

Penruddock Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112119
Local Authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	325533
Inspection date	20 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Tony Painter

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	52
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Andrew Leslie
Headteacher	Mrs Dianne Irving
Date of previous school inspection	1 September 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Penruddock Penrith Cumbria CA11 0QU
Telephone number	01768 483278
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- the effectiveness of accurate tracking of pupils' progress in evaluating the school and promoting achievement
- the impact of positive provision for pupils' personal development, including their understanding and contribution to the wider global community
- the effectiveness of leadership and management at different levels in a small organisation.

Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspection found no evidence to suggest that the school's assessments were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in this report. Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation documents, national published assessment data, the school's records and procedures, observation of the school at work, parental questionnaires and discussions with pupils, staff and governors.

Description of the school

This is a small rural school near Penrith. Pupils come from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds with many living beyond the school's immediate location. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) are provided for in a mixed Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 class. No pupils are eligible for free school meals. Few pupils have minority ethnic backgrounds and all have English as their home language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This good school has a high level of support from parents. They express many positive comments about the way their children enjoy school and how staff know each individual child. The self-assured and outgoing pupils also reflect this confidence in the school and its staff. They show great enthusiasm for the good range of opportunities that the school offers and particularly enjoy the regular responsibilities that every one of them takes around the school. Those in Years 3 to 5 are very proud of the way they must apply for their jobs and be interviewed before they can start. They carry out their roles with confidence and immense responsibility. Pupils say that difficulties such as bullying are very rare but the school has strong systems to sort out any problems. Many comment positively on the way they can express any concerns or feelings in their reflections diaries, knowing that any issues raised will be taken seriously by staff.

The school pays very close attention to developing all aspects of pupils' personal development and ensures that all safeguarding requirements are fully met. Very positive relationships established at every level ensure pupils' outstanding personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, pupils' understanding of how to stay safe and healthy is very well established. Regular events, such as Health Week, give pupils opportunities to show their skills and also contribute to very strong links with parents and the local community. Pupils have growing awareness of the wider world through many well targeted visits and visitors as well as the newly established links with schools in Tanzania and Nepal. All pupils are very polite and courteous and their behaviour is extremely good. Their tremendously positive attitudes frequently make a significant contribution to the good atmosphere for learning in lessons. Lessons frequently give pupils good opportunities to reflect on their experiences and opinions, which are listened to intently by others.

Good teaching ensures pupils' good achievement through the school from broadly average starting points. Teachers establish good relationships and clearly express their high expectations of conduct and behaviour that pupils respond to well. Lessons are well planned and teachers consistently involve pupils in identifying what they will learn and how success will be judged. This means that pupils understand what they will learn and most lessons are conducted at a good pace. Teachers know pupils' individual skills very well and give good personal support in their work. Questioning is frequently probing and carefully designed to make pupils think hard, which helps to promote learning. Marking is designed to give support for pupils' subsequent learning and is used with increasing consistency through the school. All pupils have identified individual targets that are often brought to their attention when starting work.

Overall standards by the end of Year 6 are significantly above the national average. These levels of attainment have been consistently shown in the school's published Year 6 national tests results over recent years. Over this time, science results have remained significantly above average and mathematics has shown a clear upward trend but English results have shown greater variation. The school has established and used strong systems for tracking pupils' progress to identify the causes of such variations. Assessments are made frequently and good attention is paid to ensuring their accuracy. The secure and accurate analysis of this data indicates that there are no significant variations relating to specific groups of pupils, including boys and girls. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are identified at an early stage and a well considered range of support is allocated to ensure that they keep up at least the same rate of progress as the other pupils.

Pupils' writing, however, remains the weakest component of their English work although the school has now put into place well targeted actions to remedy this. Successful new approaches to curriculum planning and to teaching writing includes specific identification of the main features that make writing effective, ensuring pupils are aware of how they are doing and what they need to do next. These measures are being consistently introduced by all staff throughout the school and have successfully raised pupils' awareness of how to improve. As a result, for example, pupils make good use of the resources and systems to identify important ways to improve their work. The measures are having a positive impact on the quality of writing seen in pupils' work throughout the school. The action taken has also begun to be reflected in some improvements in the school's provisional results in the most recent national tests. The progress of all pupils through the school is faster than the nationally expected rates but the most able pupils have the potential to reach higher levels still. Teachers do not always do enough to ensure that tasks are sufficiently challenging, particularly for the highest attaining pupils' writing.

The success of the actions to improve the school since the last inspection has been based on a very firm foundation of strong teamwork, which suggests that the school has good capacity to continue to improve. Within this small school, all staff take roles to review and identify where improvements can be made and evaluate success. The headteacher's extremely detailed analysis and understanding of the school shows that she knows its strengths and weaknesses well. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and is based on secure monitoring and the analysis of the detailed tracking information. The school has placed an emphasis on giving teachers and other staff the opportunity to work alongside each other in planning and teaching. This has enabled some effective sharing of good practice but has not fully developed the subject coordinators' roles in school. However, all staff contribute to continuous review of the school's effectiveness by monitoring within a clearly defined framework based on national guidance for pupils' development. Training, professional development and performance management are all successfully coordinated towards the school's planned priorities. As a result, all aspects of the school's work are kept under review and governors receive frequent updates to supplement their own training and monitoring. This allows them to make an increasingly significant contribution to the school's strategic development. The school is very conscious of its place within the local and wider community and there are good examples of close partnerships with other organisations. For example, recent close cooperation with an independently managed pre-school group has led to improved premises for both school and group and the beginnings of closer working in the future.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children join the Reception class with attainment that is broadly typical with that found nationally for children of their age. However, some are from more isolated homes and have had limited social experiences. Although they are taught in a class with Year 1 and 2 pupils, the children quickly gain confidence and settle within the class. The welcoming atmosphere and careful attention to all aspects of children's welfare ensures children quickly begin to make good progress. By the time children join Year 1, most have reached the expected levels of development for their age. There is particularly good progress in their personal development as clear expectations and well understood routines help children to gain confidence and independence. Teaching is good and activities are carefully planned to ensure all aspects of learning are adequately covered. The school has taken effective action since the last inspection

to provide better outdoor learning opportunities and these now complement the tasks that are already set within the classroom. The EYFS is managed well and this contributes to the successful provision. There are detailed and accurate records of each child's achievements that are carefully checked and regularly monitored. These are routinely used to inform planning and promote children's learning, although more use could be made of this detailed knowledge of children to help them take the next step in their learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Use information about how well pupils are doing to plan tasks, particularly in writing, that provide the right levels of challenge for pupils of different abilities.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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	1
The extent to which 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 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

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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

20 October 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Penruddock Primary School, Cumbria, CA11 0QU

Thank you very much for being so welcoming and helpful when I came to your school. You were very keen to tell me all about your school and the work you were doing. I was especially impressed to hear how you all have jobs to do. I could certainly see how the older children were proud of the way they apply for important jobs such as gardener and librarian.

You were sure that your school is good and I agree with you. It is particularly good at giving you opportunities to gain confidence and independence. Teachers give you a good range of experiences in lessons and the many visits and visitors widen your understanding of the world. The good teaching you get helps you to improve your work well all through the school.

The staff are good at working together to look carefully to see where improvements can be made and putting new ideas into practice. The teachers were right when they saw that some of you could do better in your writing. They have put some very useful ideas into place and you already know that you are already getting better at things like choosing the right words to make your sentences exciting. I have asked the school to go a bit further to make sure that you are all given tasks that will challenge each of you to do your very best work. I know how you all like a good challenge, so this should give everyone some things to try hard at and show how well you can do!

Thank you again for showing me your school. I wish you and your families the very best for the future.

Tony Painter

Lead inspector