

# St Bega's CofE Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	112349
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cumbria
<b>Inspection number</b>	357087
<b>Inspection dates</b>	17–18 May 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Adrian Francis

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 aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	41
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Madonna Adams
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Emma Sharp
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 September 2007
<b>School address</b>	Longrigg Lane Eskdale, Holmrook Cumbria CA19 1TW
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. The inspector visited five lessons and observed two teachers and one teaching assistant. Meetings were held with governors, staff, parents and pupils. He observed the school's work and looked at samples of school documentation, including development plans, tracking and assessment records, policies, safeguarding documents and samples of pupils' work. The inspector considered the views of 16 parents and carers who returned questionnaires.

- The extent to which the strategies used by the school to raise standards and improve progress are effective.
- Whether or not the school's judgements relating to pupils' personal development are accurate.
- Whether or not teachers' assessments are accurate and how effectively the information from these assessments is used to help pupils improve their own learning.

## Information about the school

This is a very small rural school. Pupils are taught in two mixed-age classes, one of which includes children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The vast majority of pupils is of White British origin. The proportion identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is very low. The number of pupils in different year groups fluctuates significantly depending upon the birth rate in the locality. There are twice as many boys as girls. The school has gained the Artsmark award, Investors in People Gold and has Healthy School status. A private nursery shares the school premises for part of each week.

At the time of the inspection the acting headteacher has been in post for almost two terms.

**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?****2****The school's capacity for sustained improvement****2**

## Main findings

This is a good school. It is an exceptionally happy place that is at the heart of the local community and pupils enjoy school immensely. Behaviour is outstanding in lessons and around the school and pupils feel extremely safe. Pupils thoroughly enjoy learning, parents and carers are very appreciative of the school's work and staff morale is high. Excellent links with the community, effective teaching and a good curriculum give pupils a really good start to life. These experiences raise pupils' skills as well as enhancing their awareness of the richness of their local environment and broadening their horizons and understanding of the wider world.

Pupils make good progress in their learning. They enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills broadly in line with those expected for their age and make good progress. Although cohort sizes vary considerably, pupils reach standards that are above average by the time they leave the school. Writing is not as high as other subjects and pupils do not always have enough opportunities to write at length and apply their skills across the curriculum.

While teaching is good overall it is variable, being especially effective in Key Stage 2 where progress accelerates. Most lessons include a variety of activities that sustain pupils' interest. Assessment is satisfactory but especially in Key Stage 1 work is not always closely-matched to pupils' ability and they are not always clear how to improve. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress in their learning and development as a result of the school's strong commitment to inclusion and because staff make sure that the needs of these pupils are met.

Pupils liken their school to being part of a large family, a view which is firmly endorsed by parents and carers. Every pupil is known and valued as an individual and all are committed to ensuring they are fully included in everything on offer.

Since the last inspection the school has maintained its effectiveness. School self-evaluation and improvement planning is of high quality. Senior leaders and governors monitor the school's work carefully and know its strengths and weaknesses well. Priorities for improvement are clearly understood and the school has a good capacity to improve further.

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

- Improve the effectiveness of assessment by:
  - making better use of accurate assessment information and marking so that pupils consistently understand the next small steps in their learning and how to improve their work

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- ensuring that tasks and activities consistently match the needs of individual pupils especially in Key Stage 1.
- Strengthen pupils' confidence and ability in writing by:
  - ensuring that sufficient attention is given to improving the basic competencies in writing
  - consistently providing pupils with opportunities across the curriculum for sustained, independent writing.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**2**

Pupils have positive attitudes to learning, settle quickly to their work and apply themselves well. When given the opportunity they work well in pairs or groups and show great respect for each other's ideas and contributions. Pupils develop good independent learning skills, particularly in Key Stage 2, because teaching encourages them to find things out for themselves. Attainment fluctuates from year to year because of the small and changeable size of the year groups. However, it is generally above average by the end of Year 6, although standards and progress in writing are generally lower than in reading and in mathematics. Assessment information, pupils' work and lessons seen by the inspector demonstrate that overall progress is good for pupils of all abilities. This represents good achievement overall.

Behaviour is excellent and pupils say they feel extremely safe in school. Pupils know how important healthy lifestyles are. They eat healthily, know which foods are good for them and those that need to be treated with more caution. They are very willing and active participants in the wide range of sporting and other enrichment opportunities the school provides. A strong feature of the school is the way in which older pupils support and help the younger ones, both in their learning and at playtimes. The school council is an active group and elected pupils write manifestos and read them to the whole school as part of the selection process.

Pupils speak with real enthusiasm about their local community and are involved in a range of events. These include cooking Lent lunches for local people and involvement in a local sustainability project with a national organisation. Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good. They know the difference between right and wrong and are encouraged by staff during assemblies and other discussion times to reflect on the impact of their actions on others. Attendance is average, primarily as a result of several families taking holiday leave during term-time.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

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

## How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is good overall although it varies between classes. Strengths throughout the school include good and imaginative use of information and communication technology (ICT) and the use of talk partners and group work. Where the teaching is especially good, more imaginative tasks are given to the pupils and in these lessons pupils are more strongly motivated and teachers have pinpointed learning needs more accurately by more effective use of assessment. This is particularly the case in Key Stage 2. Attainment in writing is not as strong as other subjects because teachers do not always put sufficient emphasis on teaching basic skills, especially in Key Stage 1, with the use of worksheets that do not effectively extend learning. Although assessment procedures have improved recently information is not yet being used consistently by all teachers to ensure that tasks in lessons match pupils' learning needs. Although work is marked regularly comments do not always make it clear to pupils how they might improve their work.

The curriculum is balanced and overall meets the needs of all pupils. Basic skills in mathematics are taught well and exploited across the curriculum. This is less well developed in writing. The school enriches the curriculum with a wide range of opportunities to capture pupils' interests. Staff make good use of visits and visitors to provide an extra stimulus for learning. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities which offer opportunities to extend pupils' involvement and learning. This is exemplified

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through the sporting provision, with pupils throughout the school involved in enrichment activities which support their very good personal development.

Care, guidance and support are good and individual pupils with specific needs are well supported. Attendance is average overall and improving because the school is robustly tackling the on-going issue of holiday absence during term-time. Transition arrangements are highly effective, with a number of staff involved in ensuring the youngest pupils settle into school routines very quickly.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The school is ably led by the acting headteacher who ensures leaders and managers have a clear vision for the future with a focus on improvement. They promote strong teamwork towards common goals and staff recognise this. Teaching is closely monitored although not always followed up rigorously enough to ensure consistency of approach. Governance is effective and governors are knowledgeable and supportive. They are keen to see the school do well and hold it effectively to account. Equality of opportunity is good. Pupils achieve well because of the increasingly strong focus on individual tracking that promptly spots if a pupil is not doing well enough and offers support. Resources, especially non-teaching staff, are managed skilfully and used effectively to maximise their impact. This includes those who support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Safeguarding procedures are good. Thorough checks are carried out on all staff and visitors to the school. Staff receive regular training to update them on safeguarding and child protection procedures. Risk assessments are carried out on pupils' activities and visits.

The promotion of community cohesion is good. The school has a clear understanding of its context and plans accordingly. The school is a happy and very cohesive community. Pupils are active in the local community. Leaders plan for visits and visitors to support and enrich pupils' understanding of different cultures and faiths. The school has established links with schools in Poland, France and South Africa although it accepts the need to further develop pupils' understanding of cultural differences within this country.

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*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught together with pupils in Years 1 and 2. Good leadership and management ensures that, in this mixed-age context, activities for Reception children are appropriate. Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills broadly in line with those expected for their age. Good progress is made and teaching assistants are very effective in helping and guiding the children in their learning. Children are encouraged to choose activities for themselves and as a result they become inquisitive and independent learners. The outside area is used well although this is currently being developed to better reflect the quality of provision indoors. Children's social skills are effectively developed by playing and working as a group, as well as joining in with some of the activities undertaken by pupils in Years 1 and 2.

Parents and carers receive regular information regarding their children's learning and progress. Good levels of care and support ensure that children's induction into the Early Years Foundation Stage is smooth and successful. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are fully included in many of the whole-school enrichment activities which support their sense of belonging to both the school and the local community. Good links exist with the privately-run Nursery which shares the school premises for part of each week. This reinforces the school's strong community focus.



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*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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 of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

Questionnaires returned from parents and carers were overwhelmingly supportive of all aspects of the school's work, such as how much their children enjoy school, the extent to which the school keeps their children safe and the promotion of healthy lifestyles. Parents and carers are impressed with the open approach of the acting headteacher and welcome the opportunity to be as engaged with the school as possible. They were especially pleased with the good start in life that the school gives to their children. No concerns were raised in any respect.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Bega's CofE 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 inspector received 16 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 41 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	12	75	4	25	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	15	94	1	6	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	10	63	6	38	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	9	56	7	44	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	10	63	6	38	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	8	50	8	50	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	14	88	2	13	0	0	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)	9	56	7	44	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	9	56	6	38	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	8	50	8	50	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	8	50	8	50	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	12	75	4	25	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	14	88	2	13	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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 December 2010 and 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.

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:	<p>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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



19 May 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of St Bega's C of E Primary School, Holmrook, CA19 1TW**

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school recently. You will be delighted to know that you go to a good school. I was impressed with how well you all get on together and how proud you are of your school. Your behaviour is excellent. You make a first rate contribution to school life as well as involvement in the local community. The school provides you with a good range of activities in lessons and at other times, particularly related to physical education and sports. The school provides you with good care, guidance and support with the result that each one of you is valued and you all feel extremely safe. I was pleased to see how hard you work in lessons and that you make good progress in your learning and achieve well. You enjoy an imaginative variety of experiences and teaching is good.

So, what does the school need to do to get even better? I have asked your headteacher and teachers to do the following:

- make sure it is always made clear to you the progress you are making and what you need to do to make your work better
- make sure you pay more attention to the basic skills of your writing and you have more opportunities to write independently and at length.

I am sure you will play your part in helping your teachers to improve St Bega's. I wish you the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Adrian Francis

Lead Inspector

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