

Temple Sowerby Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112266
Local Authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	325563
Inspection date	3 July 2009
Reporting inspector	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.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	40
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 Martin Stewart
Headteacher	Mrs Barbara Key
Date of previous school inspection	1 March 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Temple Sowerby Penrith Cumbria CA10 1RZ
Telephone number	01768 361512

Age group	3–11
Inspection date	3 July 2009
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Fax number

01768 361512

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

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

- the progress pupils are making through the school and especially in writing
- whether personal development is outstanding
- the quality of academic guidance
- what improvements have been made to the curriculum since the previous inspection and if writing is given a high enough focus
- how well leadership and management are tackling improvements.

Evidence was collected from lesson observations, the scrutiny of pupils' work, assessment information and the school's self-evaluation. Discussions were held with staff, governors and pupils, and questionnaires returned by parents were considered. A range of documentation was also examined. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified. These have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

All of the pupils attending this very small village school are from White British families. A broadly average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average and a very high proportion of pupils have a statement of special educational need. There is Early Years Foundation Stage provision for Reception children, who share a classroom with Key Stage 1 pupils. Numbers starting in Reception vary considerably each year. A very high proportion of pupils joins or leaves the school at other than the usual times. The school holds a number of awards including Artsmark and Activemark. The privately run Nursery on site is inspected and reported upon 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: 2

The school continues to provide a good education for its pupils. It has made good improvements since the previous inspection, particularly in strengthening personal development and the curriculum. The school is at the centre of the local community. A planned barbeque for the village is just one example of how the school is engaging strongly with the community. The school successfully overcomes the school's rural isolation, by working very effectively with different partners to plan and promote good community cohesion both locally and further afield. This adds to the rich curriculum. Pupils enjoy working together as a whole school, particularly on topics such as the Victorians when subjects are linked together and learning is made more purposeful. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to write more widely across the curriculum. After-school activities, visits and visitors are often shared with other schools. This has a strong, positive impact on pupils' engagement with others, helping them to understand what they hold in common and valuing their differences. Links are developing with two city schools in the United Kingdom and there is a well-established partnership with a school in Tanzania. These links are contributing well to pupils' understanding of the wider world. For example, when pupils study comparative religions, they visit various places of worship to extend their understanding of different faiths, cultures and ethnic groups.

Personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils are very well supported through excellent pastoral care and outstanding relationships. Well organised links with outside agencies provide targeted support for the most vulnerable pupils and those who are new to the school, helping them to settle smoothly. Particular attention is paid to ensure that all procedures and practices for safeguarding meet government requirements. Consequently, pupils feel very safe and happy in this caring ethos. Their thorough enjoyment of school is reflected in above average levels of attendance. Most pupils clearly understand how to look after themselves. They respond very positively to the school's promotion of healthy foods and regular exercise. Year 6 pupils recently prepared a healthy lunch for local residents, using vegetables grown in the school garden. The school day starts with exercises, to prepare pupils physically and mentally for the day ahead. Pupils have drawn up their own behaviour policy. They clearly respect the expectations they have set themselves, as their thoughtful behaviour is exemplary and makes a strong contribution to their good learning in lessons. Older pupils provide excellent role models for younger pupils as buddies and school councillors. The school council thrive on their responsibilities and have made a real difference to school life. Their decision making has meant that the library is now accessible at break times and pupils organise their own fundraising days. With their mature social skills and good academic progress, pupils are prepared successfully for the next stage of their lives.

Pupils achieve well from starting points that fluctuate widely each year. This is because year groups are very small and many pupils start at times other than Reception. Pupils in the school are making good progress from their different starting points. Standards by Year 2 have varied widely over the years, but overall, have been broadly average. Current standards from the latest teacher assessments in Year 2 are above average in reading and mathematics and broadly average in writing. By Year 6, results in the national tests have generally been above or well above average over the past few years. In the current Year 6, unvalidated test results show standards that are above average in reading, mathematics and science, although writing is not as strong. In 2008, results in teacher assessments and tests by Year 2 and Year 6 were below average. However, these pupils made good progress in relation to their starting points and

included a high number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and several pupils who joined the school during Key Stage 2.

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers organise lessons well using imaginative resources to engage all learners. A history lesson in Key Stage 2 was brought alive when pupils acted out the story of the Armada and considered the implications if the invasion had been successful. The teacher's delivery was very confident and imaginative and pupils thrived and enjoyed the challenging task. Effective use is generally made of assessment information, especially in mathematics. Teaching assistants are used flexibly to focus on groups who require additional support, enabling pupils to make good gains in their learning. Academic guidance is generally good and most pupils know their targets for improvement. Marking is helpful, but the targets to improve weaknesses in the new scheme to teach writing are not always reviewed regularly enough with pupils to accelerate the learning.

Leadership and management are good and there is a good capacity to improve. The headteacher, staff and governors work together in fruitful partnership and set a clear direction for the school. The headteacher manages her considerable teaching commitment and leadership role with skill and dedication. Although staff numbers are very small, subject leaders take on board some monitoring roles. They often work in partnership with other small schools to share good practice. Self-evaluation is accurate and target setting is realistic and challenging. The school improvement plan accurately identifies the strengths and weaknesses in the school. There are however, too few planned actions with measurable outcomes, especially in writing to enable effective monitoring and evaluation to take place. Governance is good. Governors focus on many issues that are improving provision. They improve their effectiveness through training and this enables them to be both supportive and challenging. The finance committee works closely with the headteacher to ensure good financial management. Resources are use effectively. The very good programme of school refurbishment has been managed well and has considerably enhanced the learning environment. Parents are exceptionally happy with the school and their responses have been overwhelmingly positive. A typical comment, which says, 'The school has a very special quality in that it knows every child as an individual and fulfils their needs', is fully justified.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Procedures for introducing children to the school build strong links with parents and prepares children well for their learning. As a result, they settle quickly into school life. The Reception children are taught alongside Key Stage 1 pupils. This arrangement works well in developing the children's social skills as they follow the good example of the older pupils. Their personal development is outstanding. They are happy, enthusiastic learners and behaviour is excellent. Welfare arrangements are first rate. This very safe and supportive environment enables children to thrive in their learning. At the beginning of the day they choose their own activities. This contributes strongly to their confidence and concentration. Children entered the current Reception Year with skills that were typical for their age, but this varies considerably from year-to-year. This year they are set to reach above average standards by the start of Year 1. Children make good progress in Reception from their different starting points and achieve well. Teaching is good because adults have a strong understanding of how young children learn. They plan varied and imaginative activities and their story telling skills are inspirational. The children listened spellbound to the story of 'The journey' and then became totally engaged in very meaningful activities, making boats and discussing their own imaginary journeys. The

outdoor area is being developed further. It is shared with the private Nursery and while space is limited, the recent building of a canopy has extended its use throughout the year. Leadership and management are good. Progress is measured effectively through the use of individual 'Learning Journeys.' These help the staff to match their support correctly to the developing needs of the children.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing for pupils through the regular review of their targets and more opportunities for them to write across the curriculum.
- Ensure that the planned actions in the school's development plan can be effectively measured through monitoring and evaluation and that they lead to improvement, especially in writing.

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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?	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?	1
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	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?	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**

4 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Temple Sowerby CofE Primary School, Cumbria, CA10 1RZ

Thank you all for your warm welcome when we came to visit your school recently. In a very busy week for you all with sports and performances you still found time to talk to us about your school. The school council in particular helped us to reach our judgements about your personal development. I am sure you will be pleased to learn that you go to a good school and that your personal development is outstanding.

These are some of the best things about your school.

- Your achievement is good and standards are above average.
- We were very impressed with the help you gave to the Nursery children starting in September at lunchtime. You are all very caring pupils and this has helped to make your personal development outstanding.
- Your behaviour is excellent. We know your teachers are very proud of the way you conduct yourselves in such a sensible way, so well done everyone.
- Those in Reception have made good progress because you all work hard.
- Your teachers and other adults have taught you well. It was good to hear you say that the learning is fun. You have all made good progress and by attending regularly, this has also helped you do well.
- The headteacher, staff and governors have all been successful in giving you a good education.
- You all talked enthusiastically about the activities you really enjoy in school. The curriculum you receive is rich and it makes the learning very interesting.

Although some of you are doing well with writing, your school could help you all to do even better by:

- reviewing your targets in writing more often to help you improve more quickly and giving you further opportunities to write in different subjects
- finding ways to check closely on whether the actions that have been taken to help you improve your writing have been successful.

I know Year 6 will be very sorry to leave Temple Sowerby School. Good luck at your new schools. Best wishes to those of you returning in September and remember to work hard on your writing.

Yours faithfully

Sheila Mawer

Lead inspector