

Netherton Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112137
Local Authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	337850
Inspection dates	15–16 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Sue Sharkey

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	108
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Derek Thornthwaite
Headteacher	Mrs Lynn Millington
Date of previous school inspection	19 June 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited four lessons taught by four teachers. They also held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils and a discussion with the local authority school adviser. They observed the school's work, and looked at the schools system for tracking pupils' progress, pupils' books, safeguarding documents, key policies, assessments. Inspection questionnaires were received from 55 parents and carers and also staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- whether assessment sufficiently challenges higher attaining pupils
- whether actions taken have improved the progress of pupils' writing
- whether monitoring has impacted on teaching, learning and assessment
- how Early Years Foundation Stage staff use curricular plans to make full use of the outdoors.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average size school. The proportion of pupils entitled to a free school meal is above average and almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities is below the national average.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Netherton Infants is a good school. Some aspects of its work are outstanding including care, guidance and support and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Parents and carers rightly feel that this is an extremely caring school where pupils' personal development is given a high priority. The school is an energetic, cohesive community, where staff and pupils value and respect each other. The school's evaluation of its own performance is accurate and actions taken to improve achievement have a positive impact showing that the school has good capacity to improve.

Throughout the whole school, good teaching and the good curriculum ensures that pupils progress well. This includes those for whom English is an additional language and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Some pupils reach above average standards by the end of Year 2, particularly in reading and mathematics. The school has a number of strategies in place to improve achievement in writing and these are proving to be successful. The school plans an engaging curriculum which enables pupils to acquire sound basic skills and good independent learning skills. Pupils are excited when they talk about all the things they enjoy in school, as well as in the local and wider community. Local and wider links are strong, but there are fewer opportunities for pupils to explore the richness and diversity of British culture.

The school is extremely successful at helping pupils to feel safe. Year 2 pupils happily take on responsibilities, carrying out tasks in school, such as taking out the first aid kit at break times and acting as buddies. Provision for the promotion of healthy living is first-class. Pupils confirm this when talking confidently about staying healthy through the food they eat and by taking plenty of exercise. Pupils have opportunities to use information and communication technology (ICT), but there is not always a wide range of technology available to support and extend their learning. Teachers are adept at using a good range of teaching styles to stimulate pupils and this is helping them to improve their writing. However, there are occasions in lessons when the pace is slow and this means that some pupils lose concentration and drift off task. Excellent links with the community contribute much to pupils' learning. As a result of outstanding partnership with parents and carers, last year the school initiated a breakfast club. This is now well-established and very popular. More recently a toddler group has been set up and is led by two of the schools senior teaching assistants. Parents and carers are pleased with this service and there is already a growing demand.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and improve achievement, by:

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- ensuring there is always a rapid pace in lessons so that pupils are constantly motivated
- ensuring that information and communication technology resources, include new technology and are used across the curriculum to maximise learning.
- Improve pupils' opportunities to explore the richness and diversity of the British culture.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress from their starting points, which are usually well below those typical for four-year-olds. As a result, by the time they leave Year 2, standards are above the national average. The school has a range of strategies in place to improve writing. These are proving to be successful and recent assessments indicates that pupils' good achievement in reading, writing and mathematics is on course to be repeated again this year. Pupils' enjoyment of learning is evident throughout the school. They are confident learners who are keen to talk about their work and share their experiences. Pupils say teachers help them to learn and prepare them well for their next stage in education. Lessons are fun and fire pupils' enthusiasm. Much of their learning is through practical activities building on pupils' skills whilst developing speech and language as well as social skills. For example, pupils were eagerly looking for repetition when reading *The Three Bears*, whilst extending their knowledge when asked to find phrases in the story. In another class, younger children were enjoying introducing 'wow' words into their sentences and sharing them with friends.

Teachers seize on opportunities for pupils to talk together with partners or in small groups to help to extend their speaking and listening skills. Pupils enjoy these occasions, showing that they are able to take turns and respond to each others' opinions successfully. Pupils' behaviour throughout the school is good. They have positive attitudes and their enjoyment of learning is a key factor in their above average attendance. This is a happy school where pupils genuinely care for each other. They feel safe and secure and say that adults care for them and will always help them. Pupils are extremely kind and polite; they know the difference between right and wrong and the importance of helping others. Pupils participate in the school council, some developing the skills to enable them to take on a position, such as the secretary. Pupils say that talking to the town's Mayor has helped them to carry out their role. Pupils develop excellent awareness of taking responsibilities in the school and wider community. Pupils say that they enjoy the harvest event when they raise funds for charity.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Pupils make good progress through school because the quality of teaching and learning is good and sometimes outstanding. Teaching is enhanced by the welcoming, well-resourced classrooms, which are supportive to learning. Strong features of lessons include excellent relationships, imaginative planning and astute questioning by teachers and teaching assistants which challenges all pupils and invites extended responses. Teaching assistants are skilfully deployed to support learners, especially those with additional learning needs. Assessment is used well to identify gaps in knowledge and understanding. Lessons contain a wide range of exciting activities, but there are occasions when the pace is slow and pupils begin to lose concentration. Pupils talk positively about their learning. They know how to achieve the targets set for them and those they set for themselves. As a result of good teaching, pupils' writing books offer many examples of good quality creative writing.

Teachers work closely together to plan an exciting curriculum which is used well to underpin pupils' learning. Teachers are now beginning to link subjects so that they weave skills, such as literacy, into each area. Visits and visitors complement the classroom work and this is particularly apparent in the high standard of art and dance enjoyed by pupils during India Week. Pupils enjoyed the opportunity to perform their dance at a local theatre. ICT skills are well taught, but as yet pupils do not have enough opportunities to use a wide enough range of resources to capture their imagination.

Right from the start adults give the attention and welfare of pupils the highest priority and this is evident throughout the school. The very close links forged with families when children start school continue. The very close liaison with a wide range of outside

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agencies to support pupils' well-being, as well their learning, is excellent. The school has a number of strategies in place that are extremely successful in raising attendance. Pupils' progress is tracked meticulously ensuring that potential underachievement is quickly identified, triggering appropriate intervention.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and all staff demonstrate a caring ethos which pervades the work of the school. The school is well led and managed by the headteacher, who has good support from her staff. The leadership works particularly thoughtfully to make sure that the school and wider communities are united wherever possible. For example, pupils regularly sing in the local music festival, where last year they were awarded a number of first prizes. The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion locally is good. However, opportunities for pupils to explore the diverse cultures that characterise contemporary Britain are limited. This is an inclusive school which works to promote equal opportunities and avoid discrimination. This is exemplified through the good progress made by all groups of pupils and the way in which pupils work and play well together. Governors provide good guidance; they support and challenge with enthusiasm and commitment and are developing their monitoring role. They ensure that child protection and safeguarding procedures meet requirements. Governors understand what needs to be done in the school and have a very good partnership with the headteacher and staff. Subject leaders share the headteacher's vision for making the school even better. They are involved in monitoring their subject so that they can ensure that achievements and standards continue to improve. A high priority is given to pupils' safety and well-being on the premises.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

The effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Children quickly settle into the Nursery class because of the high quality care and support they receive, as well as the excellent partnerships with parents and carers and good induction processes. Children's progress is checked regularly and adults use the information to modify what they do to meet the needs of individuals. This helps all groups of children to learn well and make good progress towards the goals expected for their age. By the time they reach Year 1, they are close to the expected levels in their knowledge, skills and understanding for their age. Children's personal, social and emotional development is good; they behave well and play together confidently. Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good, ensuring that planning reflects an understanding about how young children learn. The Nursery and Reception teacher share this role successfully; they have high expectations of the children and organise provision and resources well. Planning ensures that there is good use of both inside and outside areas; where children widen their learning experience, grow in their desire to explore and be independent and to make good progress. Within this stimulating environment, activities are well chosen by adults to provide meaningful contexts for children's learning. Children thoroughly enjoy making music in the outdoor area, for example, whilst others are constructing a tower indoors. Children are well able to serve customers in their flower shop whilst ensuring that they receive a cake and a cup of tea in the café. Early stages of writing are encouraged and children enjoy taking the customers orders for their food. Children behave very well and are keen to learn. There is a good balance between activities led by teachers and those initiated by the children themselves.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

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Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are extremely positive about the way in which the school cares for and educates their children. An overwhelming majority of parents and carers feel that their children enjoy school, are kept safe and are pleased with their children's progress. Some parents and carers took time to add comments to the questionnaire they returned to reinforce the strength of their positive views and inspectors agreed with them.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Netherton Infant School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspector received 55 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 108 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	44	80	9	16	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	45	82	9	16	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	41	75	12	22	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	37	67	17	31	0	0	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	44	80	10	18	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	40	73	13	24	3	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	43	78	11	20	1	2	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	37	67	14	25	1	2	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	40	73	14	25	2	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	39	71	13	24	2	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	39	71	14	25	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	42	76	11	20	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	43	78	8	15	2	4	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



17 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Nethererton Infant School, Maryport, CA15 7LT

I am writing to thank you for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school. We really enjoyed talking to all of you and have good memories of how friendly you were. Most of you behave well. Your excellent understanding of how to keep healthy and take lots of exercise also impressed us. It sounded like many of you enjoy the Food Club and making pizza. It was good to see that you raise funds for charity and help so much in your community.

I enjoyed watching how well you learn in your classrooms and outside them too. The school provides a wide range for activities for you, which you find exciting. Teachers work very hard to help you learn and we think that teaching in your school is good. We also thought your work was good and that you achieve well. The curriculum is good too. Adults know you well and you feel confident that they will help you if you have any worries

I have asked your school to see if they can make sure that you can use computers more, so that you can explore and investigate more easily. When you are in lessons, I have also asked the school to see if they can work more quickly with you so that you are always busy. I thought all the art work you did when you had your India week was really good, I could see how much you all enjoyed finding out about India. I have asked the school to let you explore more about all the different groups of people who live in Britain. I hope you enjoy this.

We were really pleased to tell your headteacher that your school is a good school. Well done! I hope you all continue to work hard and enjoy school.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Sue Sharkey

Lead inspector

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