

Flimby Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112421
Local Authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	325602
Inspection date	12 December 2008
Reporting inspector	Andrew Scott

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	Foundation
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	0
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	15
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Jimmy Nelson
Headteacher	Mr Mike Cunningham
Date of previous school inspection	1 October 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Rye Hill Road Flimby Maryport Cumbria CA15 8PJ
Telephone number	01900 812264
Fax number	01900 816778

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors, who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- the achievement by children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)
- the achievement of boys and more able pupils
- the effectiveness of the school's development planning.

Evidence was gathered from observations of lessons, analyses of pupils' work, performance data, parents' questionnaires and the school's documentation, and from discussions with pupils, staff and governors. 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, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This is a small school in a coastal village which has considerable social and economic disadvantage. Almost all pupils come from White British families. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. The school has gained several awards, including the Healthy Schools Award and the Activemark for sport.

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. All staff are strongly committed to pupils' welfare and this is at the forefront of their thoughts and actions. Pupils rightly feel secure and valued in school, so they relax and enjoy their learning. They get off to a particularly good start in the EYFS. The school has lost a little momentum in recent years but has recovered well and there is every sign that it is now in a good position to improve further.

Pupils enter with skills and knowledge that are well below those expected of three-years-olds and leave at Year 6 with standards that are broadly average. They achieve well overall. In Key Stage 1, standards dropped for a while and were quite low in all subjects. Following a concerted effort, standards were much better in 2008, although still below average. Standards in Key Stage 2 have tended to be average. Year 6 national test results dipped in 2008 because this year group had particularly low standards when they were in Year 2. The progress of these pupils was good over time, nevertheless.

Consistently good teaching means that pupils in the current Years 2 and 6 are on track to achieve as well as in 2008, if not better. Teachers are well organised and plan effectively. They establish a good rapport with pupils and appreciate their efforts. As a result, pupils behave well and concentrate hard; little time is lost during lessons. Most pupils enjoy their work. One excited boy, reflecting on his literacy lesson, said, 'Can we do literacy after break as well, Miss?' However, not all boys are so enthusiastic about work and the school has found it hard to motivate them all to acquire a good work ethic. There has been some improvement but there is still some way to go. In addition, more able pupils do not always make as much progress as they should. Lessons are not routinely stimulating or challenging enough; not all teachers are fully aware of how children learn in different ways.

The curriculum is good, notably in the support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and in personal, social and health education. Extra activities, visits and special themed weeks add a vital dimension to pupils' experiences. There are some good links between subjects that support literacy and numeracy but teachers do not maximise all such opportunities. Subject targets are not always focused enough to show pupils how to improve, but marking is frequently helpful and supportive.

Sensitive work by teachers and teaching assistants greatly benefit the personal development of vulnerable pupils. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils is good, as is the quality of care they receive. Health and safety issues are robust and safeguarding systems are fully in place. Pupils have some concerns about occasional bullying but they know adults take all concerns seriously. Pupils are generally considerate around school, and are responsible. Their adoption of a healthy lifestyle, for example, is good. Their voice is important to the school's development, especially through the school council. Their links with the community are strong, exemplified by their allotment, their own racing pigeon and the rugby league visitors. Links with the wider world are developing through a good approach to promoting community cohesion. Attendance is satisfactory; the school is doing everything it reasonably can to tackle unnecessary absences.

Good leadership in the school is spearheaded by a caring and dedicated headteacher, very well supported by the deputy headteacher. Their good philosophy of education is shared by all staff and governors, and is involving parents more and more. Many parents indicated their appreciation of the school through their questionnaires. They particularly praised the warm

atmosphere of the school, the approachability of staff and the quality of teaching. One wrote, 'I wouldn't want my child going to any other school.' Governors are an integral part of the school's development and their expertise is helpful with, for instance, finance and building maintenance.

The school has the right priorities to move forward; progress over time has been good. It has maintained its qualities from the last inspection and has improved various aspects, including the EYFS, parental links and support for pupils with special needs. However, it has not fully resolved all its issues. This is mainly because its improvement plans are not based enough on skilful analyses and are not linked tightly to outcomes for pupils.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision in the EYFS is good and improving. The new leadership is very good. The efficient organisation, robust welfare arrangements and close teamwork among staff give children a good start to school. The systems for assessing children's progress are excellent. Everything that children do is noted and scrupulously recorded so that work can be carefully planned to meet their needs. The curriculum is good and allows free flow between the inside and outside learning areas, whatever the weather. The giant umbrella is an inspiration. There is a good range of activities and some that are very stimulating. A story about African animals, for example, that featured tropical fruit such as mangoes and guavas, broadened the children's knowledge and widened their eyes. The tasting afterwards was an even better experience.

Children develop very well in all aspects. From low starting points, they achieve well although levels of development remain below average by the end of Reception, especially in language, mathematical development and knowledge of the world. Teaching is good, often very good. There is a lovely atmosphere and a close rapport between children and all staff. This enables children to work productively on their own, whilst benefiting from clear direction and sensitive guidance from staff. Behaviour is good and children develop independence, for example, by selecting their own fruit snack and recording their choice. Good links with parents are evident in the impressive homework books that successfully encourage parents to support learning at home.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that all pupils benefit from a consistently good level of stimulus and challenge, especially boys and more able pupils.
- Improve management by ensuring that development planning is rooted firmly in clear analyses of strengths and weaknesses and that action plans are more closely linked to pupils' achievement and personal development.

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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	3
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	3
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?	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	3
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**

15 December 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Flimby Primary School, Cumbria, CA15 8PJ

I am writing to thank you for the warm welcome you gave to Mr Stafford and me when we recently inspected your school. As you know, we came to see how well your school was doing and we were very grateful for your opinions and those of your parents. I would like to tell you what we found out.

We think yours is a good school. You have a good start in Nursery and Reception, and you achieve well throughout the school. Standards have been quite low by Year 2 recently, but progress is now much better. Standards by Year 6 are generally much as they should be for eleven-year-olds. You benefit from good teaching that rightly focuses on literacy and numeracy, but there is plenty of scope to do other things outside the classroom. Your allotment, for example, sounds like a fruitful activity. Teachers are often good at giving you helpful comments in their marking.

We are concerned that some boys do not do as well as girls. The school has been aware of this for some time and has worked hard to resolve it but not wholly successfully. In addition, not all of you receive enough challenge in your work. We have therefore asked the school to give everyone work that excites you and that is difficult without being too hard. We think that you would respond well to this but it is important that you tell your teachers what interests you.

The school is a safe place for you. You feel valued and so grow in confidence. You behave well mostly, and are kind to one another in lessons and in the playground. It is good that you are improving your diet and becoming more active. The visiting rugby league players should be inspiration enough. We like the way you are involved with the village, and we hope that you learn more and more about the big wide world beyond Flimby. The headteacher, all staff and governors work hard to improve the school and are doing a good job. They are planning even more improvements. These plans are good but we have asked the school to make sure they are all just right for your needs.

I wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Scott

Lead inspector