

# St Bees Village Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	112164
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cumbria
<b>Inspection number</b>	337855
<b>Inspection dates</b>	2–3 February 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	John Heap

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	184
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Stuart Burgess
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr John Wood
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3 March 2007
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 15 lessons given by seven teachers and spent around 50% of the time looking at pupils' learning. They held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at: safeguarding documents and policies; the minutes of governors' meetings; records of local authority visits; the tracking of pupils' achievements; and the many displays around the school. In addition 110 parental questionnaires were analysed.

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

- whether attainment was high enough and progress good enough at the end of Key Stage 2, particularly in writing
- how well groups of pupils make progress and achieve, with particular emphasis on the more able pupils, to check whether teaching was challenging enough
- whether target-setting and marking ensure that pupils are aware of their achievements and, moreover, the further improvements they need to make
- whether there is precision in the school's self-evaluation and whether the school improvement plan has challenging success criteria.

## Information about the school

This smaller than average-sized primary school serves a mainly White British population and a small proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. None of the pupils are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average. The number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. Children under five years of age are taught in the Early Years Foundation Stage in Reception. Extended provision is available at the start and end of the day and this is not covered in this report. The school has successfully achieved the following awards: Healthy school; ActiveMark.

There is a new building project to provide an Early Years Foundation Stage Centre which began in January 2010. This new build will include a new Reception classroom with outdoor provision along with a classroom purpose-built for the independent pre-school.

**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?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

## Main findings

St Bees is a satisfactory school. Good features include: the way that most pupils feel safe and recognise the benefits of leading healthy lifestyles; the good contribution made by pupils; and the above average attendance. These strengths are promoted well by the good partnerships forged with external providers. Moreover, the procedures and practices for safeguarding pupils are good.

Children enter the Reception class with broadly average skills and abilities and make steady gains. By the end of Year 6, attainment is average and pupils' learning, progress and achievement are satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities also make satisfactory progress. Achievement is weaker in writing than reading because of: inconsistencies in the rigorous use of target-setting and marking; and the insufficient use and development of basic skills across all subjects.

The tracking of pupils' achievement and observations of lessons during the inspection show the quality of teaching to be satisfactory. Teaching is best in upper Key Stage 2 because of the quicker pace, interesting and challenging activities, and more opportunities to use basic skills in a wider range of work. However, it is also clear that the quality of teaching is not consistent enough to ensure that pupils achieve well. This is because the work is not matched well enough to the differing abilities of the pupils, particularly the more able. This means that the level of challenge is not consistently high and not enough good lessons are taught. The curriculum promotes personal development well, but the limited opportunities for developing skills in literacy and numeracy make it satisfactory overall.

The school is aware of its strengths and weaknesses because self-evaluation is satisfactory. However, while senior leaders and managers are keen and motivated to drive improvement, the procedures for doing this lack sharpness. As a result the self-evaluation processes are more focused on provision than on the outcomes for pupils. Nevertheless, some effective steps are being taken to improve teaching and there is early evidence of quicker progress in upper Key Stage 2. Equally, the school has shown great commitment to the building of the Early Years Foundation Stage Centre. As a result, work on this project is well underway. The school has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the rate of progress for the more able pupils by:
  - ensuring that all work provided for them is well matched to their needs and

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challenging

- providing many more opportunities for them to develop and use their basic literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects, most particularly in problem-solving and investigative work.
- Improve the quality of teaching to a consistently good standard, particularly in writing by:
  - ensuring a consistent and rigorous approach to target-setting and marking
  - making the monitoring and evaluation of teaching more focused on pupils' progress and learning.
- Improve the quality of school self-evaluation by:
  - sharpening the focus on pupils' outcomes
  - providing subject coordinators with many more opportunities to monitor and evaluate their subjects
  - ensuring that the governing body has the necessary procedures on which to base its independent checks and evaluations.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****3**

In lessons, pupils' learning was enhanced by: good behaviour that ensured there was little disruption; good attitudes to learning, such as enthusiasm; and a will to achieve. In the best lessons, pupils worked well with partners, relished the opportunities to practise skills independently, and worked with accuracy and resolve. However, in the majority of lessons, progress was only satisfactory because too much emphasis was placed on listening rather than doing, and this limited opportunities for pupils to work independently.

By the end of Year 6, attainment is average and this is backed up by the trend in the national test results. Attainment in reading and mathematics is strongest and higher than writing, particularly for the most able. These subjects were also the strongest at the end of Year 2. Overall, this means that pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the few from minority ethnic backgrounds also achieve satisfactorily.

Moral and social development is strong and, consequently, behaviour is good and attendance is above average. Most parents and pupils appreciate the caring and secure environment. As a result pupils enjoy coming to school, relationships are good and the vast majority of pupils work and play harmoniously together. The vast majority say there is very little bullying and they can turn to a teacher if needed. Contributors such as playground buddies help provide reassurance. Pupils have a range of opportunities to take on responsibility such as becoming school councillors, dinner monitors or table monitors in class. They make charitable collections at regular intervals throughout the year, such as for Children in Need and Red Nose Day. Links with the local community are strengthened through involvement in projects such as carol singing at the local church. Pupils know that staying healthy by eating well and taking exercise is a good

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choice for them to make. They say they feel safe and know how to keep safe. Average basic skills and good social skills provide a satisfactory preparation for the next stage of learning.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>3</b>

### How effective is the provision?

Classrooms have a positive atmosphere and pupils mostly show a lot of interest in their work. The tracking of pupils' achievements and inspection evidence show that pupils' progress is satisfactory. This is the result of predominantly satisfactory teaching. However, some good lessons were seen. Good classroom management and the effective use of praise and rewards raise pupils' self-esteem and ensure very few interruptions to learning. Typically, teachers present new learning clearly and use resources wisely, such as interactive whiteboards, to reinforce and strengthen learning. Teaching assistants do a satisfactory job in supporting pupils with extra learning needs. In good lessons, teachers have good subject knowledge and high expectations of pupils. Good questioning challenges pupils to think. The brisk pace in these lessons ensures good learning. In other lessons, teachers do not challenge pupils of all abilities consistently

<sup>1</sup> 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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because work is not matched well enough to the needs of each individual pupil. Part of the reason for this is the lack of consistency in marking and setting targets for learning. The satisfactory curriculum promotes pupils' personal development well. There are specific programmes for personal, social, health and citizenship education and these are backed by specialist contributions, such as a Pakistani parent talking about Eid. Safe practices are promoted by, for instance, provision for cycling proficiency and challenging contributions from emergency services personnel. Moreover, academic development is satisfactory. It is strongest in reading, mathematics and information and communication technology. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to problem-solve and investigate in mathematics and to use their writing skills more widely in the full range of subjects. The curriculum is modified adequately to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The curriculum is enriched by a good range of visits, visitors and activities outside lessons. Extended services are well planned and include the provision of specialist coaches to improve sporting skills. The work of other specialists, in dance and theatre, is adding greatly to pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding in subjects such as history and religious education and to the overall opportunities for learning.

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Staff know pupils and their families well and mostly good relationships have developed. The school's checks on attendance, punctuality and behaviour are effective and promote good outcomes. Most parents and pupils are satisfied that the school is a secure and safe place to be. Effective communication between staff, parents and external agencies ensures that the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are adequately supported.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>3</b>

## **How effective are leadership and management?**

The senior leaders and managers have a clear vision for the school and this is supported by satisfactory, if generous, self-evaluation. The school is ambitious in its actions to drive improvements, such as the new Early Years Foundation Stage provision and in linking with other schools to promote improvement in the satisfactory community cohesion. There are strong links with the local community, including productive partnerships with the church. Globally, pupils benefit from their knowledge and understanding of other religions, such as Christianity, Hinduism and Judaism. Pupils are expected to respect all minorities and there are regular visits from members of a range

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of religions. Discrimination is not tolerated and the promotion of equal opportunities is satisfactory. Increasingly, pupils' progress is analysed and pupils falling behind in their learning are identified. Robust procedures and practices for all aspects of child protection and health and safety meet requirements. Nevertheless, the monitoring of teaching and pupils' academic work is too concerned with the performance of the teacher, rather than pupils' learning. Although priorities in the school improvement plan are accurately identified, the measures of academic success are not focused enough on measured and challenging targets for all year groups. Consequently, it is more difficult for leaders and managers to understand the impact of activities. Although the sound governing body receives appropriate information from a range of providers, it does not have a definitive procedure of its own to improve evaluation of the school. Financial management is prudent and has led, for example, to the school successfully providing extra support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Views of parents and carers

In nine out of 10 responses to the questionnaire, parents were satisfied with the work of the school. There were particularly high ratings for:

- the way the school keeps their child safe
- the way the school supports parents to help their child
- the way the school prepares pupils for the future.

Very small numbers of parents wrote comments. Positive comments included, 'I am extremely happy my children attend this school.'; 'Happy and caring school'; 'My son



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loves going to school.' and 'This school is fantastic.'

Equally, very small numbers of parents wrote of their concerns about:

- their child finding the work too easy
- whether their child was safe
- whether all pupils behaved appropriately
- whether the money for the new build was a good use of funds.

Inspectors investigated these issues and found that these areas were at least satisfactory.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Bees Village Primary 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 inspection team received 110 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 184 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	66	60	36	33	6	5	2	2
The school keeps my child safe	68	62	39	35	3	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	51	46	54	49	4	4	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	57	52	49	45	4	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	65	59	41	37	4	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	56	51	51	46	3	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	60	55	44	40	6	5	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)	41	37	60	55	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	54	49	48	44	7	6	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	44	40	56	51	7	6	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	38	35	57	52	5	5	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	53	48	45	41	8	7	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	66	60	38	35	5	5	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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



5 February 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Bees Village Primary School, St Bees, CA27 0AA

On behalf of the inspection team, may I say that we thoroughly enjoyed our visit to your school last week. We were most grateful for your warm welcome, courtesy and the help you provided. We judged that yours is a satisfactory school. Here are some of the things we found out about your school.

What we really liked about your school:

- the caring and happy atmosphere in the school and the way you support each other – particularly the older pupils helping the youngsters
- the good teaching in upper Key Stage 2
- your good behaviour and attitudes to school and work
- the good contribution you make to the day-to-day working of the school and the contributions you make through your charitable donations
- the contributions you make to a safe and caring ethos in the school and the appreciation of this shown by most of your parents
- the very interesting range of activities that enrich your curriculum, including the overnight stays
- the strong partnerships that improve your learning and progress.

To improve your school even more, your teachers will make sure that the more able pupils among you are challenged more in lessons and expected to do more and better work. They will also work hard to ensure that teaching improves, particularly in writing. I have also suggested that they let you do even more writing in other subjects, such as history, geography and religious education. You can be a great help by always doing your best work, whether it is writing in English lessons or when writing in other subjects. Finally, the headteacher and staff are going to see whether they can improve the way they check how well the school is doing.

Good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Mr John Heap (Lead Inspector)

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