

Stainton C of E Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112307
Local Authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	325571
Inspection dates	14–15 January 2009
Reporting inspector	Joan Elton

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 aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	171
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	Mr Peter Scott
Headteacher	Mrs Helen Dunham
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	Fairybead Lane Stainton Penrith Cumbria CA11 0ET
Telephone number	01768 242155
Fax number	01768 242155

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average primary school, where the overwhelming majority of pupils are of White British origin. Of the small number from minority ethnic groups, no pupil is at the early stages of learning English. A well below average percentage of pupils is entitled to free school meals and there are few indicators of social or economic deprivation. The numbers of pupils across the school with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. The school has an Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which comprises of Nursery and Reception children. The school is part of the Penrith rural cluster group for extended schools.

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 school which is steadily improving. It has some outstanding features. Attendance is well above average and pupils really enjoy their learning; the provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is excellent and these pupils make exceptional progress. In the EYFS the promotion of children's welfare and the success of children's personal development are exemplary. The school rightly deserves the very high esteem of the vast majority of parents and the following parental comments encapsulate the school's quality, 'This is a lovely school, with a very caring, competent and enthusiastic staff, who always treat children as individuals... giving them a lot of support and encouragement.'

When pupils start Year 1, their standards are average. By the time pupils leave in Year 6, however, standards typically rise to being above average in English, mathematics and science. This represents good achievement and is the result of good teaching and learning, a broad, well balanced and relevant curriculum and effective care, guidance and support. Pupils also achieve well in their personal development. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils' behaviour is good. They are considerate and have positive attitudes to learning. They feel safe, are safety conscious and adopt healthy lifestyles. The school has established some interesting global contacts and used local community multicultural resources to widen pupils' outlook. Nevertheless, pupils' understanding of British cultural diversity is no better than adequate. Their general personal qualities enable them to contribute effectively to the community and eventually to their working life.

Pupils respond well to learning challenges. Most lessons are based on thorough and accurate assessment. This enables teachers to closely tailor the pupils' work to their individual needs thereby absorbing and sustaining pupils' interest. The curriculum provides opportunities for all learners to progress and develop well. There is good provision for literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT). Education for safety, health and well-being is good. Opportunities for enrichment have a high take up and are much enjoyed. The school complies with all legal requirements for safeguarding, promotes good personal development and well-being and gives the necessary care, guidance and support for all pupils to achieve well. Pupils are well informed about their progress through constructive marking and their involvement in their own assessment.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher sets a clear direction for pupils, staff and governors. She communicates well to parents and ensures that the school runs effectively for all pupils. The school has successfully focused on raising academic and personal achievement and senior managers have a clear vision for its future development. The headteacher, ably assisted by her deputy, has empowered staff and governors so that they have an informed overview of school progress. They are therefore able to contribute effectively to the school's self-evaluation. The school has organised further lesson monitoring and recognises that full staff involvement in both aspects of the process will improve lesson consistency and curricular progression further. The school has made good progress since the last inspection and has a good capacity to improve in future.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Inspectors' findings about the good quality of the EYFS mirror the school's judgement. The EYFS is well led and managed. It ensures that pupils are given excellent levels of welfare and that they do exceptionally well in terms of their personal development and well-being. Staff devise imaginative and absorbing activities for the children both indoors and out. They create a warm and attractive environment, where children settle quickly, make new friendships and grow towards independence. Basic skills are well taught and well consolidated throughout the day. There is a good balance of teacher-led and child-initiated activities which enables children to become increasingly independent. Staff use their time well interacting with children as much as possible to extend learning using commentary, questioning, modelling and role-play. Children learn how to treat each other with respect and consideration. They are courteous and respond well to staff. Health and safety reminders on aspects such as suitable clothing, hand washing and spillages occur throughout the day. As a result, children are safe and happy. Their learning needs are well met because staff continuously monitor them and accurately identify appropriate resources for their development. Although children begin Nursery with skills below those typical for this age group, they make good progress in both Nursery and Reception. As a result the majority achieve the nationally agreed early learning goals, with many exceeding them.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' awareness of the richness and diversity of British culture.
- Extend opportunities for teachers to observe lessons in other classes in order to share good practice and raise achievement further.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are above average and pupils achieve well. When pupils enter Year 1 standards are average with some pupils being above average. Progress through Key Stage 1 is good. Pupils reach above average standards at the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. This good progress continues and the majority of Year 6 pupils reach above average standards in all subjects. This represents good achievement and matches the school's upward trend in national assessment results and good progress between the two key stages. Since 2005, Key Stage 1 national assessment results have risen from broadly average to above. At Key Stage 2 the 2008 provisional results indicate that standards are above average in English and mathematics and broadly average in science. Analysis of work shows that science is improving due to specialist support and practical work. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make exceptional progress due to the school's highly successful inclusion policy.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress in their personal development. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and are well-behaved in lessons and around the school. The general atmosphere is relaxed but orderly and the school places great emphasis on promoting Christian values. The success of this is seen in pupils' maturity, consideration for others, responsible attitudes and developing confidence. Pupils say they really enjoy school and this is shown in their attendance, which is excellent. Most pupils take advantage of the many opportunities on offer, particular

extra-curricular activities. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good. Nevertheless, during discussions, it was evident that pupils' knowledge and understanding of the cultural richness and diversity of modern Britain was limited. Pupils develop good basic skills and positive attitudes for learning. These equip them well for the next stage of their education and for the world of work. There is good scope for pupils to make an active contribution to the school community. Pupils represent their peers on the democratically elected school council and act as 'buddies' to support younger pupils. They are aware of environmental issues and contribute enthusiastically to the school's recycling projects. Pupils appreciate the school's personal development programme. This heightens their understanding of relationships and emotions and helps them understand the importance of diet and exercise to a healthy lifestyle.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good and enable pupils to achieve well. Teachers have high expectations and pupils respond well to the challenges set for them. Pupils have good attitudes to learning, are eager to succeed and work hard. Lessons are conducted in an atmosphere of mutual respect and cooperation. Teachers plan lessons carefully to meet the needs of all learners and use resources imaginatively to sustain pupils' interest and concentration. The school has worked hard on improving teacher assessment, progress tracking and marking. As a result, lessons extend previous learning, challenge different abilities and inform pupils of their strengths and areas for development. Most lessons are conducted at a good pace and pupils are keen to reach their targets. Their learning is checked during the lesson, by the use of skilful questioning so that teachers and teaching assistants can give those pupils in need, constructive help. The support and guidance given to pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is exceptionally well matched to individual needs and their successful achievement motivates pupils to strive harder.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. It provides opportunities for all pupils to make good progress. There is an effective balance of subject areas, specialist teaching for music and French and a good range of enrichment activities, such as residential visits. A particular strength is the rich and varied programme of school productions, which pupils describe most enthusiastically. The school's work in personal, social and health education and in citizenship education is very well organised. It is flexible to pupils' needs and local circumstances. Pupils have a good allocation of time for physical education. All of this contributes well to pupils' enjoyment, health and well-being. Pupils' basic skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT are well developed across the curriculum. Increased provision of computer equipment has led to improved keyboard skills and greater confidence. Pupils' scientific skills are also improving because of the school's current focus on this area.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Good quality care is seen in the school's high level of commitment to encouraging enjoyment and achievement and in the promotion of health and safety. There are effective strategies for

promoting learners' social and economic well-being and inclusion. Arrangements for the safeguarding of pupils meet the current requirements. They are regularly reviewed and staff training is appropriately updated. Health and safety are very carefully managed and pupils thrive in this secure and caring environment.

Academic support and guidance is good. Pupils meet challenging targets because they are well informed about their progress and are made aware of how to do even better. The school's tracking system is used well to make early identification of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and to inform teachers' general planning so that any pupils falling back can be given suitable support. Staff are currently adding assessments to the system so that an even more in depth description of pupil progress develops.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Good leadership and management have successfully raised standards and achievement. Pupils' personal development is given a high priority and pupils benefit from close and productive links with local communities. The school has undertaken careful analysis of its contribution to the promotion of community cohesion. It has put good measures into place and, given the school's locality, has correctly prioritised enhancing pupils' awareness of other cultures. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school, namely that all pupils reach their full potential, acquiring the necessary life skills. This vision has been effectively communicated to staff and governors so that all share a common purpose. As a result of training instigated by the headteacher, rigorous monitoring and the tracking of pupils' progress means that teachers set pupils challenging academic targets. This has contributed to raising standards. The co-ordination and management of subjects has improved since the last inspection and improved the quality of curriculum planning. The school has accurately identified the need for further lesson monitoring in order to share good practice and raise achievement across the school. Governance is good. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They use their expertise well for the school's benefit and successfully manage finances. They are kept well informed by the headteacher and local authority and contribute effectively to the school's accurate self-evaluation by consulting with staff and parents.

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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
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?	2
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?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

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/or disabilities make progress	1

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	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	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 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

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 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	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

16 January 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Stainton C of E Primary School, Cumbria, CA11 0ET

Thank you for welcoming me to your school during your recent inspection. I was most impressed with your courtesy and behaviour. You work well together and are most enthusiastic about your learning. No wonder your attitudes in class and your attendance are so good! I enjoyed your lessons. We saw some good and outstanding teaching. You make a good beginning in Nursery and Reception. The unit is so attractive and stimulating. Throughout the school, your teachers devise some interesting activities to challenge you. They care about all of you and ensure everyone experiences success. Most of you make good progress. Some of you make excellent progress. I saw that in your lessons, group work and books. You learn about a good variety of subjects and are involved in many different community events. Your knowledge of healthy lifestyles and safety is very good. I know you are most enthusiastic about your visits and clubs. Your teachers encourage you to express your views and opinions daily and you do so very confidently.

I have asked your headteacher, staff and governors to do two things to improve your school.

- To make sure you know more about and understand Britain's different cultures, religions and traditions. This is important, as not all parts of Britain are the same. In the future, you may go to live and work in another part.
- To arrange for all your teachers to share ideas and help you to progress smoothly from class to class.

Your school is a good one and very well run. Your headteacher, staff and governors have made good progress since your last inspection and are determined to make even more!

My very best wishes for your future learning. Please continue to enjoy it!

Yours sincerely

Joan Elton

Lead inspector