

Goodly Dale Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112191
Local Authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	325553
Inspection dates	1–2 July 2009
Reporting inspector	Lynne Read

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	79
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 Dorothy Hill
Headteacher	Mrs Maggie Cole
Date of previous school inspection	6 July 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Lake Road Windermere Cumbria LA23 2JX
Telephone number	01539 462482
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an additional inspector.

Description of the school

This small school caters for children from Windermere and Bowness in the Lake District. Pupils come from a varied range of backgrounds and most are of White British heritage. A few Asian and European heritage pupils are learning English as an additional language. The take-up of free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is around double that seen nationally and a high number have a statement of special educational need. The Early Years Foundation Stage provides part-time Nursery places in the mornings alongside full time places for children in the Reception class. In the afternoons, Reception children join the Years 1 and 2 class. Key Stage 2 consists of 2 mixed-age classes. The school has designated provision for pupils with physical disabilities. A significant number of pupils enter school part way through Key Stage 2. The school currently holds the Active mark, the Arts mark and the local authority charter mark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Goodly Dale Primary is a good school and provides good value for money. Outstanding features include the curriculum, pupils' personal development, and the pastoral care provided for them. Parents have every confidence in the school. They especially like the 'very broad and balanced curriculum' and the way that 'everyone is given the chance to shine - those who face particular challenges and the very able'.

By the end of Year 6, standards are well above average overall, but not as strong in English as in mathematics. In science, standards are significantly above average. From starting points that are broadly typical for their age, achievement is good for the Nursery and Reception children and in both key stages. The school has been working on improving the progress pupils make in writing over the year and some good improvements are evident, especially for the boys. However, these have not yet made an impact on test results.

Teaching is good overall, and there is some outstanding practice. Across the school, lessons challenge pupils' thinking, providing good opportunities for them to be active, enthusiastic learners. Provision in mathematics is particularly strong. This means that high expectations are set and older pupils are very confident in problem solving work. The outstanding curriculum is enhanced by a varied selection of visits and out-of-school clubs which inspires pupils and extends their experiences. Learning includes a strong emphasis on personal, social and health education. Pupils especially enjoy their 'philosophy for children' sessions and the Forest Schools activities provide excellent opportunities for learning in the open air. Pupils are proud of their Healthy Schools Award that recognises the good work done to help them live safe and healthy lives. Good partnerships add to the exciting range of learning opportunities. For example, pupils enjoy additional experiences in physical education and sport through links with the secondary school.

Personal development, including behaviour, is outstanding and supported by an excellent system of pastoral care. The school provides a secure, nurturing environment and pupils say they enjoy learning. They make an excellent contribution to the school community. For example, the school council is actively involved in raising funds and decision making. Older pupils act as 'buddies' to support reading for the younger ones and also to help organise playtime games. Pupils leave the school with good academic skills that prepare them well for the next stage of their education.

Management is good with effective systems for checking on provision and performance. The headteacher provides good, determined leadership and is successful in promoting good teamwork and a shared vision for excellence. As a result, everyone is committed to providing the best they can for pupils. The concerns raised at the previous inspection have been successfully addressed and there is good capacity for the school to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Home visits and informative meetings with parents ensure that children settle quickly into the Early Years Foundation Stage. They benefit from good teaching and learning. As a result, children enjoy their work; their behaviour and personal skills are excellent.

Children's development on entry to the Nursery is typical for children of their age, and they make good progress. The majority are working above expected levels by the time they enter

Year 1, although their early reading and writing skills are less strong than those in other areas. Lessons build effectively on children's prior learning and take account of their interests in order to ensure good progress and keep them well motivated. In the mornings, Nursery and Reception children work together in a small class and there is a good range of free-choice activities to develop independence. Good use is made of the outdoor classroom. During the inspection, children climbed, learned about cooking outdoors and made tree swings as part of their Forest School activities in the grounds. In the afternoons, the Reception children benefit from working alongside Key Stage 1 pupils, especially in terms of personal and communication skills. However, the range of free choice work is more limited so opportunities for them to investigate and discover are fewer. Children's welfare is promoted well. The coordinator has successfully united the team. However, current systems for checking planning and provision are not rigorous enough to ensure consistency of provision between the morning and afternoon sessions.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the improvements in writing are sustained so that achievement is as good as in reading.
- Improve the range of free choice activities provided for Reception children in the afternoon sessions.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement is good and standards are higher than average by Year 6. The small numbers involved in national assessments lead to a fluctuating pattern of results of national assessments. Attainment on entry to Year 1 is mostly above average except in early reading and writing work. Progress is good in Key Stage 1, including for the pupils who enter school at various stages during the two years. Currently, pupils are reaching above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics and have made good progress from their starting points at the end of Reception.

National test results at the end of Year 6 show a rising trend and were significantly above average in 2008 because of the very high standards in science. Current data shows good progress across Key Stage 2. Writing is improving, especially for the boys. Current assessments and completed work show that skills in spelling, grammar and punctuation have improved over the year. Pupils are confident in planning, editing and refining their writing and they make imaginative use of language. Progress is accelerating but, as yet, these improvements have not made an impact on test results. High standards in science reflect pupils' very good knowledge and well developed skills of investigation and experimenting. Overall standards are higher than average.

The school is very effective in supporting pupils who have learning or emotional difficulties and/or disabilities and those who are learning English as an additional language. Many pupils from both groups attain the expected level (Level 4) by Year 6. In addition, an above average proportion of pupils attain the higher Level 5, especially in science. There is a high incidence of pupils entering part way through their education, many of whom have experienced some difficulty in their previous schools. Once settled, they do well and often make rapid progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Personal development and well-being, including pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development, are outstanding. Pupils are effectively encouraged through good links with local churches, an excellent programme for personal and social education and an interesting programme of philosophy for children. Across the school, pupils enjoy learning, have a strong work ethic and are very confident in their own abilities. They say they feel safe, that bullying does not exist and that adults are always on hand to help sort out any disagreements. Behaviour is exemplary and pupils are very considerate of each other. Attendance is above average and punctuality is good.

The Healthy Schools award recognises pupils' excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles. They make 'healthy meals' and take part in a good range of sports clubs. The 'young citizens' scheme informs pupils about how to stay safe and ensures they are extremely well informed about safety precautions related to the internet, fire, water and electricity. Pupils play an important part in decision making through their elected school council. For example, members recently organised a car wash to raise funds for playground equipment. Pupils of all ages are eager to take responsibility for jobs around school. For example, Year 6 pupils organise and run a 'philosophy for children' club for younger pupils. These factors, together with good standards, prepare pupils very well for their future education and citizenship.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good and there is some outstanding practice. Teachers make the purpose of learning clear so pupils know what is expected of them. Introductions to lessons usually have a fast pace and include a good amount of collaborative work. This helps to enthuse pupils and extends their thinking skills. Teachers constantly assess progress and plan tasks at different levels of difficulty so pupils have the challenge or support they need. Pupils receive good feedback on how they are doing during lessons and teachers routinely include praise and useful suggestions in their marking. There are some examples, especially for the older ones, of pupils critically evaluating their own work and setting targets for themselves. This is developing very good skills of independent learning and is now being extended further across school.

Teaching assistants are well trained and experienced. They provide expert support for groups or individuals to meet specific needs which often results in rapid progress. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language have specialist support. Home languages are valued and staff often go to great lengths to translate key words. Teachers are mindful of the high numbers of boys in some year groups and find topics and books that will interest them. This is one factor underpinning the recent improvement in writing.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding and successfully promotes pupils' practical, physical, creative and personal skills alongside the academic. Excellent opportunities for physical exercise and sport are provided. Pupils enjoy competitions and have had many successes, for example, in cricket and tennis. There are extensive opportunities for creative work, such as art, music, drama

and dance. A further strength of the curriculum lies in the intervention groups and personalised learning that are very successful in catering for pupils with both emotional and learning needs. The Forest Schools initiative provides opportunities for problem solving and decision making in a safe, outdoor environment. This work also promotes other areas of learning such as communication and natural science and is described by parents as having a ‘fantastic, positive and enjoyable impact on learning’.

Enrichment for learning is outstanding and includes interesting visits, visitors and special theme events. A recent residential experience gave pupils a taste of city life and made a good contribution to their awareness of cultural diversity. A rich variety of after-school clubs is on offer. They are well attended and encourage pupils to try out new activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The guidance provided for pupils is good and pastoral care is excellent. Care, health and safety issues are paramount and procedures for safeguarding pupils meet requirements fully. Staff know pupils very well and react promptly to any concerns. Outside agencies are well deployed to provide expert help where needed, both for emotional and learning needs. Staff and children go to great lengths to integrate new pupils into the ‘school family’.

Regular assessments and the tracking of learning are well established and provide a clear picture of pupils’ progress. As a result, additional help and extra challenges are targeted effectively. Individual guidance for pupils is often useful in helping them to improve their work, especially in writing. However, the advice is not always recorded and some pupils have difficulty recalling the details. In these cases, therefore, the guidance is not as effective in taking learning forward. Staff are currently looking to develop a more effective system.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good and clearly focused on achieving high standards. The headteacher provides good leadership. Praised by parents for her ‘energy and proactivity’, she is constantly driving the school forwards. Inspection evidence confirms the excellent work done to ensure that groups of pupils, such those from different backgrounds or needs, have equal opportunities. Subject managers contribute effectively to the school’s accurate evaluation of its performance. They keep a close eye on achievement and standards and use the information collected to plan future developments. In this small school, team work is very good and staff readily share expertise and experience.

The role of the governors has developed well so they now have a secure overview of provision. They are currently developing more effective systems to monitor standards and achievement. Governance is good and all statutory requirements are met. Community cohesion is satisfactory. Involvement in local projects promotes a sense of citizenship among pupils and they have a growing awareness of global issues. For example, they completed a ‘walk for water’ and raise funds for a nursery in Rwanda. Although good practice has been in place for some time, the policy is new and has not yet been evaluated.

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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?	3

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	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 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

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	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
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**

3 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Goodly Dale Primary School, Cumbria, LA23 2JX

Thank you very much for the warm, cheerful welcome and for all the help you gave me when I came to visit your school. I thoroughly enjoyed the experience and would like to tell you what I found out.

Goodly Dale provides you with a good education and has some outstanding features. 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 families and school can be very proud of you. I enjoyed watching and hearing about all the exciting things you do at school. I saw the younger ones having lots of fun making tree swings and climbing as part of their Forest School work. I know that the juniors impressed the staff at the high school with their dance performance and I watched an interesting debate during one of your 'philosophy for children' sessions. How clever some of the Year 6 pupils have been in organising a philosophy club for younger ones! Please thank your parents for sending lots of replies to the questionnaire. They are very pleased with the school and say teachers make learning fun and that helps you to make good progress.

Those of you in the Nursery and Reception class learn well. You enjoy lots of free choice activities in the mornings that are helping you to become independent learners. I have asked your teachers to make sure that you have an equally good range of opportunities in the afternoons when you work alongside the Years 1 and 2 children. In Key Stages 1 and 2 you make good progress and by Year 6 are achieving better than average standards. Well done! In Key Stage 2 there are some pleasing improvements in writing this year, especially for the boys. I have asked your teachers to make sure that the improved progress continues so that your writing is as good as your reading.

Thank you once again for the interesting conversations I had and for letting me know your views so clearly. Good luck for the future and I'm sure you will continue to enjoy your happy school.

Yours faithfully

Lynne Read

Lead inspector