

Asby Endowed School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112267
Local Authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	337888
Inspection dates	24–25 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Sheila Mawer

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	22
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs June Clayton
Headteacher	Mr Roy Chambers
Date of previous school inspection	28 September 2006
School address	Great Asby Appleby-in-Westmorland Cumbria CA16 6EX
Telephone number	01768 351154
Fax number	-
Email address	admin@asby.cumbria.sch.uk

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

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. The inspector observed seven lessons and looked at pupils' work. The three teachers in the school were all observed at least once and two were visited again. Meetings were also held with staff and pupils and a representative of the governing body. In observing the school's work, a range of documents were examined, including the school improvement plan, assessment information, safeguarding procedures, minutes of governors' meetings and records of monitoring and evaluation. The inspector also analysed the 18 questionnaires returned by parents and carers. In addition, questionnaires were received from 12 pupils in Key Stage 2.

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

- whether all pupils, especially the more able and those who are gifted and talented, are making good progress, particularly in science
- the extent to which monitoring and evaluation by the leadership team is sharply focused on raising standards and making improvements
- how well community cohesion is planned and promoted outside the school and local community
- how well children's needs in Reception are being met in the mixed-age class.

Information about the school

This is a very small village school where pupils are taught in two classes. The area is sparsely populated and many pupils travel some distance from outlying areas to attend. All pupils are from White British families. A below-average proportion of pupils are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. The Early Years Foundation Stage provides full-time education for Reception children, who share a classroom with Key Stage 1 pupils. The school has received two awards reflecting its commitment to healthy and sustainable living. A new headteacher and the Chair of Governing Body were appointed in 2009 and two teachers have recently returned from maternity leave.

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

This is a good school, where pupils achieve well. Since the last inspection key aspects of provision have improved significantly. Care, guidance and support are now outstanding and relationships are excellent. The school has created an exceptionally strong ethos where pupils feel greatly valued and very safe. This has a positive impact on their good behaviour and positive attitudes. Younger pupils really appreciate the 'buddy system', which pairs them with older pupils at break times. Pupils comment, 'We're a family-friendly school.'

From broadly typical starting points in Reception the progress made by pupils is good. By Year 6 attainment is above average in English and mathematics. Standards in science have been below average for several years. Resources have recently been improved as well as opportunities for pupils to carry out their own experiments. As a result, standards in science are rising strongly and progress is good. Teaching and assessment are good. However, the school recognises that the progress made by more-able and gifted and talented pupils is not always fast enough for them to reach the higher standards of which they are capable. This is because on occasions the challenge in lessons and the targets set for these pupils are not rigorous enough.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage good improvements have been made to planning and assessment and in the use of support staff. This ensures that the needs of Reception children in the mixed-age class are effectively met. The school has worked successfully to introduce a more creative and relevant curriculum for pupils in Key Stage 1 and this is being extended to Key Stage 2. Pupils are highly valued for the strong contribution they make to their school and to the local community. The excellent partnerships with other local schools and organisations significantly benefit pupils' learning and their personal development. Plans to extend community cohesion to wider communities in the United Kingdom and globally are at an early stage of development.

Recent changes in leadership have strengthened the accuracy and rigour of self-evaluation and ensured that priorities for development are sharply focused on raising standards. The track record of improvement is good. Leaders have a clear awareness of strengths and weaknesses. Above all, there is a strong willingness from the headteacher, governors and staff of this very small school to learn from others through effective professional development and the expertise of the local authority. This illustrates well the good capacity that the school has to improve further. It also gives good value for money.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- Ensure that more-able pupils and those who are gifted and talented consistently make good or better progress by:
 - planning harder tasks, more frequently, for their independent work and setting more challenging targets that closely match their capabilities.
- Improve the promotion of community cohesion by developing more opportunities for pupils to experience and understand the cultural, ethnic and social diversity in the United Kingdom and the wider world.

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

Pupils behave well, enjoy school and make good progress in lessons. They work hard to meet the objective of the lesson and rise to teachers' expectations, particularly when work is challenging. Many pupils say how much they enjoy science. In one science lesson observed, the enthusiasm and enjoyment of pupils pervaded the classroom as they carried out their own investigations. Throughout the lesson pupils went out of their way to support each other and to work responsibly, without direction from an adult. They were well motivated by the open-ended questions they were set and used every minute to work hard and learn well. In most lessons pupils achieve well and are keen to learn. Despite this, there are missed opportunities in some lessons for more-able and gifted and talented pupils to learn their skills exceptionally well and make even stronger progress. The handwriting skills of many pupils lack fluency and their writing is often untidily presented.

Pupils are equally keen when they take on responsibility around the school and in the local community. Members of the school council play an important part in ensuring pupils' health and safety through their work in developing the school grounds and researching the benefits of fair trade. They held a fair trade coffee morning for the village recently and are now planning a fair trade healthy tuck shop in school. All pupils clearly know the benefits of 'five a day' and how to keep fit. They say that bullying is extremely rare because the school is very safe and caring. Spiritual, moral and social development is good. Cultural development is satisfactory, as links with wider communities are still being developed. Pupils' strong personal qualities, their good basic skills and above-average attendance prepare them well for the future.

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	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	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Excellent relationships and effective teaching enable pupils to learn well. Lessons are successful because they are well planned and organised. Specialist teachers are often used to extend the range and quality of teaching. Teachers present work in an interesting way by using a wide variety of resources. Explanations are usually clear and good questioning helps to extend pupils' skills and knowledge. Although teaching is good, expectations are not always high enough nor target setting rigorous enough for more-able or gifted and talented pupils to enable them to make consistently good or better progress. The use of assessment to support teaching and learning is effective. Marking gives pupils clear guidance for improvement and target setting is well embedded throughout the school.

The broad and increasingly creative curriculum is organised well for the mixed-age classes. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is good. Excellent enrichment through clubs, visits and visitors add greatly to pupils' enjoyment and to their learning. In particular, the sports partnership established with other schools is a considerable strength. Literacy and numeracy skills are practised well across the curriculum. Their use, especially in science, is having a good impact on progress.

All pupils in this very small school receive outstanding care, guidance and support. They and their families are known extremely well by all staff. Everything possible is done to enable them to participate fully in all aspects of school life. External support is sought quickly if needed to improve the learning and well-being of pupils. This is very much appreciated by parents and carers, and pupils. One parent, who has recently moved her son to the school, commented on the excellent support and guidance he has received to

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close the gaps in his learning and improve his enthusiasm for school life. She also added, 'What a difference it has made to us all as a family.'

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 is moving the school forward successfully. He works closely with staff, governors, the local authority and other headteachers to effectively monitor and evaluate teaching and learning. Their strong teamwork, drive and ambition have moved the quality of teaching and learning from satisfactory to good. An advanced skills teacher has been used particularly well to improve the use of assessment. These excellent partnerships make a valuable contribution to the leadership and management of the school. Safeguarding procedures are thorough, detailed and fully meet requirements. Clear management responsibilities for health and safety and relevant training for all staff and governors ensure good practice. Governors are very knowledgeable about the strengths and weaknesses in the school. They play a full part in determining its strategic direction through regular monitoring of the school's effectiveness. They are currently providing a good balance of challenge and support to aid the development of the outdoor area for Reception children.

Equality of opportunity is promoted well in the school and there is no discrimination. Everyone has equal opportunities to contribute to lessons and school life. This ensures that all groups of pupils achieve well. However, the school recognises the need to extend the learning of more-able and gifted and talented pupils. Good partnerships are established with parents and carers. They are regularly consulted about whole-school issues and are currently working with the school on the feasibility of reintroducing school meals. Community cohesion is promoted very successfully within the school and the local area. Wider links within the United Kingdom and globally are less well developed. 'E-links' are being explored and pupils recently supported the Haiti appeal; however, the school recognises that there is still more to do.

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

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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	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	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress during their Reception Year. Good leadership has ensured that significant improvements to provision are effectively meeting the needs of children in the mixed-age class. By the time children enter Year 1 nearly all are working at the expectations for their age and many children exceed these. The partnership between home and school is strong. Parents and carers are kept fully informed of their children's progress and what is being taught.

Children quickly settle into the routines of school life. They are helped through excellent support and by following the good examples set by their classmates in Years 1 and 2. Their care, safety and welfare are given a high priority at all times. Children are happy and confident to plan their own learning at the beginning of the day. In construction, two children played particularly well together, sharing resources to build a road track and helping each other to complete their tasks. Children play safely and their behaviour is good.

Indoors, a good balance is achieved between adult-led tasks and children initiating their own learning. Resources for indoor learning are generally good and provide challenge for children. Opportunities for learning outdoors are more limited. However, plans are well advanced for a spacious and well-equipped outdoor area to improve provision. Good teaching is particularly effective in promoting children's early literacy skills. In one activity, the teacher facilitated some very meaningful role play in the 'travel agency'. Not only was the children's spoken language extended well but, through discussions about holidays and where to travel, the wider world was explored.

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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

Most parents and carers, in a very high return of questionnaires, are completely happy with what the school provides. Responses were overwhelmingly positive. Parents and carers strongly agree that their children enjoy school, are making good progress and that teaching is good. There were no significant issues for the school. Several parents and carers commented on the excellent support their children receive in school and how well the school is led and managed. The inspector agrees with parents' and carers' comments about the outstanding care pupils receive and the good leadership and management.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Asby Endowed 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 18 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 22 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	15	83	3	17	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	14	78	2	11	2	11	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	13	72	5	28	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	13	72	2	11	2	11	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	13	72	5	28	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	11	61	7	39	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	10	56	5	28	0	0	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)	11	61	4	22	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	10	56	7	39	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	10	56	6	33	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	10	56	4	22	2	11	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	10	56	4	22	0	0	2	11
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	14	78	2	11	2	11	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.



26 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Asby Endowed School, Appleby-in-Westmorland, CA16 6EX

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave me when I visited your school recently. I was very pleased that I was able to talk to everyone during the two days and find out your views of the school. You told me that you go to a good school and I agree with you. You also said that you feel totally safe and enjoy your learning.

These are the main things in my report.

- From Reception through to Year 6 you are doing well with your work.
- You are really well looked after and get on together very nicely.
- Your behaviour is good and the way you help to run the school as councillors and buddies shows how mature and responsible you are.
- Teaching and the curriculum are both good. The excellent partnerships you enjoy with other schools really help you to learn well and stay fit and healthy.
- Your school is well run by the headteacher, staff and governors.
- Well done for achieving above average attendance!

I have asked the school to do one or two things to make your good school even better. Although you are achieving well, I think that some of you who find learning easier than most or who have a special talent could make faster progress at times, by receiving harder work and more difficult targets. Although you all know a lot about the local area where you live, more needs to be done to help you to understand the wider communities in the United Kingdom and beyond. I hope you will enjoy finding out about different communities in the wider world.

Good luck everyone for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Sheila Mawer

Lead inspector

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