

Grange CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112280
Local Authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	337892
Inspection dates	12–13 May 2010
Reporting inspector	David Byrne

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	164
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Judith Mitchell
Headteacher	Mr Colin Milner
Date of previous school inspection	19 April 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 10 lessons taught by eight teachers. Meetings were held with governors, staff, pupils and the School Improvement Partner. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documents relating to safeguarding, the progress and attainment of pupils, the curriculum, the school's development plan and the way in which the school evaluates its own performance. The inspection team analysed 102 questionnaires returned by parents and carers and those from staff and pupils.

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

- the overall rate of progress of pupils across the school
- the impact of the curriculum on learning
- how effectively the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are met
- the school's contribution to community cohesion
- the accuracy of the school's self-evaluation and effectiveness of the procedures for monitoring the school's performance.

Information about the school

This is a small primary school. The large majority of pupils are White British. A few pupils speak English as an additional language. The deputy headteacher has taken up a promoted post since the last inspection. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. A below-average proportion of pupils has special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school is accredited as a Healthy School and has Eco-Schools Green Flag status. The school provides after-school care which is subject to a separate inspection.

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 with an exceptionally caring ethos. The large majority of parents and carers are very positive about the quality of the school's provision. Pupils benefit from good teaching which provides interesting lessons that make school fun.

After a satisfactory start in the Early Years Foundation Stage the large majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress and those who speak English as an additional language do exceptionally well. Given their starting points, pupils' achievement is good overall and attainment at Year 6 is typically well above average. A strong curriculum, which is increasingly led by pupils' interests, contributes to good learning. Outstanding links with local schools and the local authority, coupled with the imaginative use of the outdoors, enrich learning enormously. In addition, an excellent range of extra-curricular activities enables pupils to develop special interests and talents.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. This contributes to good behaviour and a good understanding of the need to treat others with care and respect. Pupils grow into mature and thoughtful people. They develop positive attitudes to others and take pride in their work. Most have a good knowledge of the choices required to live safe and healthy lives and strive to put this into practice. Pupils leave school with the necessary skills and personal qualities to take full advantage of their next stage of education.

Leadership and management, including governance, are good. There is a clear focus on raising attainment and ensuring that all groups make good progress. The school's criteria for monitoring its success lack real detail and this means that some aspects of its own evaluation are over generous. This is because subject leaders, though very competent, have limited opportunities to monitor and evaluate the school. Since the last inspection high standards have been maintained and important aspects of the curriculum have been improved. These factors demonstrate the school's good capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of education in the Early Years Foundation Stage from satisfactory to good by:
 - developing the use of the outdoor learning environment in Reception
 - improving the range and quality of learning resources to provide more options for children to make their own choices

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- ensuring that the Early Years Foundation Stage leader is supported to develop good practice across both classes.
- Improve the impact of leadership and management in the school by:
 - establishing clear criteria for evaluating the school's success and enabling staff to have the time to monitor the school's performance.

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

The large majority of pupils enjoy lessons and thrive on solving practical problems. For instance, pupils in Year 6 were engrossed with a mathematics and science project to explore how the length of string affected the movement of a pendulum. Such activities demonstrate pupils' ability to work collaboratively, as well as independently. The pride in their efforts is reflected in the good-quality work in their books.

Good progress from starting points that are typical for their age in the Early Years Foundation Stage results in well above average attainment in English, mathematics and science by the end of Key Stage 2. Attainment in reading has been historically very high and better than in writing. The introduction of strategies such as 'Every child a writer' and the 'Power of reading' has contributed to a boost to the attainment of all pupils in writing, and especially of boys. In mathematics pupils have consistently done well, as has been the case in science, although the more able have not always done quite as well as they could. There are many strengths in performance in physical education and aspects of the arts. Pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because of the dedicated support of teachers and teaching assistants.

Pupils develop the confidence to make decisions and manage their own learning. Many have a good and deepening understanding of their own strengths and weaknesses and increasingly use this knowledge to improve their own learning. These qualities, coupled with good academic attainment and above-average attendance, prepare pupils well for the next stage in their education. Pupils know their voice is heard and valued and by acting as playground helpers and school councillors they contribute positively to the running of the school.

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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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	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	2
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?

Teachers know exactly how well pupils are doing and use this information to plan work to match pupils' needs. Most lessons are interesting and stimulating, although in some classes better use could be made of new technology to enrich learning. In the very best lessons pupils use their imagination to transfer learning from one area to another. For instance, knowledge from history was combined with persuasive texts in literacy to advertise a 'Roman' board game as part of a design and technology project. At times, however, progress is held back because pupils are not always given enough opportunity to find things out for themselves. The purposes of lessons are clearly explained and time is taken to enable pupils to evaluate how well they have learned. This process helps them to become aware of what they need to do to improve their work, thereby raising their performance.

Many improvements to the curriculum are underway as a result of close collaboration with other schools and taking on initiatives such as the Forest School's project. There is a clear focus on developing the basic skills of literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology but increasingly an approach is being adopted that makes links between subjects within a theme. This enables the interest of pupils to be considered and included, which promotes a greater interest in learning. One consequence of this is a marked improvement in attainment in writing, particularly for boys. Memorable experiences are provided through many visitors to school such as the felt maker who worked with Year 2 to capture the art of Peruvian culture.

Pupils feel that they are well cared for, guided and supported and the vast majority of parents and carers agree. Inspection findings show that the school goes the extra mile

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to care for and support pupils with emotional and personal needs. Very close liaison with a range of agencies enables effective support to be tailored to individuals' needs. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are given well-managed day-to-day support and the school is in the process of improving the quality of its plans for individual pupils. Older pupils are very well prepared for their move to secondary school, through a variety of well-organised and innovative activities.

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?

Leadership and management, including governance, are good. There is a shared commitment among all staff to provide the best possible quality of education within an extremely caring and supportive ethos. The school gives a high regard to promoting equality of opportunity for all pupils and has effective procedures for dealing with any form of discrimination. The process of self-evaluation and the criteria for judging the school's success lack sharpness. This fact, coupled with a limited time for key managers to monitor the school's work, means that the school's view of itself is rather generous. The governors are very well led and managed and are a vital part of the school's success. They ensure that the safeguarding requirements are fully met and that there is a good emphasis given to promoting community cohesion within the school and the local community. Good links with other schools contribute to developing pupils' understanding of diversity in modern society. The involvement of parents and carers is greatly valued by the school and the school has succeeded in explaining to them how the modern curriculum works. The school manages its budget well and gives good value for money.

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

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

The provision is satisfactory overall and good for developing children's personal, social and emotional development. Children start Nursery with skills that are typical for their age but with many being better than that. They settle in quickly because adults establish clear routines and care for them well. By the end of Reception, most children reach the expected levels for their age with a significant number exceeding them. Children develop the confidence to make choices about what they wish to learn and develop good cooperative skills when sharing with others. They feel safe and secure and enjoy good relationships with each other and adults.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The recently appointed leader for the Early Years Foundation Stage is steadily developing the curriculum. Closer links are being built between the Nursery and Reception classes so that good practice can be shared for the benefit of all children. Good practice is developing in the tracking of children's learning, with regular observations and recording of their achievements. The recently introduced learning journals are popular with parents and carers, who are delighted to be involved in sharing information about their children's development. The level of challenge in learning is usually appropriate, but the quality of activities is sometimes hampered by a lack of stimulating resources in the Reception class. Outside areas are used well by the Nursery children, though underused by those in Reception.

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	3
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

The percentage of parents and carers who returned their questionnaires was high. The

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large majority are very supportive of the school. Inspectors agreed with the overall view held by parents and carers about the school. A small minority of parents and carers expressed some concerns about the quality of the security within the school. The inspectors checked on this and found that proper procedures are in place to secure the building and maintain the safety of pupils and adults.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Grange CofE 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 102 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 164 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	64	63	30	29	7	7	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	64	63	31	30	4	4	2	2
The school informs me about my child's progress	52	51	46	45	1	1	2	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	55	54	41	40	3	3	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	63	62	36	35	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	50	49	42	41	3	3	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	47	46	52	51	1	1	2	2
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)	52	51	40	39	1	1	2	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	53	52	45	44	2	2	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	46	45	45	44	6	6	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	48	47	47	46	2	2	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	55	54	42	41	1	1	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	64	63	35	34	1	1	1	1

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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.



14 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Grange C of E Primary School, Grange-over-Sands, LA11 7JF

It was a delight to meet you for two days and share some of school life with you. You attend a good school which really cares for each of you and gives you a good start in life. It was good to see so many smiling faces and happy children in lessons and about school. The way that teachers listen to your views adds to the quality of learning you receive and helps you all to make good progress. When you leave school in Year 6 a higher proportion than average of you reaches standards that exceed the expectations for your age. You should also be proud of how well you do in sport and the arts.

Your teachers and the support staff work hard to make your lessons fun. The linking together of subjects such as literacy, mathematics and science seems to be making you enjoy lessons more and more. Not only do you do well academically, but you also develop a good understanding of how to look after yourselves by eating sensibly and taking regular exercise. These features will help you to live healthy lives in future. It was pleasing that you said you felt safe in school and that any bullying was rare.

There are some things that your school could do even better and I have asked your headteacher and governors to consider the following.

- Find ways of making learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and especially in Reception, even better.
- Strengthen the way in which staff keep a check on how well the school is performing so that even better things can be provided for you.

I wish you all the very best for your future and hope you continue to enjoy your time at school, making good friends and enjoying learning.

Yours sincerely

Mr David Byrne

Lead inspector

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