

Scotby CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112403
Local Authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	337921
Inspection dates	25–26 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Judith Straw

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	264
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Julian Coulthard
Headteacher	Miss Jackie Watson
Date of previous school inspection	1 January 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 19 lessons, including two extended observations in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at information about pupils' progress, subject and school development plans, policies and procedures, including all those relating to safeguarding. Inspectors scrutinised 145 questionnaires from parents and the same number from pupils in Years 3 to 6.

- the attainment and progress of pupils, particularly in mathematics
- the attainment and progress for more-able pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities to determine whether teaching is challenging enough and matched correctly to pupils' needs
- the effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels in driving forward school improvement
- the outcomes for children and quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Information about the school

This is a primary school of average size situated on the outskirts of Carlisle. Very few pupils are entitled to take a free school meal. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is just below average. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The Early Years Foundation Stage provision consists of Reception classes. The school has gained the Activemark and is recognised as an Enquiry School with Creative Partnerships. A new headteacher was appointed in spring 2008. Previously she had served as acting headteacher.

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, which has improved significantly since the last inspection. Effective leadership from the new headteacher and governors has raised morale after a difficult and prolonged time of uncertainty during which the school had no permanent leadership. The school is now a happy, thriving community. Typical of parents' views is that, 'this is a lovely school, the staff work hard to support each child and are always available to talk to parents.'

Overall, achievement is good as standards are above average. Teaching is good in Key Stages 1 and 2. Lessons move along quickly with pace and challenge, so that pupils learn well and make good progress. Occasionally, teaching does not use the assessments of pupils' learning to plan precisely how to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills. Nevertheless, the increasingly exciting and relevant curriculum gives pupils good opportunities to practice their skills across a range of subjects, except sometimes in the use of information and communication technology (ICT). The school has halted a previous decline in standards in writing and after a serious dip in attainment, progress and achievement in 2008, standards rose again to an above average level at the end of Year 6, in 2009.

Since the last inspection, the school has improved in all the areas that were identified as areas for development. Attainment in writing has risen, the school has implemented an effective system for tracking pupils' progress and subject leaders have developed their skills to take a full part in monitoring the success of the school and identifying areas to improve. Based on these improvements, the ongoing development of teaching, learning and the curriculum in Key Stages 1 and 2, and the positive outcomes in pupils' personal development and well-being, the capacity to improve even further is good.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress. Teaching sometimes does not challenge children enough in their learning. There are, for example, too few opportunities for children to extend their learning out of doors. The otherwise satisfactory leadership tends to have too generous a view of what is provided and its effect on children's development.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise provision from satisfactory to at least good in Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - - making sure the expectations in the teaching and learning are high enough to accelerate progress
 - - providing more imaginative and better resourced opportunities to enhance

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children's play

- - developing regular planned provision for outdoor learning
- - formally monitoring and evaluating the provision.
- Improve the quality of pupils' learning in Years 1 to 6 by:
- - ensuring all staff make consistently good use of daily assessment to plan pupils' learning to meet their various capabilities
- - planning more opportunities for pupils to use ICT in a range of subjects.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils work hard in lessons and relate well to their teachers. They show good levels of concentration and most are positive in their attitudes to learning. The great majority of pupils behave well. By the end of Year 6, pupils have gained a good range of basic skills, so they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Owing to the difficulties faced by the school, many pupils under-performed in 2008 and as a result, attainment fell. Since then it has recovered, particularly in English, where standards were well above average in 2009 at the end of Year 6. Good progress continues this year. Standards in English have been maintained and are rising in mathematics owing to the confident and expert leadership in that subject.

Pupils feel safe and happy in school. They have a good understanding of the importance of a healthy diet and the value of taking regular exercise. Indeed, pupils say they would like even more opportunities for active and vigorous play at breaks and lunchtime.

Pupils' enjoyment of school is shown their excellent attendance and the enthusiasm with which they talk about all activities, including their work. They have a strong sense of right and wrong, open and enquiring minds and have a good knowledge of the beliefs and values of others. The members of the school council are fully involved in decision making. All pupils are regularly consulted about the school's plans, expenditure and the curriculum. They are proud of their school and enjoy raising money for local and international charities.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is good and it contains some first-rate features particularly in the way in which subjects are combined to make learning more interesting. Teachers plan lessons with pace and challenge, particularly in mathematics. During the inspection, for example, some pupils were engaged in solving complicated problems that challenged their powers of arithmetic and reasoning. Most lessons are planned to provide challenge for pupils of all levels of ability. However, in some lessons, assessment is not used well enough to plan new work. Pupils assess their own work frequently and find teachers' marking useful in helping them to make improvements. Teaching assistants are well briefed and make a positive contribution to the learning and progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The good curriculum contains some notable features. The range of cross-curricular work is excellent. For example, in the current Year 6 project on Greece, pupils are studying the history and literature of ancient Greece. In design and technology they have made togas and other Greek costumes. After tasting food at a Greek restaurant, they spent a lesson working out the various bills for meals. In literacy, they studied the difference between fact and opinion in various Greek holiday brochures and used computers to assist in their design of a Greek vase. These methods make learning immediate and relevant. Additional enrichment is provided in sport, through links with other providers, dance and French. The many after-school clubs, visits and visitors enhance the enjoyment of all pupils. Take-up is excellent; in the last academic year 82% of pupils attended at least one club. A strong curriculum for personal, social, moral and cultural development supports pupils' good social development. However, the curriculum is no better than good overall owing to the missed opportunities for all pupils to sharpen their skills in ICT.

The effective care, guidance and support which pupils receive promote the good outcomes in pupils' personal, social and moral development, awareness of issues relating to health and their understanding of the world around them. The school works well with a wide range of other agencies. The school has good measures in place to support vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities

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and to make sure that they are fully included in all aspects of school life.

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 supported by her deputy headteacher, has kept the school on an even keel through a turbulent time. Senior leadership has remained focused on school improvement. Senior and middle managers use a range of strategies to monitor the quality of work in the school. The success of their work is seen in the improved attainment and progress in Years 3 to 6. By contrast, it is in the Early Years Foundation Stage that leadership and management lacks the same skills of evaluation. Nevertheless, this is an inclusive school, which works hard to help each child to achieve their potential and to break down barriers to learning. Governance is good. The governors are knowledgeable and enthusiastic and have a very clear and accurate picture of strengths and weaknesses. They provide effective challenge to the school and are involved in monitoring impact of actions taken on the quality of provision.

All safeguarding policies and procedures are in line with government requirements. Staff and governors receive appropriate training and there is a system for regular review of all procedures. The school has established good relationships with parents and the local community. This is clear from the many very positive responses from parents to the questionnaire. Strong links with other providers enhance the curriculum and help to ensure the well-being of pupils. Local community links are good and help to foster good community cohesion. The school has good links with schools in Africa and raises money for, and welcomes visits from, children from Chernobyl. The school monitors the effectiveness of its provision for community cohesion and is beginning to develop links within the United Kingdom as the next step.

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

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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	3
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

Provision is satisfactory. There are some good features, but the setting is satisfactory overall owing to relative shortcomings in teaching, the management of learning and evaluation by the leadership. Good emphasis is placed on ensuring children's care, safety and welfare. Parents say they are entirely confident that their children are well looked after. They appreciate being involved in their children's learning. Relationships between children and adults are good and behaviour is mostly good. Children play well together and enjoy sharing books in the reading area. They participate fully in daily exercise with energy and enthusiasm.

When the children start in Reception their skills are mostly typical for their age. They make satisfactory progress and enter Year 1 with broadly average attainment. Within the satisfactory teaching there is an appropriate balance of directed activities and tasks chosen by the children themselves. However, expectations are not always high enough for the children to make good progress. For example, when the story of the Jolly Postman was used to help children improve their writing, the methods used were not good enough to maintain children's interest. Although the children are keen to initiate some of their own learning, the range and quality of resources for imaginative play are limited. The level of challenge in some activities does not engage children enough in high quality learning. Children have insufficient opportunities to use the outdoor space regularly to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding. Satisfactory leadership and management have established appropriate assessment procedures that give a clear picture of progress and development. However, formal monitoring and evaluation of provision is not fully developed and, as a result, judgements about provision are too generous.

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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 very large majority of parents are entirely happy with the school and offer warm praise for the staff, the headteacher and the way in which their children develop confidence and self-esteem. 'We know our child is valued by staff,' is typical of comments made by parents. They are especially pleased with the creative, cross-curricular, elements in the curriculum, which are making such a positive contribution to pupils' enjoyment of learning. They also comment on the high quality of pastoral care, which their children receive. Many parents expressed satisfaction with the academic standards children attain. A minority of parents show concern about the behaviour of a very small number of children and some were concerned about the dangers of the busy traffic outside the school. Inspectors are satisfied that the school is actively working to improve these matters.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Scotby 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 145 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 264 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	101	70	38	26	2	1	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	82	57	57	39	3	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	76	52	60	41	4	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	88	61	42	29	7	5	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	95	66	43	30	0	0	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	80	55	55	38	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	83	57	52	36	5	3	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)	67	46	65	45	2	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	83	57	47	32	5	3	2	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	58	40	64	44	9	6	7	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	67	46	64	44	6	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	95	66	41	28	3	2	2	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	102	70	35	24	2	1	2	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 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.



27 November 2009

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Scotby CofE Primary School, Carlisle, CA4 8AT

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave to my colleagues and me when we visited you in school this week. We enjoyed talking to you and seeing you at work in lessons and playing at lunchtime. You told us that you are proud of your school and we saw for ourselves that most of you are making good progress. Please thank your parents for the many questionnaires they sent in to help us. These are the important things I found out about your school:

- The school provides you with a good education and is improving all the time. Almost all of you reach above average levels of attainment by the time you leave school and you are well prepared for the next stage of your education.
- Your attendance is high and you enjoy school and all that it offers.
- The school provides you with many opportunities to learn about how to live a healthy life and you try to put this advice into practice by eating sensible and taking plenty of exercise.
- Your teachers plan interesting lessons and you really enjoy the creative curriculum, which makes lessons so enjoyable.
- Most of you behave well. Everyone in school takes good care of you so that you are well supported.
- Children are well looked after in the Early Years Foundation stage where they are making satisfactory progress.

We have asked the school to improve the pace of lessons and challenge in the Early Years Foundation Stage and to look more closely at what is provided so that it is stimulating and exciting with more opportunities to learn outside. In Key Stages 1 and 2, we have asked the school to give you more opportunities to use computers and teachers to collect more information about your daily progress so that you all make good progress in lessons.

We enjoyed our visit very much and wish you all every success in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Judith Straw

Lead Inspector

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