

# Seascale Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	112163
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cumbria
<b>Inspection number</b>	325544
<b>Inspection dates</b>	22–23 April 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Sheila Mawer

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.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	152
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
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Philip Taylor
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Gillian Hartley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 January 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Crofthead Road Seascale Cumbria CA20 1LZ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01946 728403
<b>Fax number</b>	01946 721003

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

This small school serves the local village and outlying areas. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. Almost all children are from White British backgrounds. In some year groups, a well above average proportion of pupils have joined or left the school at other than the usual times. The school has Early Years Foundation Stage provision, with places for 19 Nursery children and 22 Reception children. The school holds a number of awards including Healthy School Status and Activemark. There is a privately run pre-school play group on site. This has been inspected separately.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Seascale Primary School provides its pupils with a good education. Some aspects of its work are outstanding. The key successes of the school are the excellent relationships between staff and pupils and a very welcoming ethos, linked with outstanding care, guidance and support. Pupils' personal development is outstanding. Behaviour is exemplary and pupils say that they thoroughly enjoy school and always feel safe. Their attendance is above average and they display very positive attitudes to learning. Pupils benefit considerably from excellent partnerships with other schools, the local and wider community and outside agencies. This explains why the curriculum has improved greatly from the previous inspection and why community links are very strong. Nearly all parents are very appreciative of all that the school provides and their confidence is well placed. They say, 'We couldn't wish for a better school. Our children are very happy and progressing well because the school achieves the right balance of care, development, challenge and social activities'.

Pupils achieve well and make good progress from their individual starting points. Standards by Year 6 are above average. They are not as high in writing as in other subjects, especially for more able pupils. This is because of some weaknesses in the structure and mechanics of writing, such as grammar and punctuation. Overall, though, teaching is good and provides more challenge and interest for pupils than it did at the previous inspection. Academic guidance is good; target setting and helpful marking are well established in the school. As a result, pupils know how well they are doing and how to improve. The good curriculum provides a wealth of opportunities for pupils to learn within and beyond the classroom. Strong links are made across different subjects and these give pupils opportunities to practise many basic skills and enjoy meaningful projects.

Community cohesion is planned and promoted well. Pupils grow successfully into responsible citizens through the many duties they undertake in the school. As recycling monitors, for example, they learn the important skills of living successfully in a community and raising awareness of their global responsibilities. Close links with the local community include joining the parish council to discuss improvements to the village. A link with a city school and visits to a multi-faith centre have broadened pupils' cultural, religious and ethnic experiences. Global awareness has been raised through welcoming visitors from different countries and establishing pen pals overseas. Further national and international links are being developed to enhance the already good provision. Pupils are well prepared for life ahead. The school council runs a healthy tuck shop and, through managing their own budget and ordering supplies, pupils learn important enterprise skills.

By good leadership, management and governance, the school has maintained, and in many respects, improved the good quality of provision since the last inspection. Standards have risen and subject leaders are managing improvements in their subjects more effectively. Progress in writing is not as successful because actions for improvement are not linked closely enough to raising standards.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Provision is good. Children have a settled start because they are well prepared for this stage of their learning. Home visits by staff help to allay parents' concerns and provide children with

a friendly face when they start Nursery. Children enter the Nursery with skills that are mostly in line with age-related expectations in all areas of learning. They make good progress and their attainment is often above average by the time they start Year 1. Children enjoy the 'free flow' learning inside and outside. This contributes very well to their good levels of confidence and concentration in their independent activities. As a result, personal development and well-being are good. Learning and development are effective because staff are skilled in supporting children in their play and generally provide an appropriate level of challenge. Sometimes, children work in groups with an adult. These sessions are used well to provide children with higher levels of challenge and an understanding of the basic skills, for example, to discriminate between 'b', 'd' and 'p' on a computer program. Welfare arrangements are good. This safe environment enables children to thrive. Communication with parents is generally good, although some parents of younger children feel they do not have enough information about their children's progress. The profile for monitoring each child's development is developing very well. It includes a record of the progress children are making towards the early learning goals, photographs and examples of children's work. It is planned that this will be available to parents in the near future, so that they can check their children's progress. A recently appointed Early Years Foundation Stage leader is making a marked impact on improving the quality of provision.

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

- Improve the teaching of writing to raise standards, especially for more able pupils.
- Ensure that plans to improve writing are more closely linked to raising standards.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Achievement is good. Pupils start school with skills that vary from year to year but are generally typical for their age. Pupils in the current Year 6 class are on track to achieve above average standards in reading, mathematics and science and average standards in writing. The unvalidated national test results for Year 6 in 2008, showed similar results and were above average. Pupils performed particularly well in science, where a high proportion of them exceeded the levels expected for their age. Since the last inspection standards at the end of Year 2 have generally been above average. In 2008, standards were broadly average, adversely affected by a high turnover of pupils in this class since the Reception year. Standards in the current Year 2 are also broadly average as a high proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Although pupils are making good progress through the school, writing is not as strong as other subjects and more able pupils in particular are not achieving as well as they could.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are outstanding. Pupils' excellent enjoyment of school is shown in their above average attendance. Behaviour is outstanding. Pupils take on many responsibilities and show considerable care and concern for each other, for instance, by supporting pupils sitting on the friendship bench. They develop healthy lifestyles because of the extensive sporting provision, well resourced playground and the attention given to understanding why it is important to eat wholesome foods. Pupils say they feel very safe because, for example, they understand issues relating to 'stranger danger' out of school and know exactly where to assemble in the event

of a fire. Pupils accept enthusiastically their responsibilities to improve the school community and further afield. Their Eco award and the school council's work in developing the school grounds has heightened their understanding of caring for the local environment and given them a say in the life and work of the school. Pupils are well prepared for their future lives because of their well honed social skills and their developing competence in the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT).

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers plan lessons well and pupils receive work that is well matched to their abilities. Stimulating activities, clear explanations and a good pace to most lessons keep pupils well engaged and motivated. In Year 6, for example, the teacher used different props and sound effects to set up a dramatic scene to engage pupils in writing their own settings of stories. Teaching assistants are well trained and provide good quality support, especially for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. They use the individual targets set for pupils as a clear focus for the teaching. This enables most pupils to learn well and be fully involved in the lessons. Relationships are excellent and, as a result, pupils are keen to work hard and do their best. Teachers are enthusiastically embracing all of the opportunities that the writing project is giving pupils to write more widely. However, in the teaching of literacy there is not enough focus or rigour in helping pupils to improve the mechanics and structure of writing. Grammar and punctuation are not improving at the same rate as pupils' ideas.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good with an outstanding feature in the vast range of enhancement activities provided. These are particularly well linked to local and wider communities. Residential visits and planned work that includes activity, health and democracy weeks all contribute exceptionally well to pupils' personal development and well-being. Provision for literacy, numeracy and ICT are good. The recent introduction of themes such as 'The Vikings' is proving to be a good vehicle for applying literacy skills and inspiring pupils. Pupils take part in several after-school activities that enrich the curriculum, such as gardening, chess and football. They really like some of the topics they study. For example, study of the reasons for people travelling helped to develop an understanding of the traditions and customs in other countries.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 1**

The care, guidance and support provided for pupils are outstanding and the parents' questionnaires overwhelmingly support this view. Relationships are excellent and pupils know they are valued highly in this respectful and supportive environment. Arrangements to safeguard pupils meet government requirements. Procedures are regularly reviewed and risk assessments are tackled efficiently. Careful attention is given to pupils in need of additional support and their needs are excellently met because of well targeted support from skilled teaching assistants and external agencies. Local sports clubs, for example, have a real impact on health and fitness; Seascale First Responders provide very good first aid training for pupils. The needs of vulnerable pupils are very carefully considered. Their progress is tracked both socially and academically.

Pupils' academic guidance is good. They understand their targets for improvement and older pupils routinely assess each other's work and check their progress towards their targets. Marking is very informative and provides clear points for improvement.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. The strong and enthusiastic leadership of the headteacher has created a shared vision among all staff and governors towards continued improvements. Equality of opportunity is central to this vision. The school values every child as an individual and creates an inclusive and harmonious community. Although self-evaluation is at times too positive, this is a school that knows itself well. The issues from the last inspection have been addressed successfully and there is a good capacity to build on what has already been achieved. The school is making good use of challenging targets to raise standards further but it is aware that improvements are needed in writing. At the moment, the improvement plan for writing does not clarify how planned interventions will impact on standards. The resources available to the school are used well. Several governors are new to the school. Through training, they are quickly becoming involved in the life and work of the school. They have taken on responsibility for different subject areas and are working closely with coordinators to monitor pupils' progress in these subjects. They offer appropriate support and challenge to the school and their governance is good.

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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 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?	2
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 <sup>1</sup> 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

<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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

## 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 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**

24 April 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Seascale Primary School, Cumbria, CA20 1LZ

I am writing to thank you all for the very kind welcome and help that you gave us when we inspected your school recently. Mrs Rodger and I appreciated your keenness to talk about the school and we considered all of your views when making our judgements. You will be pleased to hear that you go to a good school and some of the work is outstanding.

Your school has many strengths and here are some of them.

- Those of you in the Reception and Nursery are working very hard on your activities and learning well.
- You are achieving well by the end of Year 6 and reaching mostly better than expected standards.
- You are taught well and receive excellent care, guidance and support.
- Your personal development is outstanding and there are particular strengths in your relationships, your enjoyment of school, behaviour, feeling safe and how you work hard to make your school and the local community better.
- The headteacher, staff and governors have worked successfully to make lots of improvements since the previous inspection.
- We could see from all the lovely displays around the school how good your curriculum is. You told us how much you enjoy all of the excellent clubs, visitors and visits outside of school. We enjoyed looking at the lovely photographs of your visit to Bradford and could see how much you were enjoying yourselves learning about different religions and cultures.

We have asked the school to make some improvements to the teaching of writing, to help you reach higher standards. Some of you don't do well enough with your writing and make mistakes, particularly with grammar and punctuation. We hope you will all work very hard in lessons to improve your writing, as your teachers want you all to do really well.

Best wishes to you all in the future and good luck with the writing!

Yours faithfully

Sheila Mawer

Lead inspector