

Robert Ferguson Primary

East Dale Street, Carlisle, CA2 5LA

Inspection dates 25–26 September 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Progress is good across the school. Since the last inspection the number of pupils making and exceeding expected progress over time has risen significantly.
- The majority of pupils enjoy reading and read often and widely.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and those for whom the pupil premium provides support, achieve exceptionally well.
- Teaching and learning are good overall. In most lessons teachers have high expectations of what they want pupils to achieve. Encouragement and praise from adults are a strong feature in all lessons.
- Pupils are proud of their school. Behaviour is good and pupils collaborate well. Pupils say they enjoy school and feel very safe.
- The curriculum provides a rich range of experiences which promotes pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development well.
- Senior leaders and governors have successfully raised the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. Progress is rising and closer monitoring of teaching is leading to more consistency throughout the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is good rather than outstanding with some inconsistencies between classes.
- Provision for outdoor play in the Early Years Foundation Stage is not as good as the indoor provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 14 teachers teaching 20 lessons.
- Discussions were held with groups of pupils, Chair of the Governing Body, Local Authority personnel, parents and school staff.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and discussed the work they have been doing in class this academic year.
- Inspectors took account of the 13 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection.
- They observed the school's work, scrutinised a number of documents, including the school self-evaluation summary, school improvement plan, safeguarding documents and the school's own data for checking on pupils' progress.
- Inspectors analysed questionnaires completed by staff.

Inspection team

Gordon Alston, Lead inspector,	Additional Inspector
Sue Sharkey	Additional Inspector
Sheila Mawer	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium is above average.
- The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. A small proportion of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. A few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets the current government floor standards which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure consistency in the quality of teaching and raise it from good to outstanding by:
 - always matching tasks to pupils' different ability levels, particularly for more able pupils
 - sharing the good examples in marking and ensuring consistency in feedback so that pupils always know how to improve their work
 - allowing pupils time to respond to marking and to check against their individual targets.
 - Improve the outdoor play facilities for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage so that it mirrors the good practice and provision provided indoors.
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Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the Nursery with skills well below those typical for their age. They make rapid progress across all areas of learning because the teaching is good. This progress is most marked in communication, language and literacy and in personal, social and emotional development and prepares children well for Year 1.
- Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1 although attainment remains slightly below average in reading, writing and in mathematics. Year 2 pupils use their knowledge of letters and the sounds they make to read unfamiliar words and they talk enthusiastically about the books they like.
- Good progress continues in Key Stage 2. Pupils' reading skills increase so that by the end of the Year 6 most are fluent and competent readers. Overall attainment is broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics. This reflects good achievement from pupils' starting points.
- Throughout the school disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those supported by pupil premium make exceptional progress due to the accurate identification of their needs and very good support from teachers and support adults both in class and in small groups.
- In most lessons learning is effective, leading to good progress. The focus on practical activities sustains progress but occasionally the level of work is not accurate and slows learning. This is often the case for the more able who overall make good progress but this is not yet consistent.
- Nearly all parents who responded through Parent View agree that their children make good progress.

The quality of teaching is good

- Many examples of good teaching were seen across the school, but very little was outstanding. This explains why pupils' achievement is good, rather than outstanding. Nevertheless, there is improvement since the last inspection and this has a clear impact on the rise in pupils' progress.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage staff show a secure knowledge of the needs of this age group. A strong focus on language development and effective questioning extends communication skills. The indoor area is stimulating and promotes good progress through role play and learning through real life situations. This is not reflected in the outdoor area which lacks the required stimulation to promote learning.
- In Key Stages 1 and 2 teaching includes many strengths. A common feature in most lessons is the very supportive climate for learning that is created in all classrooms. Teachers know their pupils well and give encouragement to all. The very best lessons promote good application of basic skills and development of problem-solving.
- Teachers plan thoroughly to promote personal development as well as their academic achievement. Initiatives to encourage learning through enrichment and practice have successfully raised confidence in working independently. An improvement in writing links directly to teachers ensuring that pupils write regularly in different styles and have time to practise their reading.
- Assessment is used effectively to identify any pupils not making enough progress. Additional support includes extra group work. Analysis of school data shows that this approach is effective in helping pupils to catch up with their peers.
- When teaching is not as effective assessment is not always used rigorously enough especially

in ensuring that work is sufficiently challenging. As a result, the pace slows and pupils do not push themselves to work at a fast enough pace. Furthermore, there are not always sufficient opportunities for pupils to respond to teachers' comments about their work and to take responsibility for assessing their progress towards their individual targets.

- Very effective provision and support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and pupils supported from the pupil premium ensure that they make exceptional progress. Teachers and teaching assistants, across the school, work together well, providing tailored support for each pupil's individual needs, enabling them to make very good headway.
- Responses on the on-line (Parent View) site show that most parents feel that their children are taught well, a view endorsed by the inspection.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour and safety are good and effectively promote a generally calm, safe and harmonious community.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage quickly learn to follow routines. They have very good attitudes to learning and well-developed social skills.
- Older pupils show a mature sense of responsibility towards others, displaying good manners and respect for others. They feel very secure because they are all valued and supported as individuals. This sense of security is also helped by the steps taken to inform pupils how to keep safe, such as when using the Internet.
- Pupils' very positive attitudes towards school are shown in their enthusiastic participation in all aspects of school life, from lessons, to class trips, to participating in before- and after-school clubs. They enjoy school and say that bullying of any kind is rare and is dealt with quickly when it occurs.
- Assiduous work by the school to raise attendance has resulted in it rising to broadly average in the current year.
- Virtually all parents who responded on Parent View indicated that their children feel safe in school and they believe behaviour is good and bullying is dealt with well.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher communicates high expectations leading to a team all sharing a common vision with a strong focus on continuing improvement. Effective systems to track performance lead to accurate self-evaluation and the correct priorities. Changes are identified and actions put in place. Success is evident in the rising trend in progress and attainment. There has been good improvement since the last inspection and the effectiveness of management shows that this is set to continue.
- Regular monitoring of teaching by managers has brought about improvements in teaching although shortcomings remain. The impact of targeted professional development, linked to appraisal, has been positive. Continuing training, for example in promoting pupils' numeracy skills, has resulted in marked improvements.
- School leaders ensure that the curriculum is managed well and tailored to meet pupils' needs. Key literacy and numeracy skills are developed successfully across the whole curriculum. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted effectively. Older pupils discuss maturely national and international events from both a moral and social viewpoint and value different traditions and cultures.
- Although the management of the Early Years Foundation Stage has identified the need to

improve outdoors it currently requires attention.

- The high level of support given to disabled pupils and those with special educational needs or those who receive pupil premium funding allows them to access all that the school offers. It demonstrates the promotion of equality of opportunity that is central to the school's work.
 - Safeguarding meets requirements and staff training enables staff to keep pupils safe.
 - The local authority provides effective support to the school in monitoring performance and reporting to governors.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - plays an important strategic role in school development and both supports and challenges leaders
 - has a good understanding of what the school does well and the areas for further improvement.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	112242
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	401249

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	3 - 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	320
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alan Johnson
Headteacher	Graham Frost
Date of previous school inspection	28 April 2010
Telephone number	01228 535091
Fax number	Not applicable
Email address	office@rferguson.cumbria.sch.uk

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