

Ireby C of E School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112251
Local Authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	289219
Inspection date	20 March 2007
Reporting inspector	Eric Jackson

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	42
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Pauline Bibby
Headteacher	Miss Alison Hornby
Date of previous school inspection	1 September 2001
School address	Ireby Wigton Cumbria CA7 1DS
Telephone number	01697 371367
Fax number	01697 371367

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school is much smaller than average and draws its pupils from a wide area. Fewer pupils than average nationally take free school meals. Children's attainment at entry often varies considerably year-on-year, but is broadly average. The proportion of pupils identified with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. All the pupils speak English and almost all are White British. The school has nursery provision; a preschool group and after-school care are provided (inspected separately). The school has received an Achievement Award, the ActiveMark Gold and Investors in People status.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good and improving village school, confirming the school's own view. Parents are very pleased with the education provided, especially those with children in the Nursery and Key Stage 1. They say that their children love the staff and the school. Really good use is made of the internal accommodation and grounds to promote learning, especially the attractive and well equipped Nursery area. Inspection findings support the views of older pupils who say that they enjoy their time here and feel well prepared for the next stage of their lives. Links with parents and the church are strong and support learning effectively.

Standards are above average by the end of Year 6, and pupils' achievement is good. Children currently make good progress in the Nursery and Reception years and achieve at least the nationally expected levels. They also make good progress in Years 1 and 2, and make satisfactory and sometimes good progress in Years 3 to 6. Improving pupils' achievement in writing is an accurately chosen priority as there is currently insufficient opportunity for pupils to write extended pieces of work independently.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also promoted well. Pupils take part enthusiastically in a wide range of exercise and sporting opportunities, from morning 'Wake and Shake' to swimming and sports at a local leisure centre. They understand and live healthy lifestyles, and parents appreciate the guidance offered for preparing healthy packed lunches. Pupils are safe in the school and they learn safe practices. Older pupils appreciate the value of the sex and relationships education and drugs awareness training they have received recently. Pupils make a satisfactory contribution to the school and wider community. Whilst older pupils take some responsibility for aspects of the school's life, pupils are not encouraged sufficiently to develop independence and an understanding of citizenship.

The quality of educational provision is good, including for children in the Foundation Stage. Teaching and learning are good and particularly strong in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. The staff understand the pupils' learning needs and plan lessons effectively to meet them, including through support and intervention strategies. The curriculum is good, as are care, support and guidance given to pupils. Leadership and management are also good. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. The recently appointed headteacher swiftly identified areas requiring action and worked closely and effectively with the governors, staff and the local authority to make improvements. She leads the school well, including through her teaching of the Reception and Year 1 and 2 pupils. The staff work well as a team to manage the school, some in a variety of different roles that they perform well. The school has good capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing by providing more opportunities for pupils to write extended pieces for a variety of purposes, including their own.
- Encourage pupils to take more responsibility in class and around the school, and to become more independent in their learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are above average at the end of Years 2 and 6. The pupils achieve well. Progress is good currently in the Foundation Stage and at Key Stage 1, and satisfactory with good features at Key Stage 2. Two three-year-old girls in the Nursery could already read their own and other children's names, even from upside-down name cards. The school's data show that the majority of pupils made good progress in reading and mathematics over the last four terms. They made satisfactory progress in writing overall, but older pupils made the least progress. However, Year 6 pupils are on track to meet the school's challenging targets in this year's national tests. Pupils identified with learning difficulties and/or disabilities often make good progress from well-targeted support and intervention programmes. Recently, the school has identified able and talented pupils who are encouraged to extend their skills in music or mathematics alongside pupils in other local schools.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The close partnership with parents strongly supports the school's good promotion of pupils' personal development and well-being. This leads to pupils having positive attitudes to learning, understanding the importance of safe practice and healthy lifestyles, and behaving well. However, some older pupils feel that 'not many lessons are interesting'. Children in the Nursery and Reception are helped to settle very well and soon become confident learners. Older pupils' development of the skills associated with community responsibility is satisfactory. Across the school pupils respond cheerfully to the staff's encouragement, illustrated in a Celebration Assembly where those nominated for their efforts by other pupils were delighted with their awards. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good, supported well by developing links with a village school in Nigeria. Pupils also appreciate the good family atmosphere and small numbers so that they all know one another. Their attendance is satisfactory and they are well-prepared for the next stage in their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good and leads to effective learning. The teaching and support staff work well together to plan tasks and activities to meet pupils' identified needs. Older pupils are clear about the levels they achieve and what they need to do to improve. Regular discussion between teachers and pupils in Key Stage 2 keeps the teachers well informed about pupils' understanding of what they have learned. However, these pupils are not yet encouraged sufficiently to develop their work independently; although they did very well during group work in an art lesson. Younger pupils in the morning Nursery and in Reception and Key Stage 1 have a good variety of lively and challenging activities. The Nursery area is used very effectively to extend the older infants' learning in the afternoon. For example, Year 1 and 2 pupils learned through baking cakes in a science lesson that some changes of state are irreversible and could explain why.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a good curriculum founded on effective coverage of English, mathematics and science. Recent improvements to the science curriculum have led to greater coverage of investigational work. The Foundation Stage curriculum is very good, and Reception children work in the well equipped Nursery and outdoor area as often as possible to ensure full coverage of all the required areas of learning. There is good enrichment through instrumental musical provision, games and sports, and extra-curricular activities including an art club run by a parent. A visit from an African drumming group and pupils' involvement in local agricultural shows also add excitement to learning. There are very good resources for information and communication technology so that pupils' skills develop effectively; although older pupils feel that they do not have sufficient access to the available laptop computers.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Parents are pleased with the levels of care for their children, which are very good. All required safeguarding and child protection measures are in place. Pupils are safe and well looked after. Those pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive good support and guidance so that they make good progress. The school is trialling a nurture group with local authority help for a few pupils to help their personal development, although this is at an early stage. Academic support and guidance are good. Much of this is through discussion with pupils and their parents. Formal systems to record progress and achievement are in place and used effectively to set targets for pupils' future learning. Able or talented pupils have been identified in some areas and meet like pupils from other schools to undertake extension activities.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good and have a positive effect on pupils' achievement and personal development. The school has maintained its effectiveness since the last inspection and has made satisfactory improvement. Recently, developments have accelerated well under the dynamic leadership of the headteacher. She leads by example in the classroom and has encouraged the staff team to work as an effective leadership and management unit. Staff are deployed well and good use is made of the buildings and resources. A budget deficit has been carefully managed and projections to return to positive balance are on track. Other areas needing attention have been dealt with in priority order and governors are now well-informed and closely involved in monitoring the work of the school. Staff training recently has covered important areas such as child protection. School improvement is focused through good self-evaluation on those areas needing attention to further improve the quality of education and raise standards. The school's capacity to improve is good.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Ireby C of E School

Ireby

Wigton

Cumbria

CA7 1DS

21 March 2007

Dear Children

Thank you for welcoming me to your school in its lovely setting. You will remember that I came to inspect how well your school helps you to enjoy learning and to develop the skills and attitudes that will help you in your future lives.

You have a good school where you make good progress in your learning and your personal development; I know your parents agree with me in this. It was good to see how you supported each other during assembly and how much you enjoyed your work and play.

I also really enjoyed the cake that Class 1 made for me. Thank you.

The teachers look after you well and make sure that you have the right tasks and activities to help you to improve. You told me that you know your learning targets and how well you are doing in English, mathematics and science. I know that this is helpful to you.

I have asked the teachers to give you more chance to write using your own thoughts and ideas and to help you become more independent and responsible around school. You can help by continuing to work hard and doing your best to be 'good citizens' in your school.

Yours sincerely

E Jackson

Lead Inspector