

Cambois First School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122179
Local Authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	340099
Inspection dates	4–5 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Brian Blake HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	48
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Lisa Walker
Headteacher	Mr Paul Frost
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. The inspectors visited six lessons, one assembly, and held discussions with the Chair of the Governing Body, headteacher, teachers and other support staff who work in the school. The inspectors also spoke with the pupils in lessons and around the school. The inspectors observed the vast majority of the school's work and looked at 15 parents' questionnaires, 11 staff and eight pupil questionnaires. A range of school documentation was read, including details relating to safeguarding procedures in place at the school.

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

- attainment and progress at the end of Year 4
- pupils' attendance
- the quality of teaching and learning as an aid to raising standards and improving pupils' progress, especially in the core subject areas of English and mathematics
- the quality of the curriculum
- the effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels as an aid to self-evaluation.

Information about the school

Cambois First School takes pupils from three to nine years of age and is significantly smaller than the average sized primary school. The percentage of pupils entitled to take free school meals is over three times the national average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is broadly in line with the national average. The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The school has a very small number of Travellers' children from the local area. The school holds a number of awards, which include Activemark, Investors in People, Healthy Schools Award, Arts Mark and the Basic Skills Quality Mark.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Cambois First School provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils. Some aspects of the school's work are good, with some important outcomes improving.

There has been a downward trend in pupils' performance since the previous inspection. However, the 2009 unvalidated results from national assessments show that because of targeted support work from within and from outside of the school, this downward trend has been arrested, and modest improvements are now being made across most year groups in school. Overall, the pupils make satisfactory progress during their time at the school, achieving broadly average standards by the end of Year 4, when they move on to middle school. Attendance is currently inadequate, but improving because of a focused effort to tackle the number of persistent absentees. Other pupil outcomes, including feeling safe, and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are being maintained at a good level. Overall, these improvements exemplify the school's satisfactory capacity for future progress.

A range of school developments has been planned and partly implemented, and although these are satisfactorily identified in the current school improvement plan, there is an overemphasis on the headteacher monitoring all aspects of the school's current and future work. Accordingly, there is too little recognition in the plan of the important roles that both governors and other staff need to fulfil in terms of them contributing to the overall leadership and management of the school, especially in monitoring and evaluating the provision as an aid to accurate and more robust self-evaluation.

Staff are very sensitive to the varying needs of the pupils and are always ready to support or help, whenever needed. Teaching is almost always of a satisfactory standard and is occasionally good. Teachers relate well to the pupils and, in response, the pupils behave well and work reasonably hard at the various learning tasks set. However, teachers are currently focusing too much on what they will teach and too little on what the pupils will learn from various lesson activities. Assessment of pupils' progress is at least satisfactory overall, but currently underdeveloped in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Resources for learning are generally good across the school and are well used and respected by the pupils. With the exception of the outdoor provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage, the accommodation provided by the school is of a satisfactory or better standard.

About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the overall attendance rate by focusing on targeted strategies that tackle the persistent absenteeism of a small minority of pupils.
- Improve the quality of teaching from satisfactory to a more consistent level of good, as an aid to:
 - raising standards and improving pupils' progress across all year groups
 - identifying more specific learner outcomes in all lessons so that more robust assessment of pupils' progress can be undertaken.
- Develop a clearer strategy for sharing leadership and management responsibilities across the school by:
 - identifying and delegating responsibilities for planned priorities and actions
 - ensuring robust monitoring and evaluation that accurately contributes to whole-school self-evaluation.
- Develop the Early Years Foundation Stage provision by:
 - better evidence gathering of children's ongoing progress across all areas of learning
 - improving the outdoor provision to aid children's learning
 - clear linking with provision at Key Stage 1.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

The vast majority of children make satisfactory or better progress during their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage, so that their attainment on entry to Year 1 is broadly average. By the time the pupils leave the school at the end of Year 4, overall standards are broadly those expected for their age. The unvalidated data for the most recent national assessments show that for the first time since the previous inspection, standards and progress are on the rise. Pupils' overall progress during their time at school is satisfactory. Those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities also make satisfactory progress relative to their capabilities.

The vast majority of pupils enjoy their learning. Pupils are attentive learners in lessons and are able to work confidently as individuals or in a small group. Attitudes to learning are generally good and reflected in the good behaviour seen. Pupils listen carefully to instructions and generally respond quickly and sensibly. The overwhelming majority of pupils who spoke with inspectors, and those who responded to the pupil questionnaire, said they enjoy attending school, and that they feel safe and are confident that there is always an adult to whom they can talk about any issues that are important to them.

Pupils are aware of the need to maintain their general well-being, especially in relation to being active and eating healthily. This is recognised by the school's achievement of the 'Healthy School Award', a national initiative that recognises a school's commitment and contribution to the all-round well-being of its pupils, and 'Activemark', which is

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awarded for a school's provision of at least two hours physical education and sport each week. The school's emphasis on developing basic skills, as exemplified by its achievement of the Basic Skills Quality Mark Award, contributes to the pupils' future economic well-being.

Attendance in the last academic year was very low. However, this is affected, in part, by the authorised absence of some Traveller pupils. The school is alert to these issues and has been tackling the poor attendance of a small minority of pupils. This is meeting with some success, with the latest attendance figures for the first half of the autumn term showing around 95%.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. There are well established links with some public services, such as the police and fire service, and these are helping the pupils to appreciate and understand these important roles in the broader community. However, the school has yet to develop more fully, links with some groups within its own local community. This limits the pupils' appreciation of some aspects of their own local culture.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	4
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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Teaching is satisfactory and is contributing to the most recent improvements in pupils' standards and progress in literacy and numeracy across the school. Teachers' planning is satisfactory overall, but almost always has no information on what pupils are expected to learn from the lesson activities. This makes ongoing and accurate assessment of pupils' progress, an aid to future planning and provision, less effective than it should be. The tracking of pupils' progress is at least satisfactory overall, but underdeveloped in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The curriculum is satisfactory overall: it is good in the two core areas of literacy and numeracy but less coherent and robust across other areas taught. The school makes good use of nationally and commercially produced subject schemes of work, which underpin lesson planning and provision. However, there is too little evidence that these are always suitably adapted or modified to suit the particular needs of all pupils at the school, particularly as they move from year group to year group.

The quality of the care, guidance and support provided by the school is good overall. There are clear and well known procedures for supporting the pupils. For their part, the pupils say they feel well supported, which contributes to their high levels of enjoyment. Teachers are diligent in marking pupils' work, or praising pupils for their answers to questions posed in lessons. However, marking and teachers' verbal comments to pupils in lessons do not consistently identify how the pupils can improve upon the accuracy and detail of what they have said, or the quality of written work in their books.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher, governors and staff are keen to bring about future improvements, especially in raising standards and improving pupils' rates of progress across all year groups in school. Some improvements are being seen, especially in standards and attendance. School improvement planning highlights almost all the key areas for improvement, but places far too much responsibility on the headteacher for monitoring all priorities and associated actions. The governing body has undergone some changes to its membership since the previous inspection, including the election of a new chairperson. Although governors are making a contribution to the work of the school, this is underdeveloped in relation to sharing responsibility for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school, through the school improvement plan or self-evaluation, and in being more visible in and around the school.

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Links with parents and carers are good, and is reported as such by those parents who responded to the inspection questionnaire. Although the school is sensitive to the socio-economic factors that influence its immediate local community, it has yet to elicit more specific information on the impact that these have on pupils' learning. The school treats all pupils fairly and equally, but has not implemented a system for assessing how successfully its range of 'equality' policies improve overall access and provision for all children in school. Staff take all reasonable actions to ensure that the children are safe and secure when working in or out of school. The school meets all the statutory requirements with regard to safeguarding, including ensuring that all adults who work in the school are suitably checked. Community cohesion is satisfactory overall and strong at school level. However, there are missed opportunities to develop further pupils' greater awareness of different cultures at regional, national and global levels.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
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	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory.

The children generally start in Nursery with skills and personal attributes that are broadly below the levels expected for their age. However, the majority make satisfactory progress and most are close to achieving the standards expected by the time they enter Year 1.

The quality of teaching is mostly satisfactory, occasionally good. Planning is also satisfactory but lacking in the level of detail needed in relation to identifying more specifically children's learning outcomes across all the areas of learning. Because of this,

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and the inconsistent collection of evidence about all children's progress, ongoing assessment of the children's progress is less robust than it should be.

A number of changes have taken place in the early years since the previous inspection, including a new leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage, a revised planning format and updated assessment procedures. However, these are still at a relatively early stage of implementation and have yet to be fully embedded in the day-to-day working practices of the Early Years Foundation Stage unit. Furthermore, links with Key Stage 1 have yet to be secured, in order to build and extend upon the children's learning.

The overall quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. The Early Years Foundation Stage manager has a clear vision for developments, but senior managers have yet to coordinate this fully within the overall school provision. Although resources and accommodation are broadly satisfactory, the outdoor provision is limited and too dependent on good weather for its regular use in supporting and developing the children's learning. All statutory welfare requirements are met.

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

Although just around a third of parents and carers returned inspection questionnaires, the overwhelming majority of these were positive about the school's provision for their children. A very small number of parents took the opportunity to write additional comments on the questionnaire and, although there was no significant pattern to these, most were keen to praise the school. The general overview of these findings was shared with the headteacher, including the single comment about bullying and a concern about a child asking for help in lessons.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Cambois First 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 15 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 48 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	12	80	2	13	1	7	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	9	60	6	40	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	8	53	6	40	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	10	67	5	33	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	10	67	2	13	2	13	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	8	53	5	33	2	13	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	7	47	8	53	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)	6	40	5	33	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	9	60	5	33	1	7	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	7	47	6	40	1	7	1	7
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	6	40	6	40	2	13	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	7	47	6	40	1	7	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	9	60	4	27	2	13	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.



16 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Cambois First School, Blyth NE24 1RD

You will know that I recently visited Cambois, along with another inspector, to find out how well you are doing at school. During the visit, the inspectors watched you and your teachers in a number of lessons, chatted with many of you about life at school and spoke with the staff who work in the school. We also spoke with the chair of your school governing body. We also read all the questionnaires returned by you, the staff and your parents.

I should like to highlight some of the important things that we found out about the school. These include the following:

- The school provides you with a satisfactory standard of education.
- Almost all of you achieve the standards expected by the time you leave the school at the end of Year 4.
- Your progress during your time at school is satisfactory.
- Overall attendance last year was inadequate, but this has improved significantly during the first half of this term. We are, however, asking the school to improve the attendance of a small number who do not attend school on a regular basis.
- Those of you who spoke with inspectors said you enjoy school and that you feel safe.
- The school provides you with satisfactory opportunities to maintain good health, through sensible eating and regular exercise.
- Your behaviour is good.
- You understand the difference between right and wrong, although the school has more to do to help develop your appreciation and greater understanding of life outside of school.
- Your teachers provide you with good quality care and support and, although their teaching is mostly satisfactory, we are asking them to identify more clearly what they expect you to learn in all of your lessons in order to improve the standard of your work.
- Your headteacher has a clear vision for helping the school to improve. In order to achieve this, we are asking that he shares the responsibility for improving the

school with all staff and governors in order to make best use of their expertise.

- Almost all of you start at the school in Nursery. During your time in the Early Years Foundation Stage, you make satisfactory progress but your learning could be even better with improved outdoor facilities, better gathering of information by your teachers about the progress you are making, and by linking more clearly to the Key Stage 1 provision, which is the next stage of your education at the school.

We are extremely grateful to all of you for making the inspection so enjoyable. We would encourage you to continue working hard and to attend school regularly.

We wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Mr Brian Blake

Lead inspector

On behalf of the inspection team

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