



Appleby Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 112408
Local Authority Cumbria
Inspection number 289276
Inspection dates 18–19 January 2007
Reporting inspector David Earley

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Station Road
School category	Foundation		Appleby-in-Westmorland, Cumbria
Age range of pupils	3–11		CA16 6TX
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01768 351431
Number on roll (school)	331	Fax number	01768 353252
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Eric Wooff
		Headteacher	Mr S Hetherington
Date of previous school inspection	1 June 2002		

Age group 3–11	Inspection dates 18–19 January 2007	Inspection number 289276
--------------------------	---	------------------------------------

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average primary school in the centre of Appleby. The proportion of pupils who claim free school meals is below average. Most pupils are of White British background. There is a small proportion of pupils who learn English as an additional language and an above average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. There is a strategically resourced facility in school for pupils with complex learning difficulties and disabilities serving the school and the local area. Attainment on entry to the Foundation Stage is average for children of this age.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory and improving school that provides satisfactory value for money. Positive and sensitive leadership by the headteacher has helped to create a caring community where all are valued and respected. Behaviour is generally good and pupils enjoy coming to school, which is demonstrated by their good attendance. Pupils are confident in making their views known and proud when they see what they have instigated come to fruition, such as the healthy tuck shop. This is prompted by their understanding of healthy lifestyles and efforts to practise them. Relationships between pupils and adults are good, which contributes to harmony within the school. Visitors to school, such as a potter and a choreographer, broaden pupils' understanding of working life.

Pupils say that they feel safe. They have many opportunities to take on responsibility and to contribute to the life of local and wider communities. Their growing confidence and gains in knowledge and skills are setting them up well for the future.

The school has taken decisive action to remedy underachievement in Key Stage 2. There is evidence to show that progress is satisfactory and improving in Years 3 to 6. It is too early for the full impact to be evident in standards overall; currently, standards are average. Pupils make good progress in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1; some reach above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2. Throughout the school, pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress and achieve as well as they can.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. They are good in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 and satisfactory, but improving, in Key Stage 2. Teachers plan work suited to different abilities and use their subject knowledge effectively in order to make lessons lively and interesting. However, occasionally, pupils in Key Stage 2 are not given sufficient time to reflect on their learning. Also, higher ability pupils are not challenged sufficiently. Marking does not consistently inform pupils of what they need to do in order to improve.

The good curriculum is enriched by a wide range of visits and extra-curricular activities. Older pupils engage in good quality debates that encourage them to listen to other people's opinions before making decisions. Recent adjustments to the curriculum for pupils in Key Stage 2 are playing a significant part in the improvements in standards and achievement. Pastoral care, guidance and support are good; in the strategically resourced facility they are outstanding. The school collects sufficient data on pupils' performance and progress but it is not used consistently to inform pupils how to improve further.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Governors work effectively in helping to shape the direction of the school. The headteacher, staff and governors are critically analysing the school's provision and taking effective action to improve areas of weakness. The school has satisfactory capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in Key Stage 2 in English, mathematics and science.
- Improve the quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 so that it is consistently good.
- Use information from assessment procedures more consistently so that pupils understand clearly what they need to do next in order to improve.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Children start in the Foundation Stage with skills that are generally typical for their age. They make good progress and achieve well because the quality of teaching is good. By the end of Reception, many exceed the early learning goals.

Evidence from the inspection and school data indicates that standards are above average in the current Year 2. Results in end of key stage assessments fluctuate in accordance with the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. Results were slightly above average in reading, writing and mathematics in 2005 but not quite as good in writing and mathematics in 2006. Overall, pupils make good progress and achieve as well as they can.

In 2005, pupils' results in national tests taken at the end of Year 6 were average in English and science, but below average in mathematics. They improved in mathematics in 2006 but dropped in English and science. The school exceeded its target in mathematics. It credits the improvement to the successful implementation of strategies to improve teaching in the subject. Overall, the results were diminished by the high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities in the year group. Recent improvements in the use of assessment and the quality of teaching are having a positive effect on pupils' learning in Key Stage 2. Pupils' progress and achievement are satisfactory and improving rapidly. Currently, standards in Year 6 are average. Pupils who learn English as an additional language and those with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress because the provision for them is good. Those who join the strategically resourced facility, which is often at other than the usual times of entry, make equally good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Pupils say that they enjoy school. Attendance is good. Behaviour is usually good and pupils are polite and courteous. Pupils understand how to take responsibility and relationships throughout the school are good. For example, playground buddies conscientiously help others who may be upset or who need someone to play with. Pupils are confident in making their views known through the school council and pleased when they see action being taken, such as the provision of games boxes. Pupils have a good understanding of what it means to have a healthy lifestyle. They have lots of opportunities for exercise in sports such as rock climbing

and tag rugby. They know about healthy eating and the dangers of the misuse of drugs. Pupils take their responsibilities to the wider community seriously, such as when fundraising for charities or caring for the environment in the wild garden area. They show a mature understanding and respect for the cultural and ethnic traditions found in society and are successfully acquiring the literacy, numerical and technical skills that will enable them to be successful in later life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. It is good in the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1, leading to pupils' good progress. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Key Stage 2, and improving. This is reflected in the pupils' quickening progress. Typically, teachers encourage independence and collaboration and use assessment effectively to ensure that tasks are well suited to different abilities. They make lessons lively and interesting so that pupils are keen to build on their learning. For example, in Year 6, good use was made of a quiz to extend calculating skills. Teachers work closely with teaching assistants, particularly in support of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, so they make good progress. Pupils' work is marked regularly but comments do not always give sufficiently detailed advice about how it could be improved. In a minority of lessons seen during the inspection in Key Stage 2, pupils were not given enough time to reflect on their learning in order to consolidate understanding; occasionally, opportunities to challenge more able pupils were missed.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. It is broad and balanced and is making a significant contribution to the good personal development and to the improvements in standards and achievement. For example, adjustments to the curriculum in mathematics and in writing are having a direct effect on progress in Key Stage 2. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage provides a good start. Throughout the school, there is a sound emphasis on the development of literacy, numerical and technical skills through other subjects. Good provision is made for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and those at an early stage of English, which gives them confidence to try things out for themselves. The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Textile technology, bell-ringing and science clubs are popular because pupils enjoy practical activities. Pupils visit museums, churches and local places of interest and take part in residential visits, all of which provide scope for them to talk to and work with the wider community. Good links with external agencies draw in specialised support that underpins teaching and learning for pupils with specific needs.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school judged this aspect of its work to be outstanding. Inspectors found it to be good. Support and guidance for academic work are satisfactory. Pastoral care and support are good. Care, guidance and support for pupils in the strategically resourced facility are outstanding. They contribute significantly to the progress and personal development of pupils with complex learning needs, some of whom join the facility from other schools. Child protection, safeguarding and health and safety procedures are in place. The school has close links with parents in order to promote home/school learning. Good relationships in school contribute well to pupils' personal development and progress. A parent commented that the school is warm and welcoming and that her children are happy at school. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are identified at an early stage and are well supported by the school and outside agencies. The school has effective systems in place for assessing and tracking the progress of all pupils but the information gained is not used to maximum advantage to lead pupils to the next stage of learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school has taken decisive action in order to counteract a trend of underachievement in Key Stage 2. This is leading to faster progress and better achievement. It is too early to determine its full effect on standards. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and is well supported by the senior management team, staff and governors. The actions taken are based on a thorough appraisal of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Clear strategies for improvement have been established with challenging targets. The headteacher has played a significant role in creating a caring and inclusive community where all are valued and well respected. Staff work well as a team and are committed to improving teaching and learning in order to raise standards. Subject leaders have a good knowledge of their subjects and the school is beginning to extend opportunities for them to check on teaching and learning in order to make improvements. Parents are encouraged to involve themselves in the work of the school. Governors work closely with the staff and good use is made of their expertise in helping to shape the direction of the school. Issues from the previous inspection have been satisfactorily dealt with and the budget is carefully managed to underpin pupils' learning.

Clear leadership, improving standards and achievement and sound evaluation of performance indicate that the school has satisfactory capacity to improve further.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
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	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
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	2
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	2
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?	3
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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

Appleby Primary School

Station Road

Appleby-in-Westmorland

Cumbria

CA16 6TX

22 January 2007

Dear Pupils

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. We were impressed by your politeness, courtesy and helpfulness and by the way you help people in the school community and in the community outside school. We enjoyed talking to you and learning that you enjoy coming to school and feel safe there. It is good to see that playground buddies help other children and that the school council helps to make the school a better place. You all know about healthy eating and we can see that you get plenty of exercise to keep you fit.

These are some of the things your school does well:

- your teachers help you to do well in reading, writing and mathematics at Key Stage 1 and they are helping you to improve your English, mathematics and science at Key Stage 2
- your school is a very caring place and you have lots of visits and visitors and after-school clubs to make your work interesting
- children who find learning difficult and those whose first language is not English receive good help so that they do well.

These are some of the things we think you could do better:

- we want older pupils to keep on working hard so that their English, mathematics and science keep on improving
- we have asked the teachers to make sure that all lessons are lively and interesting
- we have asked teachers to explain more clearly what you need to do in order to improve further.

Thank you once again for your kindness and courtesy.

Yours sincerely

David Earley

Lead Inspector