

Ireleth St Peter's Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112415
Local Authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	325601
Inspection date	6 March 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 aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	82
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	Rev Allan Mitchell
Headteacher	Mrs Janine Pierce
Date of previous school inspection	1 June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Kirkby Road Ireleth Askam-in-Furness Cumbria LA16 7EY

Age group	4–11
Inspection date	6 March 2009
Inspection number	325601

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Age group	4-11
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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:

- how well more able pupils are achieving in Key Stage 1
- the quality of provision in Early Years Foundation Stage
- how successfully the school fulfils its duty to promote community cohesion.

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 inspectors 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

Almost all of the pupils attending this small village school are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average, while the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. The school has Early Years Foundation Stage provision. There are places for 16 children in a Reception class shared with Year 1. Numbers on roll have doubled over the past few years. Over a quarter of pupils attend from outside the school's catchment area. A very high proportion of pupils enter the school at times other than Reception. The school has gained a number of awards including Healthy Schools Status and Activemark.

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. Some of its provision is outstanding. At the heart of the school's success is the exemplary leadership of the headteacher. She has managed the significant growth in pupil numbers with great talent and vision. The result is a spacious and highly stimulating learning environment, where pupils achieve well and are exceptionally well cared for. Parents have a very good opinion of the school. They say, 'It's a fantastic school and provides our children with all that they need to succeed academically and to be happy, healthy and responsible individuals'.

Pupils achieve well by Year 6, from starting points that vary from below average to above average. This is because year groups are small and many pupils start at times other than Reception. Progress in Key Stage 2 is excellent. For the past three years, results in national tests by Year 6 have been well above average in English and mathematics and exceptionally high in science. Pupils also perform very well at the higher levels. Standards remain high in the current Year 6. None of these pupils started in Reception, but they are prospering as staff are keenly aware of their needs and circumstances. In the drive to maintain high standards, challenging targets are often exceeded in Key Stage 2. Standards are broadly average by Year 2 and progress is satisfactory in Key Stage 1. Results in teacher assessment have shown a slow upward trend over the past few years. More able pupils are not achieving well enough yet in Key Stage 1 as too few of them reach the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics.

Excellent relationships form a strong basis in the good teaching. Through stimulating activities and opportunities to work independently, pupils are eager learners. Their problem-solving skills are promoted particularly well in practical tasks and through searching questions. Pupils say they really enjoy this kind of work and it leads to impressive results in science. In Key Stage 2, assessment is used effectively to ensure that work is well suited to individual needs. A lesson on probability in the upper juniors, clearly demonstrated the right challenge for pupils of different abilities through every stage of the learning. Pupils were strongly engaged throughout the lesson and made excellent progress. In Key Stage 1, expectations are not always high enough in setting suitably challenging work for more able pupils and this slows their progress. Overall, pupils experience a good, exciting curriculum that is adapted to meet their needs. There is a strong focus on promoting the basic skills of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum to keep standards high. Outstanding facilities outdoors are used extensively to make the learning relevant and exciting. Excellent enrichment activities, including themed weeks on health and safety and an extensive variety of clubs after school add much to pupils' enjoyment and their good achievement.

Pupils know they are valued highly in this loving and supportive environment. They all have a named adult who they can turn to for help and support. Procedures to safeguard pupils fully meet requirements. The introduction of a walking bus has reduced traffic congestion around the school and made travel to school much safer and healthier for pupils. The school has excellent links with specialist agencies. Their support is invaluable for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Skilled teaching assistants successfully boost the good progress made by these pupils through early intervention and the effective delivery of good programmes of work. The quality of care, guidance and support is good overall. Pastoral care is a strength, contributing greatly to pupils' outstanding personal development and well-being. Academic guidance is satisfactory. Key Stage 2 pupils are well informed about their progress. Marking is helpful and pupils are keenly involved in the target-setting process, encouraging them to aim

high and improve. In Key Stage 1, marking is also helpful, but targets are not child-friendly. Pupils say they find it difficult to understand their targets and are unsure of how to improve.

The outstanding attention paid to pupils' personal development results in them feeling safe and very happy. They love their teachers and most say that the school is perfect. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Pupils have first-rate attitudes towards their learning, attendance is above average and behaviour is exemplary. This creates a very positive atmosphere in the school. The very good understanding pupils have of healthy lifestyles is used to plan healthy menus at lunchtime. Attendance at sporting clubs after school is excellent. The use of specialist coaches is building important skills and keeping pupils fit and active. Pupils make an excellent contribution to the life of the school. School councillors enjoy their responsibilities in seeking sponsorship for school improvements and charity events. Older pupils are outstanding role models in supporting younger pupils as play leaders and buddies. Pupils' success in reaching high standards and acquiring mature personal skills ensures excellent preparation for their future learning.

In good leadership and management there is a shared vision among all staff and governors towards continued improvements. Weaknesses from the last inspection have been addressed very successfully. The school's evaluation of its own performance is accurate, indicating how well it knows itself. It is moving forward purposefully, knowing there are still areas of weakness to address in Key Stage 1. Subject leaders play an effective role in monitoring the school's performance and sharing good practice. Work to promote community cohesion is good and well planned and monitored. Pupils make an excellent contribution to the school and are at the heart of the local community. Recently the village and visitors as far away as New Zealand celebrated with the school its 400th anniversary. A link with a city primary school is giving pupils the opportunity to broaden their cultural and ethnic experiences. The school's commitment to expanding global links is demonstrated by its achievement of the International School Award. Governors challenge the school well through their monitoring of the curriculum and standards. They bring a wide range of expertise to their roles and are fully involved in the strategic direction of the school. With strong and effective leadership and management in the school, the capacity for further improvement is good.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. In the last few years, children have started in Reception with skills that are below those typical for their age. They make good progress and nearly all reach broadly average levels of attainment by the start of Year 1. Leadership and management are good, with a strong emphasis on providing excellent care and welfare. This helps the children to develop very positive attitudes to school and settle quickly to their learning. Behaviour is outstanding and demonstrated in the respect the children have for each other. Key Stage 2 pupils often join the Reception class to act as 'reading buddies'. This helps to foster a real interest in reading from an early age. Within a stimulating environment there is a good choice of activities to support the different areas of learning both indoors and outdoors. These activities provide a good balance of teacher led tasks and choice for the children to develop their own ideas. Through good teaching and a thorough tracking of the children's progress, staff respond effectively to individual needs. The advantage of sharing the classroom with Year 1 enables some flexibility in groupings. For example, on occasions the gifted and talented children in Reception join Year 1 for some extension work. At the moment there is

not enough evidence of children's work on display to help them to share and celebrate their successes and achievements across the curriculum.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that expectations in the teaching and learning of more able pupils in Key Stage 1 are more closely linked to their capabilities to raise their standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Set targets for pupils in Key Stage 1 that they can understand so they can become more involved in knowing how well they are doing and how to improve.

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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	1

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**

9 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ireleth St Peter's CofE Primary School, Cumbria, LA16 7EY

Thank you all for the very warm welcome you gave to us both when we visited your school recently. We came to find out how well you were doing. You all helped us to know your school better through the very friendly way you talked to us in lessons and at break times. I am sure that you will be pleased to know that you go to a good school that has some outstanding features.

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

- Most of you are learning well and some of you are making excellent progress.
- By the end of Year 6, you are reaching high standards and achieving well.
- The headteacher has worked exceptionally hard with the staff and governors to make your school successful.
- You are taught well and everyone in school cares for you greatly.
- Almost every aspect of your personal development is outstanding, including your behaviour, working very hard in lessons and keeping healthy.
- You told us how much you love everything about school. We could see why because the building and grounds are so exciting and the learning is made fun through visits, visitors and lots of clubs.
- We saw how exceptionally well you all get on together. It was great to see you keeping fit and playing safely together in the adventure playground.
- It was a pleasure to meet so many polite and responsible pupils. You are a real credit to the school. It was clear how proud you are to be school councillors, playground pals, part of the green team and buddies.

We have asked the school to make one or two things better.

- Those of you in Key Stage 1 who find writing, reading and tasks in mathematics quite easy will be given some harder work to challenge you more and help you to make more progress.
- In Key Stage 1 you will all be given targets that you can understand so you can become more involved in knowing how well you are doing and how to improve.

Good luck to you all in the future.

Yours faithfully

Sheila Mawer

Lead inspector