in English and mathematics. I know you will help because you like new challenges and often set your own targets for improvement.

My very best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Jackie M Barnes

Lead inspector