

Cartmel Priory CofE School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 112437 |
| Local Authority | Cumbria |
| Inspection number | 337935 |
| Inspection dates | 15–16 April 2010 |
| Reporting inspector | Ann Wallis |

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

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|--|--|
| Type of school | Secondary |
| School category | Voluntary aided |
| Age range of pupils | 11–16 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 366 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mr Steve Chambers |
| Headteacher | Dr Paul Williams |
| Date of previous school inspection | 13 February 2007 |
| School address | Headless Cross Cartmel Grange-Over-Sands LA11 7SA |
| Telephone number | 01539 536202 |
| Fax number | 01539 536287 |
| Email address | admin@cartmelpriory.cumbria.sch.uk |

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 22 lessons, and observed 22 teachers teach. They held meetings with governors, staff and groups of students and spoke with the School Improvement Partner and a representative of the local authority. They observed the school's work, and looked at students' books, the school improvement plan, school monitoring reports, student progress data and other documentation. They analysed 132 questionnaires from parents, 95 from students and 33 from staff.

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

- students' attainment, personal development and the care, guidance and support they receive and whether these are all strengths of the school as the school's self-evaluation suggests
- the quality of leadership and management at all levels and whether this and teaching in all subjects are good enough to support the school's judgement that it has outstanding capacity to improve
- the rate of school improvement since the last inspection
- the use of assessment information to track students' progress and intervene in their learning when needed.

Information about the school

This is a well below-average-sized school which serves a rural area in South Cumbria. It has specialist status in science. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. Almost all students are of White British heritage and very few are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. A below-average proportion of students have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school has gained Sportsmark, Healthy Schools and Eco Schools awards.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Under the outstanding leadership of the headteacher, Cartmel Priory Church of England School has made excellent progress since the last inspection. Students' attainment has risen markedly and progress has accelerated. Standards are now high, progress is good and students' achievement is outstanding. School self-evaluation is rigorous and very accurate. Lines of responsibility are very clear and staff, particularly leaders and managers at all levels, are highly motivated. Priorities for improvement are very well chosen. Consequently, the school is exceptionally well placed to improve further.

This outstanding school has a great many strengths including:

- the way in which equal opportunities are promoted and the talents of all are recognised and nurtured so both students and staff feel valued and morale is high
- the excellent care, guidance and support it provides which makes all students feel very safe and allows them to really enjoy learning and achieve their very best
- the curriculum which is very closely matched to the needs of all students and in this small school has been enriched by very close links with other schools and colleges
- the high quality of leadership and management at all levels.

Students are keen to learn, show respect for each other and behave well. Relationships are excellent and informal styles and friendly approaches pervade the school. Students make a very valuable contribution to their own and the wider community and are extremely well equipped with the skills needed for the world of work. The vast majority of teaching is good and expectations in lessons are usually high and the pace of work brisk. However, leaders and managers are not complacent and recognise that the quality of teaching can be improved further. The use of new assessment techniques and new information and communication technologies, whilst already used well, are not yet fully developed and embedded in the work of the school.

Community cohesion is promoted well, particularly in the local community. The school has begun to evaluate the impact of this work and has a clear plan for further development. This recognises the need to provide students with further opportunities to engage with students from cultures and communities further afield which differ from their own. Resources are extremely well deployed particularly as the school has managed to reduce a budget deficit whilst at the same time raising attainment and improving students' outcomes.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Extend community cohesion by providing students with further opportunities to engage with students from other cultures and communities both in the United

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Kingdom and abroad.

- Raise the quality of teaching even further so all lessons are at least good and more are outstanding by:
 - embedding the use of new assessment techniques to accelerate students' learning
 - making greater use of new technologies to enhance learning
 - sharing good practice in teaching more widely.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**1**

Students were seen to make good progress in lessons because most are keen to learn and work hard. They respond very well to the good teaching they receive and enjoy learning. Scrutiny of work in students' books and of the detailed records the school keeps on their progress confirmed that students are reaching well above average standards and the achievement of all groups of students is outstanding. For the last two years GCSE results have been high and school data shows that current Year 11 students are on track to reach similar standards in examinations this year. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities make the same progress as their peers because they receive constructive individual help from teachers and teaching assistants.

Students attend school regularly, are punctual and treat all members of the school community with respect. They have excellent literacy and numeracy skills. These, combined with a good understanding of information and communication technology, a real willingness to take responsibility and very well-developed teamwork skills mean they are thoroughly prepared to become very good citizens.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

| | |
|--|----------|
| Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning | 1 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Pupils' attainment ¹ | 1 |
| 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 |

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

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

How effective is the provision?

Students make good progress because teaching is consistently good. Teachers expound their subjects clearly, ask students perceptive questions and give them time to think about the answers. Students are increasingly encouraged to assess their own work and that of others. However, this use of assessment information to accelerate learning is not yet fully embedded in the work of all subject areas. Lessons are varied and teachers use a range of resources to stimulate students' interest. Artefacts, such as barbed wire support from the trenches, brought learning about the First World War alive for students. Practical activities, the development of thinking skills and independent research were all seen to be adding to students' enjoyment of learning. The school recognises that even greater use of new technology can be made to add further variety to lessons and further stimulate the interest of all students. Teachers mark work regularly and give students helpful suggestions on how to improve their work further. The outstanding curriculum is adjusted regularly to better meet the needs of students. For example, the school's decision to change its specialist status from technology to science has proved very successful and was made after close consultation with parents and students. Partly through its specialist status, the school has developed excellent links with partner schools and colleges which mean that students are offered a wide range of academic and vocational courses. In addition, there is a very high take up of the numerous sporting opportunities, outdoor activities, trips, visits, clubs and events that take place outside of the school day.

Students and parents speak highly of the outstanding care, guidance and support the school gives. Transition arrangements from primary schools are seamless and students settle quickly into Year 7. Excellent use is made of a range of outside agencies to support students who are vulnerable. However, within this close-knit school community, whose ethos is underpinned by its Christian values, students and staff respect and care for each other.

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 | 1 |

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The effectiveness of care, guidance and support

1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher's crystal-clear vision for the school is very clearly understood and supported by all staff. He has been extremely well supported by a talented deputy headteacher and senior team, highly motivated staff and knowledgeable governors, all of whom have been instrumental in bringing about rapid school improvement. Teaching and learning are monitored effectively and staff are now beginning to share good classroom practice more widely. This exchange of ideas, skills and teaching techniques has not yet been shared sufficiently widely to raise the quality of all teaching to good or better. Safeguarding procedures are robust. Staff are well trained and have a good understanding of child protection and risk assessment procedures. The school values every individual highly so all groups of students make good progress. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. The school promotes community cohesion well and has excellent links with the local community but has yet to fully develop links with communities and cultures further afield.

These are the grades for leadership and management

| | |
|--|----------|
| The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement | 1 |
| 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 |
| The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being | 1 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination | 1 |
| 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 | 1 |

Views of parents and carers

The majority of parents and carers are supportive of the school and pleased with the education their children receive. A minority expressed some concerns about variations in the quality of teaching and about the way the school deals with challenging behaviour.

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The inspection team found that behaviour was managed well and that although there were variations in the quality of teaching, this was good overall.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Cartmel Priory Church of England 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 132 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 366 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|----|-------------------|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 40 | 30 | 77 | 58 | 12 | 9 | 2 | 2 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 54 | 41 | 77 | 58 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| The school informs me about my child's progress | 55 | 42 | 76 | 58 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 47 | 36 | 75 | 57 | 9 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 38 | 29 | 82 | 62 | 6 | 5 | 2 | 2 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 28 | 21 | 85 | 64 | 13 | 10 | 2 | 2 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 30 | 23 | 82 | 62 | 19 | 14 | 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) | 36 | 27 | 81 | 61 | 8 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 38 | 29 | 81 | 61 | 8 | 6 | 1 | 1 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 37 | 28 | 67 | 51 | 22 | 17 | 2 | 2 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 24 | 18 | 87 | 66 | 9 | 7 | 3 | 2 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 50 | 38 | 73 | 55 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 2 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 0 | 0 | 66 | 50 | 5 | 4 | 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

| | Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools) | | | |
|----------------------|---|------|--------------|------------|
| Type of school | 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

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|----------------------------|--|
| 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.



19 April 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Cartmel Priory Church of England School, Grange-Over-Sands, LA11 7SA

Thank you very much for the warm welcome you gave us when we came to visit your school last week. We are particularly grateful to those of you who took time to talk with us and tell us about all the strengths of your school. We would also like to thank your parents and carers who returned our questionnaire.

These are the main findings in our report

- Yours is an outstanding school where you make good progress and reach high standards.
- The leadership and management of your school, particularly that of your headteacher, is outstanding.
- The curriculum you follow and the care, guidance and support you receive are both outstanding,
- You are well taught and and enjoy learning.
- Your behaviour is good and you make an excellent contribution to your school and the wider community.

This is what we have asked your school to do now

Provide you with further opportunities to engage with students from other cultures and communities both in the United Kingdom and abroad.

Raise the quality of teaching even further so all lessons are at least good and more are outstanding by:

- embedding the use of new assessment techniques to accelerate your learning
- making greater use of new technologies to enhance learning
- sharing good practice in teaching more widely.

You can help to improve your school even further by continuing to work with your teachers to achieve the very best you can.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Ann Wallis

Lead inspector

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