

Wiggonby C of E School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112309
Local Authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	325573
Inspection date	6 February 2009
Reporting inspector	Dave Byrne

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 aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	44
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 Zoe Ferguson
Headteacher	Mrs Elizabeth Daly
Date of previous school inspection	13 June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Wiggonby Wigton Cumbria CA7 0JR
Telephone number	01697 342752
Fax number	01697 342752

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

This inspection carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

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

- whether the quality of teaching and learning meets the needs of all pupils
- whether the curriculum consistently meets the wide range of ages and levels of development of pupils in each class
- the quality of assessment and its contribution to guiding pupils to make progress
- the effectiveness of strategies to bring about school improvement and develop the school's capacity to improve in future.

Evidence was gathered from performance data and other school documentation, observations of teaching and learning, the work produced by pupils, parents' questionnaires and discussions with pupils, staff and governors. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail. The inspectors found that the judgements made in the school's self-evaluation form were justified and these have been included, where appropriate, in this report.

Description of the school

The school is smaller than average. Pupils are taught in two classes one of which includes children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. It serves a relatively isolated rural community. Virtually all pupils are of White British backgrounds and none requires support for English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils identified with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is currently increasing and is above average. A below average percentage of pupils are eligible for free school meals.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. Strong leadership by the headteacher is improving the school and raising standards. Pupils' personal development is good and they reach above average academic standards. It is a much valued part of the local community and excellent links with other schools add considerable benefit to pupils' learning. The levels of personal support and care are excellent and pupils' safeguarding is maintained at all times. The large majority of parents have confidence in the school and praise the family ethos that pervades it.

Pupils benefit from good teaching and a lively and imaginative curriculum. These, coupled with the caring and secure environments within school, help pupils to do well. Assessment is used effectively by teachers to match work to pupils' abilities. Pupils are fully aware of their own strengths and areas for improvement and they understand their targets for improvement in future. They make good progress across the school, and reach targets which match their abilities. Standards can vary due to the small numbers within groups and the impact this has on statistics. However, inspection findings are that pupils achieve well in their time in school. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 have typically been above average although in 2008, results were average. In Key Stage 2, standards in English, mathematics and science are generally above average. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is of a good quality. It means that all pupils are fully included in school life and achieve well in relation to their individual targets.

Despite the small nature of the school, effective strategies adopted by the headteacher and staff mean that pupils gain a wide range of experiences beyond the standard curriculum. Very useful links with other schools enable pupils to participate in activities such as sport and the arts. Good links with a nearby high school adds to the quality of sports teaching and as well as enabling the more able pupils to experience challenging activities in mathematics. Pupils not only develop well above average skills of writing, numeracy and mathematics but also develop the confidence to perform investigations in science, develop a basic knowledge and understanding of French and become confident and proficient in using information and communication technology (ICT).

Pupils are well prepared for their next stage of education. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. As they move through school, pupils become confident and caring individuals. Behaviour is excellent at all times and pupils say they never feel threatened or intimidated. Attendance is good. They love school and particularly like being challenged with practical tasks of the sort used in science and design and technology. Pupils have a good sense of safety and know the choices required to stay healthy. At play and during lessons, older pupils watch out for others. It is encouraging to see the way older pupils take care of younger ones for example, when serving and tidying away during lunch. Pupils' views are respected. This adds to the strong sense of community which pervades the school.

The school is well managed and led, has the support of parents and has forged excellent links with the community. It has improved since the last inspection due to the drive and determination of the headteacher, the dedication of staff and the success in tackling areas of underperformance. Much has been done to improve the accommodation which is of a high quality. The curriculum has been extended with new initiatives to improve writing and help pupils who find reading and numeracy difficult. The high quality of teaching has been maintained in Key Stage 1 and improved in Key Stage 2 and assessment is now much better and more

effective. The school demonstrates a good capacity to continue to move forward in future. Governance is satisfactory and improving. Good liaison with the local authority has resulted in governors being much more involved in school life, and making sure all statutory requirements are met. The school has an accurate view of its own strengths and weaknesses. The quality of planning for school improvement, however, lacks the necessary rigour to set out as clearly as possible the areas for development. Whilst school improvement plans are shared with all stakeholders, they are not always fully understood by them. Resources are carefully managed and the budget is supplemented by significant sums raised by parents and the tenacious pursuits of grants as well as by the trust set up in the school's name. The headteacher recognises the challenge of broadening pupils' knowledge and understanding of the wider global community. Many initiatives are taken to do this including involving pupils raising funds for communities in Africa. The school is in the early stages of developing clear planning strategies for promoting community cohesion and for evaluating the impact of such events on pupils' attitudes.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The Early Years Foundation Stage is well managed and gives children a good start to school life so that they achieve well. Close links with the on-site playgroup, and with prospective parents, means that children settle in quickly to school. Great care is taken to keep children secure so that they feel safe. Children start school with levels of development that are typical for their age although in some years they can be lower than typical. Whilst children generally have good levels of personal, social and emotional development, many have difficulties with aspects of language and in particular speech. Good leadership and management ensure that provision is well targeted to each individual child. Staff know each child very well and tailor activities well to meet the children's different needs. Good attention is given to developing children's understanding of sounds, words and letters as well as of basic mathematical development. Staff work hard to talk with children so that their language improves and opportunities to work with older pupils adds to their learning. Practical, fun activities capture children's interest and make them want to learn. Learning is fun and children have many practical activities, both inside and out and experience a wide range of activities suited to their learning needs and areas of interest. Pupils make good progress in their time in Reception and make good improvements in their communication, language, literacy and mathematical skills. They also develop a secure knowledge and understanding of the world around them and make good strides in improving their creative and physical development.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the rigour of school improvement planning and ensure that strategies are understood by all stakeholders.
- Devise and implement a strategy for promoting community cohesion, and monitor its impact on pupils' attitudes and understanding.

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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?	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 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?	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	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?	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	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**

9 February 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Wiggonby C of E School, Cumbria, CA7 0JR

It was a privilege to spend a day with you and to share in your lessons and talk with you. Your school is a good school which does a good job in preparing you for your future education. You are taught well and as a result you achieve well in English, mathematics and science.

Lessons seem fun and you talked with great enthusiasm about the practical things you do in science. Your standards of reading, writing and mathematics are above average and the way you use targets in Key Stage 2 helps you to move forward and improve. The many visits you go on and the links with others schools add very much to the standard of lessons you receive in class. These help you to learn well.

Your school is very caring; indeed, there is a supportive family atmosphere. Staff keep you safe at all times and your behaviour is excellent. It is good that you take such good care of each other and look out for younger ones. You act sensibly and safely and know how to stay fit and healthy.

The school is steadily improving under the guidance of your headteacher. There is a clear capacity to improve further too with your help. There are two things though that would add to the quality of education you receive. Firstly, the school needs to consider how it can link together what it does to widen your knowledge and understanding of global issues. Secondly, we have suggested that your staff think of better ways of planning for school improvement and keeping a close check on how well this is working.

I wish you all the very best for your future.

Yours sincerely

Dave Byrne

Lead inspector