

Brough Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112177
Local Authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	325547
Inspection dates	7–8 May 2009
Reporting inspector	Suzi Clipson-Boyles

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	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	90
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	Mrs Barbara Dowson
Headteacher	Mrs Lesley Whittle
Date of previous school inspection	1 April 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Church Brough Kirkby Stephen Cumbria CA17 4EW
Telephone number	01768 341284
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one additional inspector.

Description of the school

This smaller-than-average primary school consists of an Early Years Foundation Stage class of children in Reception and three mixed-age classes. It serves a rural community of mixed private and local authority housing. Most pupils are White British. The percentage entitled to free school meals is lower than that nationally. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is slightly higher than that nationally. Pre-school provision on the site is run privately. This is inspected and reported on separately by Ofsted.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a caring and inclusive school that many pupils love to attend. It provides a satisfactory standard of education, and some aspects of its work are good. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good because of the effective care, support and guidance that they receive. A large number of parents commented in glowing terms about the school and reported to the inspector that their children are happy and very well cared for. They particularly value the open and friendly communication with staff and the exceptionally wide choice of after-school clubs for all age groups. Leadership and management are satisfactory and improving. The day-to-day running of the school is efficient and organised. The enthusiastic headteacher leads a dedicated and hard-working team of staff, and governors support the school well particularly in financial management. The teachers work closely together to ensure that children's progress is monitored and there is continuity of information from class to class, and for parents. Longer-term improvement is minimised by the large number of initiatives being introduced during a relatively short time. Priorities are not sufficiently focused on raising standards and achievement, and there is too little planned time for evaluation of impact. Despite this, there are clear signs that some improvements have made a difference this year. For example, the new writing project to help pupils work on longer and more exciting pieces of writing is gradually improving the quality of writing throughout the school. The new assessment and tracking of individual progress is used effectively to help teachers decide which pupils need additional help. The curriculum has been enriched to provide new and different opportunities to extend learning, during and after lessons. A very small minority of parents and pupils expressed discomfort with some of the recent changes, but there was no evidence to indicate that this was more widely felt or a cause for concern.

Standards are broadly average but achievement has been variable since the last inspection and remains uneven across the school. A good number of the more able pupils reach higher levels, but the middle and lower ability bands do less well than similar pupils nationally. Evidence shows that this is slowly improving and achievement is now satisfactory. In Key Stage 1 current cohorts are making satisfactory progress and standards have risen to average levels, following a decline since the last inspection. In Key Stage 2, most pupils are making satisfactory progress and standards remain in line with national levels.

The quality of teaching varies between classes and some good lessons were seen during the inspection. However, the overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. This is because where teachers provide different tasks for different ability groups this does not take sufficient account of what the pupils already know and what they need to learn next. There are too many periods of whole class teaching targeted towards the more able and pupils at an earlier stage of learning sometimes get left behind. Yet, teachers have strong skills in other aspects of their work. They plan thoughtfully to make the learning fun which means pupils are motivated and enjoy their lessons. High quality resources help to support thinking and learning. Learning support assistants are well-managed and extensively trained to high standards. The effective curriculum is enhanced with a good range of enrichment activities. Despite the lack of adequate accommodation, physical education is provided to a good level by taking the pupils to other locations, but this incurs a significant cost from the school budget and from the pupils' learning time. Pupils are well cared for and have a good awareness of healthy lifestyles and how to stay safe. Their experiences of people and places beyond the local community are extended through

the range of opportunities provided by the school, although it is not yet clear what impact this is having on their understanding of community cohesion.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children in Reception love coming to school and they make good progress. They start school from a range of starting points but skills are generally typical for their age. By the end of the year many are reaching and an increasing number exceed the levels expected for their age. This is because opportunities for learning are carefully designed alongside thorough assessments. All the statutory welfare requirements are met and children thrive in this safe, happy and caring environment. Activities are planned in ways that are meaningful to the children and areas of learning are linked through themes. During the inspection, detectives were hunting and identifying mini-beasts outside using a range of equipment, but they were also learning a lot about counting and shape through spiders' legs and webs! The learning support assistants that work in Reception are very well briefed by the teacher so that language and learning are extended at every opportunity. Leadership and management are good. Well-organised systems lead to the efficient running of provision outside and inside. There is an accurate understanding of strengths and areas for improvement. New developments also link closely to the main school, for example the identification of writing as a weaker aspect has been targeted for improvement along with the rest of the school. Where changes have been made these have had a positive impact on the children. For example, the outdoor area has been developed and improved and this has promoted improved motivation in boys' learning. Many parents expressed appreciation of the good induction arrangements and continued good communication with staff, including the helpful information they receive about their child's progress. Likewise, there are good working links with the private pre-school which are of significant benefit to the children.

What the school should do to improve further

- Establish a smaller number of priorities for improvement based on more regular analysis of information about the school's performance.
- Ensure that work is more closely tailored to the full range of learning needs so that each pupil is making progress at the right level each day.
- Review the planning and evaluation of the promotion of community cohesion so that evidence of impact becomes clearer and informs planning.
- Improve the accommodation within school for physical education.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will have a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Standards are typical for this age group at the start of Reception, and they remain average by the end of Year 6. In Key Stage 1 standards have been below average and falling since the last inspection, apart from a slight recovery in 2007, particularly for more able pupils. Inspection evidence shows that this has improved during the current academic year and standards are starting to rise again as pupils are now making satisfactory progress. At Key Stage 2, the picture is more variable. Test results in English, mathematics and science dropped to below the national averages in 2006 but have been

improving gradually and consistently since then to return to the average levels seen in 2008 tests and confirmed by inspection evidence. More able pupils achieve particularly well, but some pupils in the middle and lower ability bands are not making enough progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are making good progress since the introduction of the new tracking system which enables teachers to provide additional support at an earlier stage.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good because the school provides a supportive, caring and stimulating environment within which to learn and grow. Pupils enjoy coming here as illustrated by the good attendance. There are close working links to local churches of different denominations, helping pupils to understand faith in the community. Awareness of other religions is developing. There is much evidence of pupils reflecting thoughtfully on social, spiritual moral and cultural issues and their development in these areas is good. This is also exemplified by their good behaviour and the mature way that they are able to discuss problems and issues in class. They have a good awareness of how to stay healthy, enjoying their daily fruit and taking every opportunity to join in with the physical activities on offer. The Healthy Schools Award has recently been reaccredited, demonstrating how embedded this is into school life. Pupils say they feel safe in school and are confident that staff will always deal with bullying swiftly, sensitively and effectively. They have a good awareness of minimising risks and avoiding hazards, including how to stay safe on the Internet. Pupils enjoy the many opportunities to contribute to the school and local communities and they regularly raise funds for a large number of charities at home and abroad. Pupils work collaboratively and industriously in ways that prepare them well for their working futures, and progress in the basic skills is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching is satisfactory and in some respects it is good, enabling pupils to enjoy lessons and make reasonable progress. Classrooms are well-organised. Colourful displays of pupils' work and support materials are carefully prepared to further promote learning. For example, Year 1 and 2 pupils were fascinated by the many types of real fruits and vegetables provided for them to examine during a lively science lesson. Teachers and support staff spend time and care on ensuring that a variety of resources are prepared to a high standard and these help to motivate the pupils and focus their thinking. The teachers plan carefully how to deploy support staff and this means that care and attention is given to supporting pupils' learning. Pupils are given much encouragement in their work and this promotes positive attitudes to learning in a secure environment. Despite all this, pupils only make satisfactory progress overall because activities are not closely tailored to what pupils need to learn. Teachers' plans include different activities for ability groups, but these tend to focus on what they have to do rather than what they need to learn. Too much time is spent on whole class teaching. This often targets the higher ability pupils who respond well but pupils who are at earlier stages of learning sometimes get left behind. The quality of marking is, in most cases, extremely thorough and helps pupils to understand where they have gone wrong and what they need to do next. However, a small number of unmarked books were identified during the inspection with little evidence of written guidance from the teacher.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Most pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school because lessons are fun. Statutory requirements are met, and the school goes beyond this to provide a curriculum that is exciting and interesting. The needs of certain groups have been addressed to improve learning through the curriculum. In particular, boys have responded well to specially-designed reading resources and this has improved motivation. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or difficulties are making better progress than last year as a result of newly introduced schemes for reading, writing and mathematics. Different subjects across the curriculum are enriched effectively, for example, classes go out into the local environment at every opportunity for geography and history investigations. Visitors to the school further strengthen learning, for example the Shakespeare for Kids workshops enjoyed by Class 4. The school uses the curriculum to deliver a good programme of personal, social and health education, interweaving aspects such as healthy eating into subjects where they can be taught in meaningful ways. Likewise, the school promotes community cohesion wherever possible across the curriculum, helping pupils to develop a better awareness of their local community, including how food is prepared and served at the local pub! Visits such as the residential trip to Edinburgh help them to develop an understanding of other British communities and there are a growing number of activities to build global awareness. Accommodation for physical education in the school is inadequate but the school gets round this in a determined way. Swimming and sports take place at the nearest sports centre and dance lessons are provided in the local community hall, plus the usual outdoor activities. However, transport costs and additional time taken mean that this is not an ideal situation. Sport is further extended beyond the school hours as part of the extensive range of after school clubs provided voluntarily by committed staff. There is something for all ages and interests from eco-gardening to art. The take-up is very high and promotes positive attitudes to school and learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The committed team of adults in this school provides good quality care, guidance and support. They promote an enjoyment of learning and do all they can to ensure pupils' health and safety. The introduction of the new house-points system has encouraged good behaviour and increased motivation to learn. All arrangements for safeguarding pupils are in place. A full equalities policy helps to promote a positive culture of inclusion across the school. The school works successfully to eliminate discrimination. The absence of racist incidents shows that pupils are tolerant and understanding of one another. As a result of this well planned environment, pupils feel well cared for, safe and happy. Teachers are setting more challenging targets for each individual pupil through the good assessment and tracking system. This enables more focused support for learning for those that have fallen behind. Pupils use helpful target cards in the classroom in different subject areas to remind them of the need to improve in areas such as writing. Teachers and learning support assistants provide good one-to-one support for children in the classroom. They give encouragement and help where needed.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Day-to-day management is efficient and well organised and there are emerging strengths in strategic leadership. Communication with parents is good and there are strong links with other partners such as the on-site preschool, other local schools and learning support services. The headteacher provides an enthusiastic lead and has introduced many new initiatives since September 2008. The small team of staff works closely together and there is evidence of shared decision making. Self-evaluation is very thorough and takes account of a range of evidence, including surveys of parents and pupils. This has helped to identify areas for improvement. However, there have been too many initiatives introduced too quickly during the current academic year. This has resulted in insufficiently clear priorities, particularly on raising standards and achievement. Nevertheless, there is evidence that some of the changes are starting to make a difference. For example, the new assessment and tracking system has led to improved progress for pupils with learning difficulties and/or difficulties. Progress has improved at Key Stage 1 during the last year and standards are starting to rise in Years 1 and 2. Capacity for further improvement is therefore good. The school takes many actions to promote community cohesion, and is in the very early stages of evaluating the impact of these actions. Governors are supportive of the school and have provided a consistent steer during three changes of headteacher in four years.

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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?	3
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?	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?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	3
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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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**

12 May 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Brough Primary School, Cumbria, CA17 4EW

Thank you very much for making me so welcome during my recent visit to your school. You were helpful, friendly and kind and I was impressed with how well you behave and how much you love your lessons. Your school gives you a satisfactory standard of education and there are some things that are good. You like your teachers because they make lessons fun. All the adults in the school take great care of you so you feel safe and happy. Children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 make especially good progress which means that their work improves a lot every day. In Key Stage 2 some make better progress than others. Sometimes, when you are all taught together in a large group, some of you find it difficult to keep up. This means that you are not always learning as much as you can and some of you get behind. I have asked the teachers to plan their lessons in ways that will help you learn at different levels depending on what you are already good at.

A great number of your parents returned the questionnaires and this was very helpful to my inspection work. Most of them are really pleased with the school and they like the large number of clubs that staff provide for you after school. I wish there had been time for me to join the Lego club! A very small number of parents and pupils said they were not very happy with some of the changes. I checked this out very thoroughly and many others disagreed. I believe this problem can quickly be sorted out because I am confident that the grown-ups in your school, including the governors, are very willing to listen to problems so they can help.

Mrs Whittle has brought lots of exciting changes to the school since September. She and all the staff have been extremely busy. I have told them that they have been trying to do too much! They need to concentrate on fewer projects from now on so that they can see how successfully you are all achieving. This will help them to understand what works well and what doesn't work well. They will also be checking more closely how much you understand about people in other towns, cities and countries. Finally, I have asked them to find a way of providing you with a suitable space for physical education so that you do not have to spend so much time travelling to other places. I know that you will want to help in any way you can to make your school even better. Make sure you pass on your own ideas to your teachers, and I hope you will carry on enjoying lessons and working hard. I wish you all the very best.

Yours faithfully

Suzi Clipson-Boyles

Lead inspector