

Norman Street Primary School

Norman Street, Carlisle, Cumbria, CA1 2BQ

Inspection dates 25–26 September 2012

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Teaching in Years 1 to 6 does not always match the individual needs of pupils with different levels of ability.
- Teachers' marking does not always give pupils enough information on how to improve their work.
- Teachers do not always have high enough expectations of the amount and quality of pupils' work, nor do they provide pupils with a fully secure understanding of letters and the sounds they make.
- Leaders have implemented systems that have resulted in improvements in pupils' achievement and to the quality of teaching but the impact of actions taken are insufficiently rigorously evaluated.
- While pupils' progress in Years 1 to 6 is improving, it varies between classes. This means that pupils' overall achievement requires improvement.
- Most pupils have good attitudes to learning, but in some lessons behaviour dips because pupils do not fully understand the work they are expected to do and cannot complete tasks independently.

The school has the following strengths

- School leaders are committed to improving the quality of teaching and have a clear view of what needs to be done.
- Good teaching and recent improvements to the indoor and outdoor learning areas in the Early Years Foundation Stage mean that children settle into school swiftly and make good progress in the Reception class.
- The curriculum has improved since the last inspection and pupils benefit from an increasingly wide range of interesting outside visits and visitors to the school.
- Relationships are strong. Parents feel very welcome in school and pupils know that adults in the school look after them well and are willing to listen to any concerns.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 17 lessons, one of which was a joint observation with the headteacher. In addition, the inspection team made a number of short visits to lessons and small group sessions.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, parents, members of the governing body, a local authority representative and school staff.
- Inspectors took account of 30 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), a telephone call from a parent and 24 staff questionnaires.
- A range of documents was looked at, including the school’s data on pupils’ progress, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Janette Corlett, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Louise Murphy

Additional Inspector

Adrian Francis

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized primary school that has an increasing number of pupils on roll.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average.
- The proportions of pupils supported at school action and those supported at school action plus or have a statement of special educational needs are below average.
- Most pupils are from a White British background and the majority speak English as their first language.
- The school currently meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school provides a breakfast and an after-school club.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the overall quality of teaching so that it is at least good by:
 - planning lessons that take into account prior learning to ensure that any whole-class teaching is at the correct level to meet the needs of all pupils
 - planning independent tasks and activities in lessons which are accurately matched to the needs of pupils and provide the right amount of challenge to ensure all pupils make as much progress as they can from their individual starting points
 - making sure that when marking pupils' work, teachers give pupils enough information on how to improve their work and that pupils then have the opportunity to revise their work in follow-up lessons
 - ensuring that the teaching of reading in Years 1 and 2 enables pupils to have a secure grasp of letters and the sounds they make.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - more rigorously using the systems and procedures in place to assess actions taken to improve the impact of teaching on pupils' learning and outcomes
 - using the performance management of teachers and focused professional development to improve individual teachers' ability to plan and teach well-structured lessons.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Children in the Reception class make good progress from their starting points which are generally below expectations. The indoor and outdoor learning areas have recently been improved and provide a vibrant and stimulating environment for young children. This, together with the warm welcome from the friendly team of teachers and support staff, means that after only a few weeks in school children are settled into the school routines, playing well together and listening carefully to adults and each other.
- The attainment of pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics is average and the majority of pupils make expected progress in these subjects. Progress in mathematics is stronger than it is in reading and writing.
- Attainment at Key Stage 2 in English and mathematics is average. Pupils' progress has improved with an increasing number of pupils making better than expected progress between Years 3 and 6. However, due to inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, progress is not yet good enough in every class.
- Disabled pupils, with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language make expected progress because they receive increasingly well-targeted support from teachers and teaching assistants.
- In the past, pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium have generally achieved less well than other pupils. Pupils currently supported by the pupil premium make expected progress, an improvement on past years.
- Pupils have the opportunity to practise reading across a variety of lessons and activities throughout the school day. A slot is made available on the daily timetable to allow them to read individually and in small groups guided by an adult. A significant minority of pupils in Years 1 and 2 struggle with reading because their understanding of letters and sounds is not secure and this means that they do not all reach expected levels at the end of Year 2.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teachers have good relationships with pupils. As a result, pupils are comfortable in asking for help when it is needed, answer questions confidently and contribute well to class discussions.
- Teachers generally have good subject knowledge and are encouraged to use their particular areas of expertise, for example in music, information and communication technology and art, across different classes and year groups. This supports breadth and balance in the curriculum.
- In some classes, pupils are not instilled with a pride in the quality or quantity of their work.
- Teachers do not always use secure assessment of pupils' prior learning to pitch whole-class lessons at the right level for their needs. As a result, pupils sometimes move into activities and tasks without fully understanding what they are expected to do and the purpose of their learning.
- 'Talking partners' of mixed ability are sometimes used effectively to help pupils develop confidence and independence as learners.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, but the quality of marking varies considerably between classes. Where marking is of high quality, teachers' comments give help and advice on the next steps in learning and how to improve. However, pupils do not routinely have time in lessons to follow up on these comments. Less successful marking is typified by a congratulatory phrase but no suggestions for revision or improvement.

The behaviour and safety of pupils requires improvement

- Most pupils have positive attitudes towards learning. They enjoy coming to school and say that they feel safe because the adults are always fair and willing to listen.
- Pupils say that there is no bullying in school of any kind and understand the difference between bullying and simply 'falling out'. Of those parents who responded to Parent View, the overwhelming majority felt that bullying was effectively dealt with by the school. Similarly, racist incidents are extremely rare.
- Behaviour is not yet good because behaviour in lessons is not always as good as it should be. This is because the tasks and activities set do not always engage the full range of ability of the learners. As a result, some pupils become distracted and their behaviour dips a little. Pupils understand the difference between right and wrong and generally treat one another with respect.
- Most pupils arrive at school on time. Attendance is average and improving because of the school's strong links with parents. The recent addition of a breakfast and after-school club supports working families well and contributes to this improving picture.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The headteacher provides strong leadership and has high aspirations for the school. The senior leadership team has recently been restructured and some leaders are relatively new to their roles. While it is early days to see the full impact of their work, the improved quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage and increasing proportion of pupils making better than expected progress in English in Key Stage 2 demonstrate the capacity of the team to bring about improvement.
- Senior leaders regularly observe lessons and check on the quality of pupils' work. This has had a demonstrable effect on raising achievement and improving the quality of teaching. Where weaknesses in teaching are identified, support is provided, but the arrangements for checking that this support has been effective are not firmly embedded. As a result, some valuable opportunities to improve the quality of teaching and hold teachers' accountable for pupils' learning and progress are missed. This means that overall the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement requires improvement.
- Statutory procedures are in place for performance management of staff. However, the outcomes of performance reviews are not yet sufficiently linked to those specific areas of teaching which require improvement by individual teachers. As a result, planned opportunities for professional training and development are less effective than they could be.
- The school offers a curriculum that is meeting the needs and interests of the pupils increasingly well. It is further enriched by the broad range of after-school activities available to all pupils and the many interesting visits arranged to fit with curricular themes. Older pupils benefit from residential visits with an outdoor educational or cultural purpose. For example, a group of pupils recently enjoyed an exciting visit to London which was used as the stimulus for further learning across a range of subject areas on their return to school.
- School leaders place a high priority on tackling inequality and ensuring that all pupils, including those known to be eligible for the pupil premium and those with special educational needs achieve to their full potential. Support for these groups of pupils is beginning to have an impact on improving their progress and narrowing the gaps in their performance.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is promoted through the wider curriculum and opportunities for pupils to take on roles and responsibilities within the school. School councillors, for example, recently helped organise a summer fete to raise funds to purchase extra playground equipment.
- Pupils are supported in developing cultural awareness through assemblies celebrating religious

ceremonies across the world and a multicultural week involving visitors from diverse cultural backgrounds including a Zulu dance group.

- Safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements and give no cause for concern.
- The local authority has provided support and challenge for the school which has supported the development of an increasingly effective senior leadership team.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is a strength of the school. It is well informed on pupils' attainment, learning and progress. Governors routinely question and challenge school leaders on all aspects of the school's performance, including the quality of teaching. They maintain strong links with parents and the local community.

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	112219
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	405381

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	333
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rebecca Long
Headteacher	Nick Page
Date of previous school inspection	8 February 2011
Telephone number	01228 210168
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