

Bookwell Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112155
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	378435
Inspection dates	11–12 October 2011
Reporting inspector	Naomi Taylor

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	204
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ken Routledge
Headteacher	Christopher Ashcroft
Date of previous school inspection	13 June 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Seventeen lessons were observed, taught by nine teachers. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body, staff and the local vicar. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at the tracking of pupils' progress and the school's monitoring, self-evaluation and planning for improvement. They analysed 141 parental questionnaires and a sample of pupil and staff questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- To what extent the pace of teaching and learning in lessons ensures maximum progress is being made.
- How much opportunity there is for independent learning across the whole school, including pupils' assessment of their own work.
- How the curriculum provides opportunities to develop reading and how the school involves parents in supporting their child's reading skills.
- If the balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities in the Early Years Foundation Stage is appropriate, both in the classroom and outdoors.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average-sized primary school in which the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average as is the number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Most pupils are White British but there is a small proportion from minority ethnic backgrounds. There are no pupils who speak English as an additional language. The school has Healthy School status and the Activemark award. Since the last inspection there have been changes in staffing including a new headteacher and deputy headteacher.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Bookwell is an outstanding primary school with a friendly and welcoming environment. Attainment in English and mathematics is high and the vast majority of pupils make outstanding progress. Their overall achievement in both academic and personal development is excellent. These very strong outcomes are due to: exceptional leadership and management; good and at times outstanding teaching; a curriculum of excellent quality; pupils' outstanding behaviour and attitudes to learning, and excellent provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. All staff provide excellent care so that pupils feel fully safe in school and know how to look after themselves and one another extremely well. They gain an excellent understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle and exceptionally well-planned strategies are in place to develop pupils' understanding of their role in the local and wider community. Pupils love the excellent opportunities provided for them to experience responsibility. There is a strong school council which plays a significant role in decision making especially with regard to charity work.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is good and as a result, pupils get off to a good start to their formal education. While the provision is well planned to ensure opportunities for learning outdoors, the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage do not have the opportunity to move freely from classroom-based to outdoor activities. This is due to the physical constraints of the building. As such, it limits children's choices for independent play and has a negative impact on their overall development. Teachers and support staff across the school know their pupils extremely well and work is well matched to pupils' needs. The school's motto of 'Every Child Matters' is evident in the detailed way in which teachers and teaching assistants plan their lessons and monitor progress. However, while there are examples of assessment being used well to help pupils to understand how to improve their work further, this is not always consistent throughout the school. The curriculum includes a very strong emphasis on learning challenges covering a wide range of topics. It is enhanced by a breadth of visiting professionals which adds an extra dimension to learning which the school cannot provide alone.

Since the last inspection the overall effectiveness of the school has improved. This is thanks to the excellent leadership provided by the headteacher, senior staff and governing body. All aspects of leadership and management are outstanding. The leadership team is rigorous in evaluating accurately how well the school is doing and taking steps to address any shortcomings found. It tirelessly drives forward and

secures improvement well through a detailed school improvement plan. Supported by a highly effective governing body, the school has an outstanding capacity to maintain the high performance of pupils as shown by its track record in accurately predicting outcomes for learners and making a detailed forecast for the next three years.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the quality and effectiveness of teaching by ensuring consistency in the effectiveness of feedback to pupils about how they might improve their work even further.
- Improve learning and progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage by providing the opportunity for children to move freely from classroom-based to outdoor activities.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Pupils really enjoy their learning and are very keen to succeed. As a result, their achievement by the time they leave school is outstanding. When children enter the school, their development is mostly below that expected for the age group. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make outstanding progress in Key Stages 1 and 2. As a result, attainment by the end of Year 6 is well above average and has been so for the last three years. In the current Year 6 there are a very high proportion of pupils working at or above the expected levels in both English and mathematics. Pupils can apply these skills exceptionally well in other subjects. For example, Year 6 pupils confidently worked independently researching rivers of the world using worksheets provided by the teacher, books and the internet. They also used their numeracy skills very effectively in planning their next residential visit. Pupils have excellent numeracy, literacy, and information and communication technology (ICT) skills. These, combined with high quality teamwork, mean they are extremely well equipped for their future lives. There is a high expectation in the standard of the presentation of their work. This is celebrated across the school with exceptionally high quality displays of pupils' work, including stained glass windows and other art work.

Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They treat each other, adults and visitors with respect. The older pupils willingly support the younger children. For example, the infants enjoy paired reading with older pupils. The Healthy School status reflects the fact that pupils have an excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles. This is also seen in the high number of pupils participating in the wide range of extra-curricular activities. The vast majority of pupils are punctual and attend school regularly. They are a very strong school community and highly regarded by the local residents for their contribution to social activities in a wide range of venues.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

The school's monitoring of lessons shows that teaching is improving. A very large majority of lessons seen by the inspectors were good or better. In these lessons work proceeds at a quick pace and is well matched to pupils' needs. In a Year 2 lesson investigating the lives of some children in Mexico, the pupils were presented with many challenges, including moving from one group to another and recounting what they had learnt. They responded extremely well and the teacher and teaching assistant ensured that no time was wasted. Teachers plan their lessons thoroughly and ensure that all groups of pupils make good or better progress. They make good use of varied resources including ICT to engage pupils' interest so they enjoy learning. 'Talk partners', in which pupils share their views, are a regular feature in lessons to reinforce learning. From the Reception class through to Year 6, pupils are encouraged to develop independent learning skills which they really enjoy and this accelerates their learning. In a few lessons, the work was not always matched to the level of ability for different groups of pupils. Pupils' work is marked regularly, but occasionally in feedback to pupils in lessons, pupils are not always clear about how to improve their learning further. Assessment information is used to identify where pupils have gaps in their learning and to give them the extra help they need to improve. The teaching assistants and many volunteers make a valuable contribution to learning, particularly in reading.

The curriculum is reviewed regularly and meets the needs of pupils extremely well. There is a firm focus on maintaining high standards in English and mathematics and this is evident from the many opportunities to develop these skills across other subjects. Pupils are inspired by themed topics such as Fairyland, Superheroes and The Magic Castle and this was evident in the very high standard of work produced. Professional storytellers, musicians and artistes are regular visitors to the school and provide breadth and further excitement to the curriculum.

¹The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

Parents and carers agree overwhelmingly that their children are exceptionally well cared for in school. Very well-targeted support from staff and from a raft of external agencies helps all pupils to make the best of their opportunities. There is excellent provision for all aspects of pastoral care and pupils, parents and carers find a very safe and welcoming environment in school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account:	
The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Excellent leadership and management by the headteacher are reflected in comments by parents and carers. For example, one parent/carer wrote 'he is an amazing headteacher, always putting the needs of the school and pupils first.' There is a very strong sense of teamwork across the senior leadership team, with leaders and managers at all levels and with all teachers, staff, volunteers and the governing body. An accurate self-evaluation by the school results in well-formulated plans targeted to appropriate areas for development. These are helping to drive forward improvement very successfully. For example, standards and enjoyment of reading have improved by increasing the opportunities for reading across the curriculum and gaining the support of many volunteers to listen to pupils read. The quality of teaching is rigorously monitored and outcomes are shared and fed into performance management targets. The governing body is excellent; it discharges its statutory duties very well and is highly effective. This is because the members are fully involved in decision making and have, for example, increased their involvement in the day-to-day life in the school through 'governor days'. They are also avid supporters at social occasions such as concerts performed by pupils in the local community.

The school implements excellent safeguarding practices so that pupils feel safe. Safeguarding arrangements are thoroughly and regularly monitored and evaluated by the governing body. Child protection training is fully up to date as are procedures and policies, evident in all aspects of the school's work. The school has a strong commitment to try to provide the best for all pupils and leaders and the governing body promotes this exceedingly well and discrimination is not tolerated. Small inconsistencies in performance are eliminated through well-targeted intervention strategies. As a result, the promotion of equal opportunity is excellent. Community cohesion is promoted outstandingly well, based on the in-depth analysis of the areas that the school serves. Particularly strong features include the work done through the school's links to a school in Manchester and with numerous overseas organisations about which the pupils can talk knowledgeably. Excellent partnerships with external organisations provide experiences that the school alone cannot, for example the visiting artistes to the school.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Although attainment on entry to the school varies, the skills and knowledge of most children when they join the Reception class are below those expected for their age, particularly in literacy. As seen during the inspection, children settle quickly and are soon happy and secure as a result of exceptionally good induction arrangements. This is very much appreciated by parents and carers, one of whom commented on how much their child 'loves going to school'. Another, having already noticed progress in their child's learning development in just a few weeks, puts this down to 'the care and hard work' provided by the Early Years Foundation Stage manager. The children make good progress and by the time they enter Year 1, attainment is broadly average.

Overall, children are provided for well. They have many opportunities to explore for themselves and develop independent learning in the highly stimulating classroom environment. However, the children do not have the opportunity to move freely from indoor activities to outdoor play because of the nature of the building. The key stage manager compensates as much as possible for this by a well-developed outdoor curriculum which the children enjoy. However, this does limit children's choice of learning and has a negative impact on learning and progress. They play happily together with their friends and form good relationships with adults. For example, the children sang enthusiastically with the older pupils during the whole-school assembly. The children are well taught and there is a good balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities. Their progress is assessed very carefully and their individual needs met. The whole-school focus on improving opportunities for reading starts in the Reception Year. There was evidence of this during the inspection when the infectious enthusiasm of the teacher fired a lively response from a small group of lower ability children to read a book and discover letters and sounds together. Staff show a strong commitment to the children's care, safety and welfare. The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led and managed.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

There was a very high return of parents and carers questionnaires and an overwhelming majority are extremely satisfied with this school. All believe that teaching is good, that school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour, that the school is led and managed effectively and they say they are happy with their child's experience at Bookwell. One parent/carer wrote 'excellent school...the teachers are dedicated to their job and the school is a vital part of its community...it excels in everything.' This sentiment is shared by almost all parents and carers. The very few concerns recorded related to individual problems and there was no pattern of dissatisfaction.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Bookwell Primary 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 141 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 204 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	99	70	39	28	3	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	125	89	15	11	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	99	70	39	28	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	98	70	42	30	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	110	78	31	22	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	100	71	38	27	2	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	91	65	48	34	2	1	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)	92	65	44	31	2	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	98	70	39	28	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	105	74	35	25	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	86	61	50	35	1	1	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	109	77	32	23	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	110	78	31	22	0	0	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 all 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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 is for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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:	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. ■ 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 pupils' 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.



13 October 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bookwell Primary School, Egremont, CA22 2LT

Thank you for the very warm welcome we received when the inspection team came to inspect your school recently. We thoroughly enjoyed our time with you and appreciated all the help you gave us. It was wonderful to hear the songs you are rehearsing for the Harvest Festival and to see the high quality of your work displayed around the school and how well you respond to learning challenges.

Bookwell is an outstanding school. You get on extremely well together and take great care of each other. You are a credit to your families and your teachers. The members of the school council and all those with other responsibilities do a wonderful job in helping to run the school. We know you are delighted with your school because of comments such as, 'We love coming to school', and you say the teachers make lessons fun. You are keen to learn, work very hard and are making outstanding progress. There have been many improvements since the last inspection.

You can help to keep your school an outstanding one by maintaining your good attendance and keeping up the hard work. We have asked staff to make sure that you are always clear about what you can do to improve your work even further. We have also asked that the school considers improving access to the outdoor area for children in the Reception class.

Please accept my best wishes for the future. I hope you continue to enjoy your school.

Yours sincerely

Naomi Taylor
Lead inspector

