

Kirkby Stephen Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112180
Local Authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	337860
Inspection dates	10–11 February 2010
Reporting inspector	Adrian Francis

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	180
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr D Marston
Headteacher	Mrs Lynne Wade
Date of previous school inspection	28 June 2007
School address	Nateby Road Kirkby Stephen Cumbria CA17 4AE
Telephone number	01768 371387
Fax number	01768 371387
Email address	head@kirkbystephen-pri.cumbria.sch.uk

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	10–11 February 2010
Inspection number	337860

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2010

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited seven teachers' classrooms and saw eight lessons, held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They looked at a range of documentation including records of pupils' progress and attainment, a sample of pupils' work, the school improvement plan and a range of school policies and records. The views of parents and carers were considered by analysing the 65 questionnaires received. The views of pupils were also evaluated by examining their questionnaires.

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

- the level of achievement and attainment currently in the school
- how successful the school is in assessing pupils' performance, tracking progress and planning to meet the needs of all pupils
- the quality of teaching, learning and the curriculum and the impact on raising achievement
- the impact of the school's leaders and managers on school improvement.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average-size primary school. A much smaller proportion of pupils are eligible for free school meals than is the case nationally. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is slightly lower than the national average. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. One Reception class forms the Early Years Foundation Stage provision. The school has gained the Activemark for provision in physical education and is currently undergoing re-accreditation for the Healthy Schools Award. Pupils who attend the school are drawn from a wide geographical area and around one third of the pupils travel to school by bus. There has been a significant turnover of teaching staff within the past 18 months.

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?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to pupils' achievement.

Pupils' achievement is inadequate. Over the past two years pupils' progress, by the end of Key Stage 2, has declined significantly in English, mathematics and science. Attainment has also fallen; in 2009, although still broadly average in English and mathematics, it was particularly weak in science. In response to this leaders have taken action to improve teachers' skills in teaching science and monitoring the planning of lessons closely. As a result progress and attainment is improving. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress.

Teaching is satisfactory overall. While some teaching is good, it is not consistently of high enough quality to improve progress at a fast enough pace. Teachers are making better use of the now more accurate assessment data to plan work, which matches individual needs, but this is inconsistent. Although satisfactory, the curriculum does not sufficiently enable pupils to practise their basic literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills in other subjects across the curriculum. Good enrichment activities enable pupils to pursue their interests further. Pupils feel safe in school and this is endorsed by comments from parents and carers.

Pupils' progress has been affected by disruptions in staffing but there is now a more stable position. A more formal leadership structure is developing with a shared responsibility for improvement. The governing body is challenging the leadership team more effectively and is now holding them to account. Self-evaluation is largely accurate but the monitoring of teaching and learning is not yet sharply focused enough on outcomes for pupils. The priorities for development, although very clearly expressed, are too many in number. A system has been introduced for tracking pupil progress and the school is beginning to make use of this to improve achievement. Some improvements are beginning to have an impact. For example, pupils' rate of progress, although still not good enough, is picking up in lessons and changes to the teaching of science are starting to bear fruit. Taken together, these findings demonstrate the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' achievement by:

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

- ensuring that teaching is of a consistently good quality to motivate pupils and accelerate their progress
- making sure teachers know what levels pupils are working at and use assessment to set tasks which closely match their ability
- providing more opportunities for pupils to practise their basic skills across different subjects across the curriculum
- ensuring that the school's marking policy and teachers' marking of work lead to pupils having a clearer understanding of their next steps in learning.
- Strengthen the effectiveness of the school's leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that monitoring of teaching focuses sharply on learning and improving outcomes for pupils
 - making greater use of tracking information to quickly tackle underachievement and accelerate progress.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**4**

Pupils leave school at the end of Year 6 having secured broadly average attainment. However, the satisfactory rate of progress made in their learning in Key Stage 1 has not been sustained during Key Stage 2 and is overall inadequate. Although pupils enjoy their lessons most do not make enough progress during their time in school. Discussions with pupils and reviews of samples of work from across the school, as well as observations of teaching, indicate that pupils could do better, particularly in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Data held by the school confirms this but it has not been interrogated or understood well enough to help improve pupil performance, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. In some lessons, as a result of better teaching and sharper use of teacher assessment, progress in learning is beginning to improve. For example, in a Year 6 lesson pupils used ICT to compare the effectiveness of news reports using different media. Working in groups and with good concentration these pupils progressed well and were engaged in a task well matched to their abilities.

Pupils' awareness of healthy lifestyles, their understanding of how to keep safe and their contribution to the community are good. They make good choices about staying fit and healthy and take full advantage of the sporting opportunities provided during and after school. They contribute well to the community through links with other schools. Pupils regularly fund-raise for local, national and international charities and willingly accept responsibilities on the school council and as peer mentors and play leaders. Some specially planned events within the curriculum help pupils develop their spiritual and cultural awareness, allowing them to reflect on their feelings and those of others. Pupils have an understanding of right and wrong and are generally confident and feel valued.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	4
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

The majority of lessons seen were satisfactory and some were good. In the better lessons pupils were well motivated and teachers addressed pupils' learning needs effectively. However, the good quality teaching is not yet sufficiently widespread to ensure all pupils achieve well enough. Assessment to support learning is satisfactory overall but the application of policies and procedures is inconsistent. In the weaker lessons teachers were not always clear about the level pupils were working at; consequently, tasks set did not always match their abilities. Teachers mark pupils' work conscientiously but it is not always clear to the pupils what they need to do to improve their work. The advanced skills teacher is helping bring a consistent approach to lesson planning and assessment.

The curriculum is satisfactory overall. However, there are no cross-curricular links to add interest to learning and provide opportunities for pupils to use their literacy and numeracy skills in different subjects. The curriculum in Key Stage 1, although satisfactory, does not take full account of children's needs as they move from the Early Years Foundation Stage into Year 1. Pupils spoke positively about the school and the inspection team noted the good relationships between pupils and adults. Effective liaisons within the school and with support agencies ensure pupils are safe and feel secure.

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

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

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

Since the last inspection much has been done to improve the fabric of the school building and the learning environment. The headteacher ably supported by the committed governing body has begun to embed the ambition for raising attainment and to improve pupils' achievement. All senior leaders are now accountable for pupil performance and middle leaders are beginning to take on this responsibility for the pupils they teach. The school's promotion of equal opportunities is satisfactory. For all pupils to reach their academic potential, leaders and managers recognise the need to improve the quality of teaching and accelerate pupils' learning. The deployment of an advanced skills teacher to share best practice across subjects is beginning to have a positive impact on improving achievement. The school has introduced appropriate systems for monitoring pupils' progress, the results of which are beginning to alert senior leaders to the areas of weakness. However, it is recognised that better use needs to be made of this information to more urgently improve the achievement of all.

Safeguarding procedures are good and meet requirements. Risk assessments are robust and regularly updated. Community cohesion is satisfactorily promoted within the school, but the awareness and understanding of pupils of life and different cultures beyond the immediate community is limited. The school receives well targeted support from the local authority which is helping to sharpen its awareness of the strategies needed to improve overall outcomes for its pupils. The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money is inadequate because pupil outcomes are inadequate overall.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3

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	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children in Reception settle quickly, develop confidence and benefit from the supportive and caring work of adults. They enjoy the range of learning opportunities, with smiles and lots of excited chatter evident in the Reception class. Children's behaviour and personal development are good. They relate positively to one another and develop a good awareness of keeping safe and eating healthily. Children make good progress and many reach the expected goals by the time they start Year 1. However, the outdoor play area is not always readily available and this inhibits children's learning and development. This is now being addressed and a newly created area is being developed. The curriculum is satisfactory overall. Plans are in place to improve the provision to ensure that there are more opportunities for children to learn through investigations, problem solving and use ICT. Effective induction procedures help children to become familiar with school routines and settle quickly. The quality of care is good and children are nurtured in a safe environment. Leaders and managers are becoming more accountable to the school's senior leaders. Assessments are carried out regularly and action is being taken to increase the accuracy of data to give a clear picture of children's progress.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Most of the parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire have a very positive view of the school. There is a large degree of support for the school, with parents commenting on, 'the friendly atmosphere' and 'how happy and settled our children are at school'. Inspectors agree with their positive comments. A small minority of parents

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

have concerns over the way the school deals with unacceptable behaviour. Evidence provided by the school indicates that a very small number of pupils display challenging behaviour at times but that systems are in place to tackle this. Inspectors found that pupil behaviour was satisfactory at the time of the inspection and feedback from pupils supports this view. Some parents and carers did not feel that the school meets their child's particular needs. Inspectors found that not all pupils' needs are being adequately met, and there are relevant areas for improvement mentioned earlier in the report.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Kirkby Stephen 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 65 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 180 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	25	38	38	58	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	19	29	44	68	2	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	16	25	43	66	5	8	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	14	22	46	71	4	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	16	25	45	69	2	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	15	23	44	68	3	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	12	18	49	75	3	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)	12	18	40	62	3	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	17	26	38	58	7	11	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	7	11	36	55	15	23	4	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	17	26	40	62	5	8	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	14	22	43	66	5	8	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	21	32	40	62	4	6	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.



12 February 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Kirkby Stephen Primary School, Kirkby Stephen, CA17 4AE

I am writing to thank you for being friendly and helpful when we visited to inspect your school recently. I would particularly like to thank those of you who spoke with the inspectors and those who completed the questionnaire.

I can see that you like your teachers a lot and many of you told us that you enjoy school. You feel the teachers and other adults in school are caring and supportive of you and always give you help when you ask for it. Although many of you reach the levels expected nationally by the end of Year 6 many of you do not achieve as well as you could. We have given the school a 'notice to improve' which means that inspectors will come back to check on the progress the school is making. The staff and governors want you to do as well as you can and they want to improve the quality of teaching and learning so that you can make better progress and secure higher standards in lessons and any tests you take.

I have asked your headteacher and teachers to make it clearer to you how you can improve your work. This means that teachers' marking will tell you what to do next to make your work better. The school will check more carefully how well you are doing so that the teachers can plan work to better match your learning needs. This will help the headteacher and other adults to know exactly how much progress you are making and what you need to do to improve.

You can all help by paying close attention to your teachers and concentrating carefully on your work. Best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mr Adrian Francis

Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.