

Dean Barwick School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112343
Local Authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	337907
Inspection dates	2–3 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Jean Kendall HMI

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	26
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Jolyon Dodgson
Headteacher	Mrs Linda Graves
Date of previous school inspection	12 December 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors. The inspector visited six lessons, and observed the two full-time teachers and three teaching assistants. Approximately 65% of the time was spent in lessons and sampling pupils' work. The inspector met with governors, staff, the local authority's School Improvement Partner and pupils. She observed the school's work, and scrutinised the school's self-evaluation, the school improvement plan, financial details and internal and external monitoring reports. The inspector also took account of the 26 questionnaire returns from parents and carers and those from pupils and staff.

- the progress made by pupils of different abilities and learning needs, particularly in writing and in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- the extent to which teaching and the curriculum meet needs across the range of age groups and ability in each of the three teaching groups
- how well all leaders drive improvement and manage the quality of teaching
- how well resources are managed to provide value for money and secure capacity for sustained improvement.

Information about the school

Dean Barwick is a very small school serving the village of Witherslack and surrounding countryside. It is based in a rural setting with extensive grounds and woodland. The vast majority of pupils are of White British background. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities and with a statement of special educational needs is currently higher than average. The very small cohorts mean that comparisons with national averages are subject to year-on-year fluctuation. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught separately in the mornings and in a class with Year 1 and Year 2 pupils in the afternoons. There are currently three pupils in a Nursery provision which is subject to a separate inspection. The school has an application out for consultation for a change-of-age status to include three-year-old children on its roll.

The school is part of a small school's consortium and extended services cluster. It has the Go4it award, Healthy Schools, Artsmark Silver and Forest Schools status.

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

Dean Barwick School provides a good quality of education for its pupils. Pupils thrive in the welcoming and stimulating environment. They make good progress in their learning and all-round personal development and grow in confidence. They thoroughly enjoy lessons and eagerly take part in the interesting and varied activities offered by the school. Pupils feel very safe and well cared for. They have an excellent awareness of how to keep themselves and others safe, for example, when participating in the exciting Forest School activities and after-school provision. The school makes excellent use of the outdoor learning environment, including its own extensive grounds, the vegetable garden and the adjacent forest.

As well as enthusiastically participating in all the activities on offer, pupils make an excellent contribution to their school through their cooperative and supportive attitudes toward one another. Parents and carers are unanimous in their support of the school; they feel well informed and all feel that their children are happy, safe and well taught. Comments such as, 'The school is like one big family and an asset to the village,' and, 'My child is thriving in this well-led, nurturing school,' are typical.

Teachers and teaching assistants go to great lengths to make lessons varied, interesting and fun. They know all pupils very well and take care to support fully pupils' individual learning and personal development needs. Good teaching overall in the mixed-age classes ensures that all pupils build on their prior learning and extend their knowledge and skills. Support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is effective in helping those pupils to build on their skills and to experience a broad curriculum. The curriculum has been appropriately adapted to ensure that all pupils are challenged and supported and their key skills are developed well across a range of subjects. The good teaching and effective curriculum planning help all pupils to make good overall progress from their varied starting points. However, their progress in writing lags behind their progress in other subjects. The school has made a good start in broadening pupils' writing experiences and the gap is beginning to close. Staff recognise where further improvements need to be made in the systematic teaching of skills and promoting pupils' understanding of the characteristics of different types of writing. Pupils understand what they already know and what they need to do to improve further across the full range of subjects. However, they do not always act on the advice given in the marking of their writing and sometimes repeat errors.

The vision of the headteacher and governors to help all pupils achieve to the best of their ability across a broad range of experiences is shared by all staff. Their commitment and strong teamwork adds to the positive and supportive ethos evident across the school. Monitoring procedures are at early stages and are not sufficiently developed to

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enable the sharing of best practice and ensure consistently good and outstanding teaching in all areas. However, the school's self-evaluation of the quality of provision and outcomes of pupils is accurate and identifies the most important areas to secure improvement. Staff have tackled the areas identified as requiring improvement in the last inspection and all areas of provision have improved over the last four years. This reflects the good leadership of the headteacher, good support from governors and the shared drive of all staff to secure good outcomes for all pupils. The school has good capacity to build further on the improvements it has already made.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the teaching of writing and secure consistently good progress in pupils' writing by:
 - ensuring that skills are taught systematically, based on thorough assessment of each child's abilities and learning needs
 - explicitly teaching the characteristics of different types of writing and building on this knowledge when the different styles are revisited
 - ensuring that pupils act on the guidance given in marking and feedback in subsequent pieces of writing.
- Develop the monitoring and evaluation role of the headteacher to secure consistently good and outstanding teaching in all subjects and areas by:
 - monitoring the quality of teaching against defined criteria
 - sharing the best practice in teaching.

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

Pupils' enjoyment of learning is evident in all they do. When asked their opinions, all pupils told the inspector that 'lessons are fun!' They enjoy the variety and range of experiences in the classroom and the more unusual aspects such as Forest School activities, rural skills workshops and the weekly visit to the local museum. They enter the school with varied experiences, knowledge and skills. Well-planned learning experiences and pupils' positive attitudes help all pupils to make good progress overall from their starting points. Boys and girls do equally well. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because they are supported well in small groups and individually. Pupils respond well to adult guidance when there are occasional lapses in concentration or overly enthusiastic responses in lessons. The school's performance in tests at the end of Year 6 and attendance figures are subject to year-on-year variation due to very small cohorts. Performance in both aspects is broadly in line with national averages over time.

Pupils feel extremely safe and are entirely confident that any issues will be dealt with effectively. They are considerate, accepting of individuals' needs and helpful toward each other. Their social and moral skills are well developed. The school's link with a school in Bolton and the taught curriculum helps them develop an understanding of

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different cultural influences and customs. They are curious about the world around them and reflect on their experiences and their own and others' needs. This was demonstrated in the excellent and moving assembly when pupils of all ages quietly reflected on their own concerns and thought about how they could make a positive difference. Pupils have a good understanding of what is a healthy lifestyle and of dietary requirements. They participate in physical activities with enthusiasm and demonstrate good levels of physical fitness. The inspector had difficulty keeping up with the younger children in the climb through the woods..

Pupils' positive attitudes add much to the happy atmosphere in school. All pupils are able to contribute to decisions about their learning and are keen to take on additional responsibilities on the school council and in planning events. The school is very much at the heart of the community and pupils' contributions to local charities and community events such as a village sports day are very much appreciated. Pupils' good level of key skills, their social attributes and confident approach to challenges mean that they are well prepared for their future 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	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	2
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	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

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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Teachers go to great lengths to ensure that teaching is vibrant and stimulating and learning experiences are varied, interesting, relevant and fun. Teaching is mostly good. It is strongest in the Key Stage 2 class, where the headteacher provides an excellent role model and skilfully provides for the varied learning needs of pupils aged seven to 11. Pupils make good progress in most subjects, particularly in mathematics, science, information and communication technology, and creative subjects. Lessons are generally well planned, making effective use of assessment and taking account of pupils' prior learning. This ensures that pupils are provided with relevant activities and experiences that will develop their skills and knowledge. However, their progress in writing is slower and this has an impact on their performance in English tests. This is because key writing skills are not as systematically well taught as the skills in other subjects. Adults' confirming and encouraging approaches are strengths in all lessons. Pupils in Key Stage 1 feel secure and confident to 'have a go' because they know the teacher will praise their efforts and support further their learning.

Adults know individual pupils very well and this helps them to provide well-targeted and timely support to any pupil who needs it. Pupils feel and are well cared for and this helps them grow in confidence and build positive relationships. Good academic and personal guidance and support helps all pupils achieve good outcomes. The curriculum is adapted well to meet the varied needs, abilities and interests of pupils in each class, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Key skills are mostly developed well across the curriculum. Alongside the more traditional subjects, experiences such as gardening, outdoor learning, museum-based learning and visiting teachers add variety and breadth to the curriculum. Pupils enjoy the enrichment offered through educational visits, 'sleepovers' in school and a good range of after-school clubs.

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 headteacher ably leads a group of fully committed staff in providing good-quality teaching, a stimulating curriculum and good care, guidance and support for all pupils. She achieves this by providing an excellent role model as teacher of the Key Stage 2 class. All adults have played their part in improving provision from satisfactory to good and tackling weaknesses identified at the last inspection. However, the headteacher has had limited time to focus on strategic leadership, monitoring and evaluation which means that the best practice in the school is not always recognised and shared.

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Governors are taking a more active role in these aspects and are providing good levels of support and challenge to school leaders. Members of the governing body have a good range of expertise which is effectively used to support the headteacher in management issues. The school has a deficit budget which is now being well managed by the governing body and a three-year-plan has been accepted by the local authority. Despite this, the school has managed to retain the favourable level of resources it provides for pupils and pupils' outcomes are good. It offers satisfactory value for money.

The school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination effectively. The needs of all pupils are equally well met and all are able to experience all aspects of school life. Skilful planning and teaching ensures that the most able pupils are challenged and extended in their learning and those with particular needs are well supported. There are clear policies and procedures and well-developed safeguarding systems in place to keep pupils safe. The school has very close links with the local community and has a positive relationship with parents and carers. Pupils have a good understanding of their own rural context and cultural traditions. They have good opportunities to engage with and share their experiences with children from other religious, ethnic and social backgrounds through links with schools in varying contexts. Partnerships with local secondary schools and local clusters of primary schools help pupils to experience a broader range of activities and support staff in developing their skills and sharing practice with staff from other schools.

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage play and learn happily together. Like all other pupils in the school they find learning fun and enthusiastically participate in self-initiated activities and join in the adult-led sessions. They feel safe and well cared for because adults are encouraging and children know they are always on hand to deal with any issues that might arise. All welfare requirements are met. Children are confident when talking with adults and readily chat and cooperate with each other. Their knowledge and skills when they enter the Early Years Foundation Stage vary from year to year. Their learning experiences are well matched to their individual learning needs and interests, based on thorough observations and assessments. This supports them in making good progress in their knowledge and understanding across all areas of learning and prepares them well for the next stage of their education.

Provision is well organised to ensure that children receive interesting and varied experiences that promote their health, well-being and learning. The thoughtfully organised environment is both welcoming and stimulating. Resources are easily accessible and activities provide challenge for children and extend their learning. There is an appropriate balance between child-initiated and adult-led activities. Children have free access to the outdoors which they enjoy. The area is safe and well supervised but it does not fully reflect the richness of learning opportunities available indoors. The adults who work in The Early Years Foundation Stage plan well together to ensure that the provision is of a consistently good standard. Parents and carers are highly satisfied with the provision, stating for example: 'My child loves attending Dean Barwick School; the staff are very welcoming and the children very polite. I am pleased to have my child attend and my younger child cannot wait to go.'

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

All parents and carers returned questionnaires. They unanimously agreed that their children enjoy school, are kept safe and that they are happy with their children's experience.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Dean Barwick 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 26 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 26 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	22	85	4	15	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	23	88	3	12	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	23	88	3	12	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	21	81	4	15	1	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	23	88	3	12	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	22	85	4	15	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	24	92	2	8	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	81	5	19	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	23	88	2	8	1	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	23	88	3	12	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	22	85	4	15	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	22	85	4	15	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	24	92	2	8	0	0	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.



04 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Dean Barwick School, Grange-over-Sands, LA11 6RS

Thank you for your friendly welcome and helpful contributions when I came to inspect your school recently. It was a pleasure to talk with you and observe your work. I found Dean Barwick to be a good school. You are right to be proud of your work and achievements.

These are the strengths I identified.

¿ You feel extremely safe in school and enjoy your lessons and a range of other activities. You particularly enjoy Forest School activities and after-school clubs.

- You make an excellent contribution to the school through your considerate behaviour toward one another and by taking on additional responsibilities.
- You make good progress in your learning and in the development of your personal skills.
- You are fit and healthy. I really enjoyed my walk in the woods, even though I struggled to keep up with you going up the big hill!
- Teachers go to great lengths to make your lessons varied, interesting and fun. They adapt the curriculum and their teaching well to ensure that you all make good progress from your varied starting points.
- Your headteacher and governors are providing good leadership to help the school go on to make further improvements.

There are two areas I have asked staff to improve further. You make good progress overall in your learning, but your progress in writing is slower than it is in other subjects. Your teachers are going to make sure you build on your writing skills as well as you build on skills in other subjects. I have also asked your headteacher to monitor the quality of teaching more closely so that the best teaching can be shared.

Please thank your parents and carers for their questionnaire returns. It is clear they are highly satisfied with your school. They made many positive comments which I fully agree with. I wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Ms Jean Kendall

Her Majesty's Inspector

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