

Crosscanonby St John's CofE School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112273
Local Authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	325566
Inspection dates	17–18 September 2008
Reporting inspector	Yvonne Clare

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	66
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Canon Reverend Mary Day
Headteacher	Mr Stephen Mitchelhill
Date of previous school inspection	1 September 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Garborough Close Crosby Maryport Cumbria CA15 6RX

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	17–18 September 2008
Inspection number	325566

Telephone number
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector

Description of the school

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- This is a very small Church of England primary school where all pupils come from White British backgrounds. It has fewer girls on roll than boys. There are very few pupils with an entitlement to free school meals. A below average proportion have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and the percentage with a statement of special educational need is average. The school was awarded Activemark in 2007 for the second time. The school has Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision.

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 school that is evolving and has made good improvement since the last inspection. As a consequence, it has good capacity to improve further.

The school is valued highly by the parents, many parents commenting on the care and concern shown by the school. The environment is safe, warm and welcoming. Good attendance reflects pupils' enjoyment of their time at the school and they speak of the activities available to them and the support they receive. Pupils are open, honest and friendly and they are not afraid to share their feelings. This ensures that pupils feel safe and have someone to talk to should they face difficulties.

Fostered by the school's Christian tradition, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The pupils are well aware of the importance of healthy lifestyles and willingly take part in a range of physical activities. Pupils have good interpersonal skills and this prepares them well for future learning. The teamwork, support and care apparent among the staff, both teaching and non-teaching, has a positive influence on pupils' attitudes and promotes the outstanding behaviour seen throughout the inspection. At breaks and lunchtimes, pupils play happily together. Incidents of bullying are rare and support for the most vulnerable pupils is effective.

Achievement through the school is satisfactory. Children's skills on entry to Reception are typical for their age, and they make satisfactory progress against the early learning goals. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils' standards are broadly average, although past test results in reading, writing and mathematics have often been above average. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards are broadly average, as seen in the 2007 national test results. However, initial evidence from the 2008 teacher assessments suggests that results are higher this year. The school's analysis of data supports the assertion that standards are improving. Teaching overall in the school is satisfactory. Staff use a variety of activities to engage the pupils and organise and manage the pupils well. However, the planning formats do not readily provide suitable information in order to make sure that work is challenging enough to ensure that all pupils achieve as well as they can. Whilst marking occurs regularly, it does not consistently involve pupils in setting their own targets for improvement and evaluating their progress towards them. This holds back the achievement of some. The curriculum is satisfactory. A new curriculum is under development which gives pupils practical, first-hand experiences. The pupils benefit from a variety of visits and visitors from different cultures to broaden their experiences.

Leadership and management, including governance, are satisfactory. The headteacher has a strong vision and sets a clear direction for the development of the school, based on an accurate evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses. Subject leadership is developing but the outcomes of monitoring do not yet result in clear actions in order to raise further standards and achievement.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

The EYFS provision is satisfactory. There is a correct focus on helping children to achieve. Achievement is satisfactory and pupils make steady progress. Children start with skills that are broadly typical for their age. By the end of the Reception year the majority of children reach the standards expected for their age. Sensitive induction arrangements assist in establishing a

strong partnership with parents. This helps children to settle quickly by encouraging them to feel confident and safe. Personal development is good. Children behave well, working and cooperating together agreeably and joining in activities with enthusiasm. Planning ensures a variety of activities, but the combination of the Reception class with Key Stage 1 pupils means that often incidental learning, by children in the EYFS, is missed and every child is not always appropriately challenged. Children's welfare is promoted positively and adequately, all safeguarding procedures and completing risk assessments where appropriate. A new outdoor environment has been created and outdoor activities are planned for. However, this cannot be used independently by the children as supervision is not continuously available. Leadership and management are satisfactory, with part time support staff employed appropriately.

What the school should do to improve further

- Refine planning to ensure that challenge is set at the right level for all pupils so that everyone achieves as well as they can.
- Ensure that outcomes of monitoring result in actions that are rigorously evaluated and used to raise standards.
- Involve pupils more effectively in their learning through self-assessment and meaningful targets.

A small proportion of the schools where overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement throughout the school is satisfactory and standards by the end of Key Stage 2 are broadly average. Cohorts of pupils within the school are small and in any year one pupil may account for between 7 and 11% of the total in each of the tested subjects. This demands that all assessment data is treated with caution.

Children enter the EYFS with skills that are typical for their age. They make satisfactory progress in Reception and reach standards that match those expected for their age by the start of Year 1. Results of the Year 2 assessments over the last three years showed pupils attaining above average standards. Inspection evidence shows that standards are currently nearer to national expectations for 7 year olds. Standards by the end of Key Stage 2 in English, mathematics and science have been broadly average in each of the last three years. During that time, however, pupils in Year 6 have performed less well in mathematics and science than they did in English where, in 2007, an above average percentage of Year 6 pupils gained the higher Level 5. The school has recognised this and has taken prompt action to resolve it. Results from the 2008 Key Stage 2 teacher assessments show improved results and pupils met the challenging targets set for them. Data and inspection evidence confirm that progress for the current Year 6 pupils is satisfactory. The work of teaching assistants ensures that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities access learning and make satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development in the school is good. Pupils are proud of their school. They enjoy learning and their behaviour is outstanding. The overwhelmingly positive parental questionnaires show

that parents appreciate this. One reflects the opinion of many that the school 'is a happy and friendly school' with approachable staff and they are 'really pleased that my child goes to this school.'

Close links with the church, assemblies and time for reflection develop the pupils' spirituality well, whilst a wide range of visits and 'inspirational visitors' enhance pupils' understanding of cultural diversity in the wider locality and beyond. Pupils enjoy coming to school, commenting that staff are kind and helpful to them. This is reflected in the good attendance and the excellent relationships in school. Pupils say that there is no bullying and they are confident that help is always near if they have a problem. Pupils have a good understanding of what is needed to live healthy and safe lives. The school offers fruit and healthy snacks to its pupils at break-times and after-school sports clubs enhance the school's provision for physical education.

Pupils' contribution to the community is good. The elected school council feels that it contributes well to school life, but opportunities to report back to classes are limited. Pupils respond positively when asked to take charge, 'applying' for jobs around school or acting as class monitors and also contribute to a wide variety of community and church and village events. The pupils' good attitudes and social skills coupled with their good level of competence in information and communication technology (ICT) prepare pupils well for later life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching is satisfactory overall and this is reflected in the satisfactory academic progress of pupils. Throughout the school, pupils enjoy learning, and teachers manage pupils' behaviour well. Strong relationships between pupils and adults make a positive contribution to pupils' learning. The work of teaching assistants facilitates the inclusion of all pupils, including those needing additional support. In lessons where teaching is good, the pupils make good progress. Where teaching is satisfactory, pupils are not involved enough in evaluating their own progress or in receiving guidance about how they can improve. The quality of marking varies between classes and between subjects, marking in English being the most well-established. At its best, it gives good guidance about how pupils can improve their work. Planning formats do not always take account of prior learning, or provide assessment information about pupils' learning. This leads to inconsistency in informing future planning and ensuring that activities consistently and effectively challenge all pupils to achieve as well as they could. Also, they do not always give a clear, shared focus and success criteria, enabling pupils to know what is expected of them and how they can improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is currently satisfactory, meeting all statutory requirements. There is an appropriate concentration on the core subjects of English and mathematics, with a particular focus on mathematics. In science, improved assessment procedures enable more accurate tracking of pupils' progress. ICT is also well provided for; all classrooms benefit from interactive whiteboards. Physical activity and links with the feeder high schools provide valuable opportunities for pupils to take part in a wide variety of sports. The school is piloting an approach to learning which links subjects together with the aim of making learning more relevant and enjoyable. Pupils enjoy 'hands on' experiences in the form of trips, visits and visitors, bringing

topics to life. This new approach has yet to be embedded through the school. As a result activities for some areas of science, and some other subjects, tend to be over reliant on worksheets and pupils have too few opportunities to use their basic skills of literacy and numeracy in other subjects.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory and there is a caring ethos in the school. All relevant procedures for safeguarding pupils and ensuring their health and safety are in place. As a result, pupils say that they feel safe in school and know whom to turn to if they have a problem.

Academic guidance is satisfactory. Targets are set for literacy and in numeracy, but wording is too complex for pupils to remember or understand and therefore they do not give clear guidance about how pupils can improve. Individual education plans for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are satisfactory and are used to target additional support. Assessment is improving with the recent introduction of systems for monitoring how pupils progress year-on-year. The information being gathered is not yet being exploited fully to raise achievement so that all pupils do as well as they could.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The headteacher is an able leader and clearly identifies priorities within the school. The school is improving as a result of a number of effective strategies. Subject leaders, some new to their current curriculum area, have undertaken training to develop their role and are making a good start in monitoring of their subjects. The school recognises the need to enhance pupils' knowledge beyond the school and its local community and promotes community cohesion well. This has a positive impact on the pupils' good personal development. Governance is satisfactory. Governors are involved in all aspects of school life and offer valuable support but recognise the need to extend their role as critical friends. Self-evaluation is thorough and accurate, so the school understands clearly what it needs to improve. The success of current improvements suggests that the school has a good capacity to maintain its progress.

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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?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	3
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

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/or disabilities make progress	3

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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 learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
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

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

19 September 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Crosscanonby St John's CofE School, Cumbria, CA15 6RX

Thank you for making me so welcome in your bright and happy school and for your help during the recent inspection.

I thought your behaviour was excellent and you were so kind to each other. I enjoyed talking to you and listening to what you had to say about your school. Yours is a satisfactory school which does well in giving you trips and French lessons which broaden your experience of life and knows what to do to get better. It is doing a good job in helping you to make friends and in encouraging you to behave with respect for others. It is very caring and makes sure you are safe and secure.

You told me that you like school and enjoy your lessons as well as the clubs, visits and visitors. You certainly know about staying safe and being healthy. You also care for each other very well and enjoy the jobs your teachers ask you to do.

I have asked your school to find ways to enable you to do even better, by making sure you understand how you can improve your work. The school can do this, for example, by telling you how to improve when marking your work and setting your targets. I have also asked the school to use the information it has about your progress in each subject to plan lessons that really make you think and then keep checking how well you are doing so it can put other things in place to make sure you do even better.

It was a pleasure to visit your school. Keep working hard and coming to school regularly.

I do hope you continue to enjoy school and that it will help you to become happy and successful adults.

Yvonne Clare

Lead inspector