

Calthwaite CofE School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112301
Local Authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	337898
Inspection dates	22–23 September 2009
Reporting inspector	Alison Thomson

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	52
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr C Ecroyd
Headteacher	Mr G Norman
Date of previous school inspection	2 March 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited nine lessons and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and analysed 20 questionnaire responses from parents and carers, 26 questionnaire responses from pupils and nine from staff. The team also looked at the data the school had collected about pupils' progress, at work in pupils' books and at the school's records of monitoring the quality of teaching.

- attainment and progress in 2009, with particular respect to writing and mathematics in Key Stage 2
- how the school uses assessment to involve pupils effectively in their own learning
- the effectiveness of the school's monitoring and evaluation, particularly of areas that are less strong such as attainment in writing.

Information about the school

Calthwaite is a very small primary school. There is currently a gender imbalance, with boys outnumbering girls by two to one. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than average. This includes a group of pupils who have speech, language and communication learning needs. A below average proportion of pupils have a statement of special educational needs. All pupils are White British, with no pupils speaking English as an additional language. Early Years Foundation Stage consists of a Reception class. The number of pupils entering and leaving the school throughout the year is very low.

The school has many awards, including Flagship Food for Life 2009 and Activemark 2009, for the promotion of a healthy lifestyle.

The number of pupils attending the school has been declining although this has stabilised this year. The school has gone through a period of instability in staffing, but this has now been resolved.

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

Calthwaite school provides a good education for its pupils in a caring, family-like environment. The majority of parents are very positive about all aspects of the school and their views are captured accurately by the comment, 'I cannot envisage a better village school set up.' One of the main strengths of the school is the excellent care, guidance and support of all its pupils, including the most vulnerable. This results in many aspects of pupils' development being outstanding.

Pupils feel extremely safe in school and feel that the school values their views. They have an excellent understanding of what it means to be healthy and are very proud of their contribution towards the school's awards in this area. The school's ethos of respect shines through in the courtesy pupils show to others, and through roles such as house captains and table monitors at lunchtimes. Year 2 pupils told the inspectors that they feel very important helping younger children to settle in when they first start school. Pupils have good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. While the spiritual, moral and social aspects are particularly strong, pupils' understanding of minority ethnic groups reflecting the mix in the United Kingdom is less secure. The school has made excellent links with the local community and the pupils' involvement in events such as 'Party in the Park' is particularly well thought of by the residents. This is exemplified by the comment, 'The school is the life and soul of the village,' from a governor who lives locally. The school has analysed all three strands of community cohesion and has identified that the national and international aspects need strengthening. However, it has already made a start by establishing a link with a school in Poland.

Teaching is good and the pupils achieve well, particularly in science and reading. They are usually given tasks that they find interesting and challenging, but say that they sometimes find writing boring. The school has improved standards in mathematics and writing, but acknowledges that standards, in writing in particular, could be even higher. Relationships in lessons are very positive and pupils are eager to answer questions and to participate. Their behaviour contributes strongly to their learning. For example, they cooperate with each other well when working in groups to solve challenging problems. They welcome the chance to work independently, but they are not always given enough opportunities to be involved in assessing how well they are learning. As a result, they do not progress as quickly as they might do in some lessons. The school tracks the progress of pupils regularly. This ensures the early identification of any underachievement. Good individual and small-group support ensures that pupils soon make up lost ground. There are good examples of effective intervention and support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and this enables them to make good progress. The curriculum caters successfully for all pupils and is supported

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very well by many visits and visitors.

The headteacher effectively monitors and evaluates the school's work and knows the strengths and areas for development. He has worked successfully to overcome instability in staffing. The decline in standards and progress at the end of Year 6 has been reversed and attainment, although in line with the national average overall, is now above average in science and reading. Governors play an important role in supporting the strategic development of the school. They have an increasingly active role in the life of the school and hold the headteacher to account effectively. For example, they monitor the effectiveness of the curriculum well. However, they rely too heavily on the headteacher for evidence about the performance of the school and have not fully developed systems for monitoring and evaluating the breadth of the school's work. Nevertheless, the school has demonstrated that it has made improvements in many areas since the previous inspection. This is illustrated by becoming a Flagship Food for Life school, by managing resources well to address the deficit budget, and for introducing a successful marking policy which ensures that pupils know how to improve their work. Capacity for further improvement is, therefore, good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in writing by:
 - - making writing tasks more relevant to pupils' interests
 - - introducing writing into as many other curricular areas as possible
 - - giving pupils clear, measurable success criteria so that they become more involved in assessing their own progress in lessons.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to learn about other cultures, reflecting the ethnic diversity that exists nationally and internationally by:
 - - building links with schools in the United Kingdom that contrast with the school in terms of the ethnic mix of pupils
 - - consolidating the links that have been made with a school in Poland.
- Extend the governing body's monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance by:
 - - putting in place robust systems to enable governors to focus more closely on the school's performance.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Although classes have a range of abilities and ages, lessons are particularly well organised so that all pupils learn productively and make good progress. For example, in a Key Stage 2 lesson on maps and scale, each pupil was engrossed in a challenging task that matched that pupil's ability. While the younger pupils were identifying changes that had occurred in their school grounds on an outline map, older pupils were drawing their own maps to scale. Teachers share successfully with pupils what they should be learning. However, pupils are not given clear enough success criteria so that they can gauge for themselves how well they are progressing. Behaviour is good and pupils

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contribute enthusiastically in discussions. Older pupils value the opportunities to work independently and told the inspectors that they were proud to be trusted to get on with their work.

The small cohorts mean that overall attainment fluctuates from year to year. Attainment at the end of Year 6 is securely average, with standards in science and reading rising to above average in 2009. Progress is good throughout the school. This includes progress in mathematics where there had been previous underachievement. Progress in writing has improved, but pupils indicated that they would like some more interesting things to write about. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress and achieve well, in line with their peers, as a consequence of well-focused support. There is no significant variation in the progress and learning of different groups of pupils in lessons.

Pupils greatly enjoy school and attendance is high. They greatly enjoy the wide range of activities on offer, including the opportunity to organise a sports day and to train the younger pupils for the events. They are prepared successfully for their future economic well-being by having good information and communication technology (ICT) skills and a keen sense of cooperation and consideration for others when working together.

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	3
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	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

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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How effective is the provision?

Good-quality teaching typically takes good account of pupils' different needs and teachers maintain the interest of pupils through good pace and interesting activities. In one English lesson pupils responded enthusiastically to the challenge of being a reporter during a Second World War air raid. Teachers promote learning effectively through the good use of 'talking partners' to generate ideas that can then be shared with the whole class. Teachers' marking uses a clear system that pupils understand well. The written comments are very helpful so pupils know clearly how they can improve their work. However, pupils are not given enough opportunity to be involved in assessing their own learning through evaluating their progress against the targets set for them.

The good curriculum allows pupils to make good progress. Initiatives such as 'Big Writing' have brought about some improvement in writing throughout the school. Many pupils said how much they enjoyed their mathematics lessons, thriving on the challenge of solving problems, involving, for example, probability. While there are many good links between topics, the school recognises that these are currently too limited to enhance pupils' writing skills fully. Learning has been improved by the good use of interactive whiteboards. Pupils' personal qualities are developed successfully through a wide range of interesting activities which they appreciate and enjoy. A telling example is the visit to an open air museum where pupils experience first-hand what life was like in early industrial and agricultural Britain.

Pupils are known as individuals and well cared for by staff. The school makes good use of external agencies to ensure that pupils' different needs are met appropriately. Planning for individual pupil's needs is robust and their progress carefully monitored. Evidence was seen of significant success in the way in which the school helps pupils overcome difficulties in achieving well. Many parents commented on how much they valued the way in which the school met their child's particular needs. Links with secondary schools are very strong, preparing them well for the move to a much larger 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	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has the good support of staff, parents and governors and is fully

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committed to ensure that the outcomes for all pupils are as good as they can be. Although the school is small, responsibilities are shared and all staff work very successfully together. Progress and learning are improving in all areas because of the drive to raise attainment. Monitoring of lessons is accurate and weaker teaching has been successfully tackled to ensure that all lessons are good or better. As a result, all groups of pupils make equally good progress, reflecting good equality of opportunity for all. The school's effective system for tracking pupils' progress regularly provides very useful information, ensuring the early identification and eradication of any underachievement.

Governance is satisfactory and governors are increasingly involved in school life. A high priority is given in the school's policies and actions to ensure that pupils are safe on site and during out-of-school activities. All required procedures are in place and robust. Partnerships with outside agencies are strong, but senior leaders have yet to evaluate systematically these partnerships' impact on pupils' learning and development. Links with parents are particularly strong and all who returned the questionnaire feel that the school listens to them and acts on their views. A few parents feel that the school does not help them support their learning well enough. This is something about which the school is already aware and is addressing effectively.

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	3
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	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

Children enjoy learning in this bright and stimulating environment. Most children join with the expected skills for their age, but a significant minority have less well-developed

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social and language skills. The carefully thought out programme of activities helps all children to develop their interests, skills and independence successfully. The majority of children reach the levels expected for their age in most areas of learning by the time they reach Year 1.

Staff have been very successful in developing children's early skills by picking up on their interests and extending them. Girls and boys were seen enthusiastically engaged in imaginative play, taking turns driving their 'train' to Spain. Activities led by adults also work well. Children enjoy their daily sessions in small groups which help them link sounds and letters and, as a result, some were able to give their own examples of words beginning with 's'. Inspectors saw children helping to make their own healthy 'smoothies'. This learning was helped greatly by Year 1 and 2 children encouraging the younger ones. 'If you sit nicely, you will get your turn next,' said a Year 2 pupil to a Reception child. Staff adapt their approaches appropriately to different children, making sure that each child feels safe and secure during their early days at school. The all-weather outdoor area is imaginatively used, but the access route at present limits its use.

Reception children are taught in the same class as Key Stage 1 pupils. This is effectively managed on a day-to-day basis. Daily and weekly planning is completed and put into action efficiently, covering the full range of areas of learning. Learning objectives are matched well to the differing needs of children and there is a clear focus on communication and literacy, which has been identified as an area that is less strong. The school's leadership and self-evaluation of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good and there are increasingly effective links with a private Nursery nearby. At present, leadership is shared as there is a new team in place.

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 are very positive about all aspects of the school. They are particularly happy with the management of the school and the way their views are sought and acted upon. Their comments reflect their appreciation of the school's outstanding care and support for their children as individuals. The inspectors felt that this was a real strength of the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Calthwaite 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 20 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 52 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	34	77	7	16	3	7	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	26	62	15	36	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	25	58	12	28	5	12	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	25	58	13	30	4	9	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	24	56	14	33	4	9	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	21	50	13	31	6	14	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	29	67	13	30	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)	21	54	12	31	3	8	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	28	65	7	16	6	14	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	25	60	13	31	3	7	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	23	56	15	37	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	27	64	13	31	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	29	69	7	17	5	12	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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	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.



Inspection of Calthwaite C of E School, Penrith, CA11 9QT

Thank you for welcoming the other inspectors and me to your school recently. We enjoyed talking with you and seeing how well you learn in class. We worked very closely with your headteacher and also spent time talking to your teachers and governors and looking at your work. Your questionnaires told us that you enjoy all the things that you do at school very much and that you all feel very safe there. They also told us that you feel the teachers listen to you well. Many of you also commented on the good quality of the school dinners.

You think that Calthwaite is a good school and we agree with you. Your teachers know you well and find lots of different ways to help you learn and develop as young people. We saw this in your lessons and in the extra activities the school sets up for you. This helps you achieve well in your work and to develop good personal skills, such as helping others. We think that you do this particularly well. We were very pleased to see how good your attendance is. As you probably know, your teachers have been working hard on ways to make sure you make as good progress in your other subjects as you do, for example, in science and reading.

Your headteacher, teachers and governors work together closely as a team to keep improving the school. The school keeps a careful check on the progress you make and it finds out what you and your parents think. We have asked your teachers to help you do even better in your writing and to give you more opportunities to check for yourselves how well you are learning. We have also asked for the governors to become more involved in checking how well you are progressing. Lastly, we have asked your headteacher to find ways of helping you learn about people of different backgrounds and cultures, both in the United Kingdom and abroad.

I hope you continue to enjoy all the activities that the school has to offer.

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