

Raughton Head CofE School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112257
Local Authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	337883
Inspection dates	11–12 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Juliet Ward

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	40
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Ian Reed
Headteacher	Mrs Mary Alston
Date of previous school inspection	1 February 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. The inspector visited five lessons, one assembly, a residential site to see the Year 5 and Year 6 pupils, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. She observed the school's work, including the school development plan, the tracking of pupils' progress, provision for those pupils identified as having special needs and/or disabilities, minutes of the governors' meetings and 21 parental questionnaires.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work. She looked in detail at the following:

- pupils' attainment in the 2009 national tests at Key Stages 1 and 2, the standards attained by the current pupils, the school's strategies for assessment and its analysis of pupils' progress
- confirmation of the apparent improvements made to the pupils' cultural development
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers at all levels, including the governors, in enabling continuity and improvement in the light of the significant changes in staffing over the past two years
- the improvements made to the outdoor learning area in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- the progress made by those pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Information about the school

Raughton Head is a very small primary school which draws on a mixed rural catchment. A small number of pupils are currently eligible for free schools meals. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is smaller than the national average. Currently, two pupils have very specific learning difficulties. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs. From November 2008, an experienced acting headteacher has been in place following the retirement of the previous headteacher through ill health. A substantive headteacher has been appointed to take up the position on 1 April 2010.

The school has Healthy School status, the Activemark and the School Partnership Mark.

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

Raughton Head is a good school. Pastoral support, guidance and care provided for every child are considerable strengths. As a result, by the time pupils leave the school, they are mature and thoughtful young adults who have made a positive contribution to the school and the local community.

A supportive atmosphere for learning exists that ensures pupils make good progress, enjoy their learning and achieve well. Their excellent attendance and the happy faces in many lessons and around the school are testimony to this. The school successfully instills in the pupils a strong spiritual, social and moral understanding that accounts for their outstanding behaviour and positive attitudes to school. As one parent wrote, 'My children are exceptionally happy at school; there has never been a day where they haven't wanted to go to school.'

The acting headteacher provides clear, well focused leadership. She has ably taken up the reins and kept the school functioning effectively. Documents show that developments are driven forward at a good pace. Strengths and weaknesses are speedily identified because the school has good systems for monitoring and evaluating its work. The school has improved from its position at the time of the last inspection. Its capacity to continue to improve is good.

Reception children get a good start to their education and achieve well. The very recently completed outdoor area has added an excellent dimension to the children's future range of learning experiences.

Pupils of all abilities continue to make good progress throughout the school. Following a dip in pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2009, progress has accelerated and the present Year 6 group is doing well, although the progress the pupils make in writing and mathematics, especially the boys, is not consistently good enough in every year group. However, by the time pupils leave school, they achieve at or above expected levels for their age in a range of subjects.

The academic guidance provided for pupils is good. The school's practice of enabling maximum progress by the setting of targets is evolving. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, although comments do not always provide challenging enough targets for pupils and do not always link with pupils' individual targets for improvement.

Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are well planned and based on trying to make sure that all pupils enjoy learning. By providing good quality help from very well-qualified teaching assistants wherever it is needed, the least able and most vulnerable pupils make good progress. The staff have made a conscious effort to make the curriculum as exciting and interesting as possible and the rich variety of topics cover

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all subjects well. The school does much to promote pupils' place in the local community and works very effectively with the church, the local nurseries and playgroups, and local schools.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment throughout the school, especially in writing and mathematics, by ensuring that all pupils, particularly boys, are challenged to develop the full range of literacy and mathematical skills.
- Make teaching and learning even better by ensuring that the targets set for each individual are sufficiently challenging.

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

The small number of pupils in the school means that aggregated data about their attainment must be treated with caution. The school's results in national tests and assessments, as shown in percentages, are often influenced significantly by the addition or loss of a single pupil at the time of the assessment. On paper, therefore, results can fluctuate widely from year to year. Children enter the school with skills and understanding that vary considerably and range from lower than to above those expected for their age, and leave having attained average to above standards in English and mathematics. There remain some inconsistencies which the school has begun to address effectively. Scrutiny of the progress of individual pupils, which included their work and observation of lessons, shows that all make at least the expected progress in English and mathematics, and that the progress of most is better than this. This applies to pupils of all ages and abilities, with past inconsistencies being addressed well. However, overall, girls do better than boys. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress, some from a very low starting point, or with specific learning difficulties. The standards pupils reach in science have improved at the end of Year 2. Pupils' skills in using information and communication technology (ICT) are very good. The quality of the art work around the school, some of it developed through the zeal of the Chair of Governors, is impressive.

Pupils' personal development progresses well through the school. They are thoughtful and caring to each other and their behaviour is exemplary. They are aware of possible dangers around them and have a good range of strategies to keep themselves safe. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to keep healthy, and the significant majority eat the outstanding, home cooked school lunches. The pupils make full use of the many opportunities for exercise and energetic play. Examples of the pupils' outstanding behaviour included the way they socialised, shared meals and made Victorian decorations with pupils from another school at their residential centre, and the fact that Reception children were happily included in the conversations on their family lunch tables, where the older children served them their food. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the local community, host a community lunch for parents, grandparents and community members, and also develop a clear understanding of wider

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cultural and community issues. For example, pupils contribute their work to the local church for the congregation to share. Prayers on the prayer tree, created by the pupils, were added by members of the congregation. The school addresses the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. The standards reached by pupils in English, mathematics, science, and ICT, combined with their keen appetite for teamwork, their interest in learning, and excellent attendance, prepares them well for the transition to the next stage of their education.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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	1
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	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

In most lessons observed, teaching was effective and so pupils made good progress. One parent wrote, 'It is clear that the teachers find ways to bring out the best in all children and discuss with them acceptable and unacceptable behaviour.' Pupils were well motivated by the ideas and resources presented and were keen to please their teachers and other adults. Pupils use the interactive whiteboard with confidence, including the very youngest children. A common planning format prompts staff to consider the needs of different groups of pupils, such as those with particular needs and individual pupils at

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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different ability levels. This helps focus the work of the effective support staff in lessons. In addition, there are well-targeted additional programmes. These approaches ensure that different groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make the progress expected of them.

Through the many well-developed innovations, the school provides a detailed 'creative curriculum' that enables subjects to fit together seamlessly. Pupils have many opportunities to use and develop their writing, mathematical and ICT skills in all subjects. When questioned, pupils asserted they really enjoyed their work, 'we get to do exciting things', is a typical quote. The rich range of activities outside lessons, adds considerably to pupils' enjoyment, and very good use is made of the local community. Staff provide good care, guidance and support. Pupils' welfare is of paramount importance and staff know all pupils well. Staff are resolute in their efforts to help the pupils get the best from their time in school.

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	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The acting headteacher provides a clear educational direction for the school and works very closely with a wide range of other agencies and partners to achieve success and enhance provision. In this school, teamwork has developed well; this is particularly important in ensuring that there is no longer an excessive dependence on the acting headteacher, who has set in place robust systems to support the management of the school. The staff and governors share the acting headteacher's drive and vision for improvement.

The administrative and caretaking teams play a central role within the school. Their work is much appreciated. There is a corporate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development based on an accurate diagnosis of its work. The school, therefore, has a good strategy to support different groups of pupils, which has led to improved outcomes for pupils in many areas. There is an effective plan for further development and a shared vision and willingness to work hard to make further improvements. The governing body brings a wide range of skills to bear and acts as critical friends, requesting explanations when judged to be necessary.

The school takes its duty to promote equal opportunities seriously and is effective in this. It values the opinions of parents, carers and pupils and acts upon them. Procedures to safeguard pupils' well-being, safety and health are extremely rigorous and all

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members of staff are well trained. The contribution the school makes to community cohesion is good. A plan and clear actions are in place for promoting pupils' understanding from a local perspective. Links with other schools and agencies are harnessed very well. The school has expanded its links to provide a national and global perspective well, for example, through its close links with the church in hosting visits from a priest from Uruguay.

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	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
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

Reception children start with skills and understanding that vary considerably from year to year; they make a good start to their education in the Reception class. The level of commitment and care shown by all school staff is evident in the way that children settle into the school so well and immediately begin to learn. This is particularly true of how well they mix with the older children in this class of four to seven-year-olds.

Staff work especially hard to give the children a real sense of determining their own way forward, which guarantees their full involvement in all activities. Children make good progress because all adults enable children to build strong, positive relationships. The enthusiasm and enjoyment of the children as they went on a 'discovery' tour was infectious. Although the classroom provides a stimulating learning environment and resources are used well, there have been significant restrictions due to the work on the outdoor area, and the children have not been able to 'freeflow' between indoor and outdoor learning areas. Staff get to know the children very well. They make a careful note of all responses and feedback. This information is being collated and used particularly effectively to ensure that the least able and most vulnerable settle well. The

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Early Years Foundation Stage has been effectively managed by the acting headteacher during the recent maternity leave of the Early Years teacher.

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

Views of parents and carers

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers returned questionnaires and are very happy with the school. They consider that the school has a dedicated team of staff and that the acting headteacher has done a very good job in moving the school forward. They agree that the school has a very warm, supportive and friendly atmosphere and that their children make good progress. The lead inspector fully endorses these views. One parent was concerned that parents were too involved in helping as volunteers in school. This was found to be an unnecessary concern.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Raughton Head CofE 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 21 completed questionnaires, representing 34 children by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 40 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	27	79	5	15	1	3	1	3
The school keeps my child safe	26	76	6	18	1	3	1	3
The school informs me about my child's progress	13	38	18	53	0	0	2	6
My child is making enough progress at this school	18	53	14	41	0	0	2	6
The teaching is good at this school	21	62	11	32	0	0	2	6
The school helps me to support my child's learning	21	62	6	18	2	6	2	6
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	25	74	4	12	3	9	2	6
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)	17	50	9	26	3	9	2	6
The school meets my child's particular needs	19	56	10	29	2	6	2	6
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	19	56	9	26	2	6	2	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	19	56	13	38	0	0	2	6
The school is led and managed effectively	22	65	5	15	3	9	4	12
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	20	59	12	35	0	0	2	6

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.



13th November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Raughton Head CofE School, Carlisle, CA5 7DD

I am writing to thank you all for making me so welcome when I came to your school recently. I did enjoy my visit, and loved the super healthy lunches! Yours is a good school with many strengths, and I agree with you when you told me that it is a really fun place to learn. Here is a list of some of the things that I think are good about your school.

- The school looks after you well and you all make good progress in your learning.
- You behave exceptionally well, get along with each other and feel safe in school.
- You all have good ideas on how to make things better and the teachers always listen to what you want.
- You understand how to live healthily.
- You find lessons interesting and really enjoy school.
- There are plenty of exciting things for you to do both in school and on visits and in clubs.
- The acting headteacher, staff and governors manage the school very well.

I know that the Years 5 and 6 enjoyed their residential visit and the youngest children are looking forward to using their new outdoor learning area. The school quite rightly has many plans for what it needs to do next to improve. The staff now spend some time checking on how well you are making progress. I have asked them to make sure that you are given really challenging targets to improve your work even more. I would like to see the boys doing better in their writing and mathematics, and have asked the teachers to plan even harder work so you all can make maximum progress in the future.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Juliet Ward

Lead inspector

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