

# Threlkeld CE Primary School

## Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 112276               |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | Cumbria              |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 378454               |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>        | 8–9 February 2012    |
| <b>Lead inspector</b>          | Gillian Salter-Smith |

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

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| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary   |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Voluntary controlled                            |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 4–11  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed   |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 71  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body                              |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Judy Marsland (Acting)                          |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Katharine Horder                                |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 22 May 2007                                     |
| <b>School address</b>                      | Blease Road<br>Threlkeld<br>Keswick<br>CA12 4RX |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 01768 779680                                    |
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## Introduction

Inspection team

Gillian Salter-Smith

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Six teachers and two teaching assistants were observed leading nine part lessons, guided reading, small group support sessions and an extra-curricular activity. The inspector listened to pupils reading from Years 1, 2, 3 and 6. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, the vice chair of the governing body and staff. The inspector observed the school's work and looked at the school self-evaluation document, school improvement planning and action planning, data on pupils' progress, documents relating to safeguarding and samples of pupils' work. The inspector scrutinised 48 questionnaires returned by parents and carers in addition to those returned by pupils and staff. There were no responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) to aid inspection planning.

## Information about the school

The school is much smaller than the average sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. All pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is well below the national average. There are no disabled pupils. Awards gained since the previous inspection include the Activemark and Healthy School status. The school meets the current floor standard.

**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

|                                       |          |
|---------------------------------------|----------|
| <b>Overall Effectiveness</b>          | <b>2</b> |
| <b>Achievement of pupils</b>          | <b>2</b> |
| <b>Quality of teaching</b>            | <b>2</b> |
| <b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b> | <b>1</b> |
| <b>Leadership and management</b>      | <b>2</b> |

## Key Findings

- This is a good school. Parents and carers are highly appreciative of the school’s work and its role in the community.
- Leadership and management are good. The relentless drive of the headteacher is very well supported by highly committed staff. They work as a strong team with a common purpose and high expectations. They are successful in working effectively with parents and carers to ensure that pupils are exceptionally well cared for and well taught. Consequently, pupils are very happy in school; they are safe, settled and ready to learn. They enjoy all that the school offers and their achievement is good. By Year 6, attainment is above average in English and mathematics and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. Often those joining the school during a key stage or those with behavioural difficulties make outstanding progress. Standards of art work and music are of a high quality and many pupils achieve well in sporting activities. The excellent range of extra-curricular activities contributes very well to pupils’ very effective personal development and good achievement.
- Teaching and learning are consistently good with some examples of outstanding practice. The school is keen to increase the frequency of these. A well planned curriculum ensures good progress in communication skills and provides exciting topics for pupils. Through careful assessment of pupils’ progress, staff know the pupils well and, in most parts of lessons, though not all, tasks are carefully planned to meet pupils’ needs. Marking and target setting in English are very helpful to pupils but they lack the same effectiveness in mathematics.
- Pupils’ behaviour and enjoyment of learning are typically outstanding and their attendance is high. Pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils learn to take responsibility for their own actions. They are highly reflective, considerate and caring. Older pupils, including those with special educational needs, take on the care of younger children in the dining and play areas with exceptional sensitivity.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve good teaching further so that there is a higher proportion of outstanding practice by:
  - making better use of every part of each lesson so that pupils' different needs are more fully met
  - improving the precision of marking and target-setting in mathematics so that it is as useful to pupils as that in English.

## Main Report

### Achievement of pupils

Pupils enjoy learning. Their very positive attitudes contribute to good progress throughout the school. Pupils concentrate well in lessons and enjoy the variety of tasks and the interesting topics. Children in the Reception class thrive on the many opportunities for play and exploration both indoors and outdoors. Children rise to the challenges that are posed by staff who know their needs well. For example, they were totally absorbed in making patterns creatively using a wide variety of media. They responded positively when encouraged to explain what their patterns were and to the challenge of making even more complex patterns.

Pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 are also enthusiastic learners. They gain confidence in working independently as they move through the school; some of the older pupils were especially keen to solve problems relating to pie charts in mathematics, consulting each other, drawing on other sources of information and persevering with maturity and independence. Many pupils are confident in using computers independently to further develop their literacy and numeracy skills.

Attainment in reading is average by the end of Year 2 and above average by the end of Year 6. A good balance between learning the techniques of reading and the love of stories and books helps to maintain pupils' interest and progress in reading and writing throughout the school. Progress in reading is checked closely and well targeted support for those at risk of falling behind results in pupils making good progress overall. Those receiving additional support, often those who joined the school during a key stage, make outstanding progress and catch up quickly. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because their needs are identified quickly and they receive well targeted additional support, whether this is for improving key communication skills or overcoming behavioural difficulties.

Although variable from year to year because of the very small size of the year groups, attainment by Year 6 is usually above average and progress is good in relation to individual starting point points. Parents and carers correctly consider that their children make at least good progress.

### Quality of teaching

Parents and carers are right to consider their children are well taught. Teachers ensure that classrooms are busy and purposeful. Relationships between adults and pupils are positive and supportive and pupils say their teachers are always ready to help them. Teaching makes

a very strong contribution to pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by setting high and clear expectations of conduct and encouraging pupils to become independent and thoughtful learners. In examples of outstanding teaching, pupils are highly motivated and encouraged to work independently. For example, older pupils were exceptionally keen to carry out research and find out about a famous person of their choice. They were fascinated by characters such as Nelson Mandela and wrote well-structured, thoughtful autobiographies. They did not want the lesson to end when they played a questioning game to find out about each other's characters.

Lessons are well planned; they include a wide range of learning activities that usually ensure good pace and challenge. For example, in a mixed-age mathematics lesson, pupils responded exceptionally well to opportunities for physically active learning when finding out about 3D shapes. Tasks were generally matched to their different needs. Occasionally, in some parts of lessons where the one activity for the whole class is either too hard or too easy, pupils' different needs are not fully met.

Regular assessment and careful monitoring of progress informs teachers' planning and identifies potential underachievement quickly. Well planned support programmes, carefully tailored to individual needs, are competently led by teaching assistants and help pupils to catch up and accelerate their progress. Pupils' work is marked regularly and older pupils benefit from recognising strengths in their own and each other's work and setting their own targets. Guidance on how to improve is more precise and helpful in marking and target setting in English than it is in mathematics. This means that pupils are not as clear about how they can improve in mathematics as they are in English.

The curriculum is well planned to ensure good progress in key skills within the context of interesting activities and topics. Well constructed programmes to develop recognition of letters and sounds, and to develop early communication skills within activities that interest pupils, are effective from the Reception class onwards. For example, children in the Reception class were keen to write their name on the 'call-out' board before setting off on a 'mountain rescue' to find the missing letters and sounds.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupils' behaviour is typically outstanding. They are exceptionally considerate of each other and are very keen to offer support and help to one another when learning. Parents and carers are highly positive about the standard of behaviour in the school. Pupils report that behaviour is good, that bullying is very rare and that everyone gets on very well with each other. Pupils respect each other and each other's differences. Older pupils are aware of different types of bullying, such as different types of name calling and cyber bullying. They have every confidence that adults will deal quickly with any problems that might arise. Pupils learn to take responsibility for their own actions and there have been no serious incidents of misbehaviour or racist incidents for a number of years. A number of pupils with behavioural difficulties, often those joining the school during a key stage, have responded very positively to the care and support provided. They make excellent progress in improving their behaviour and attitudes towards learning.

Pupils take on responsibilities very seriously; older pupils, including those with special educational needs, take on the care of younger children in the dining and play areas with exceptional sensitivity. Through the highly active school council they have done much to contribute to improvements in the school, including contributing their ideas on how to

maintain good behaviour. Pupils have a very secure knowledge of how to keep themselves safe in many different situations, including when using new technology. Attendance is high and pupils are punctual to school.

## **Leadership and management**

The headteacher is relentless in the pursuit of improvement, setting high expectations of herself, staff and pupils. Self-evaluation is accurate and all leaders contribute to rigorous monitoring of pupils' progress and the effectiveness of teaching and the curriculum. The school improvement plan sets out clear and appropriate priorities. Staff work well as a team, share best practice and take full advantage of opportunities for professional development to improve practice. The school makes the most of constructive working partnerships with other schools to develop and share good practice in teaching and the curriculum. Since the previous inspection, the school has tackled and improved weaknesses identified, improved the building and facilities significantly and maintained good achievement, demonstrating a good capacity to improve further.

The governing body encompasses a good range of relevant expertise and is active in supporting the school, monitoring its work and holding leaders to account. They ensure that the school's arrangements for safeguarding meet statutory requirements. The school is highly committed to equality of opportunity. The achievement and well-being of every individual pupil, whatever their circumstances, is at the forefront of the school's ethos and work. Every effort is made to ensure that there is no discrimination and that pupils develop a very good understanding and respect for people from different backgrounds and circumstances. Regular visits to cities and communication with schools across the world contribute to pupils' respect for and understanding of different cultures.

The curriculum is carefully planned to ensure good progression in key communication skills within the context of topics that interest and challenge pupils. Pupils are fully consulted in developing themes and topics for study. Their individual needs are effectively met through well planned activities in class and through well targeted support. The excellent programme of extra-curricular activities promotes pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development exceptionally well.

## 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      | 46  | 46   | 8            | 0          |
| Primary schools      | 8   | 47   | 40           | 5          |
| Secondary schools    | 14  | 38   | 40           | 8          |
| Special schools      | 28  | 48   | 20           | 4          |
| Pupil referral units | 15  | 50   | 29           | 5          |
| All schools          | 11  | 46   | 38           | 6          |

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.



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## Common terminology used by inspectors

|                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| Achievement:               | the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.   |
| Attainment:                | the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.  |
| Behaviour                  | how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.   |
| Capacity to improve:       | the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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.  |
| 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. |
| Safety                     | how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.             |

**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.**



10 February 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Threlkeld CE Primary School, Keswick, CA12 4RX**

Thank you for welcoming me to your school. I enjoyed seeing you at work in lessons, enjoying singing in the choir and talking with many of you, in meetings, at lunchtimes and in lessons. You are right to be proud of your good school. You enjoy school a great deal and this can be seen in your excellent attendance. You are well taught and you achieve well, reaching attainment that is higher than average. Your behaviour and attitudes are outstanding and a credit to you. You are very sensitive to each other's needs and keen to help one another in lessons.

Your headteacher, the governing body and staff work hard as a team to make sure that you achieve well and that you are kept safe in school. They keep a close eye on your progress and make sure that you get the extra help you need to do well. Some of you who fall behind, including some who join the school mid-year, and those who struggle to behave as well as they should, do exceptionally well. I was pleased to see that older pupils take their responsibilities very seriously when taking care of younger pupils. It was good to see that you make the most of the excellent range of extra-curricular activities. You told me how much you enjoy the music, art and sporting activities especially.

Your headteacher, the staff and the governing body are keen to carry on making the school better for you. I have asked them to improve a few things that will help to make more of the lessons as good as the very best and help you to do even better in your work. You can help by continuing to enjoy coming to school, trying your very best and making the most of all the exciting opportunities that the school offers to you. I wish you all the very best in your futures.

Yours sincerely

Gillian Salter-Smith  
Lead inspector

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