

# Sir John Barrow Primary School

Arygle Street, Ulverston, Cumbria, LA12 0BD

## Inspection dates

24–25 October 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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.

- The school is improving rapidly. Pupils make good progress, especially at upper Key Stage 2. By the time pupils leave at the end of Year 6, standards are broadly average although mathematics is weaker than reading and writing.
- All groups make good progress including the disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and those who are supported with extra funding.
- Teaching is good and improving, especially since the arrival of the new headteacher. As a result standards have been raised in English and mathematics.
- Pupils behave well because they have positive attitudes towards their learning. They feel safe in school. Parents confirm that behaviour over time has improved and it is now good.
- The headteacher and middle managers in unison with the governing body and the local authority have high expectations. As a result achievement and teaching have improved since the previous inspection.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Some pupils are not always clear about their targets for improvement and how to achieve them, especially in mathematics.
- There are occasions when the more-able pupils are not 'stretched', particularly in mathematics.
- Some middle leaders do not ensure teachers act on advice from lesson observations to further improve teaching and learning, such as for the more-able pupils.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 18 lessons with 14 teachers, of which one was a joint observation with the headteacher. In addition, inspectors made a number of shorter visits to other lessons.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and four other governors, middle leaders and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at documents relating to safeguarding, the performance management of staff, the tracking and assessment of pupils' attainment and progress, pupils' books, school policies, records on behaviour and safety and attendance data, and evaluated the quality of the monitoring of teaching and learning.
- Inspectors took account of parents' views in the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the outcome from the school's own survey of parental views. Other parental views were sought at the start and end of the school day as well as during the school time.
- Inspectors scrutinised 28 questionnaires completed by staff.

## Inspection team

Zahid Aziz, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jeremy Barnes

Additional Inspector

Naomi Taylor

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Sir John Barrow Primary School is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- The school provides a breakfast club which is managed by the governing body.
- The headteacher was appointed in January 2012.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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

- Raise attainment by improving further the proportion of pupils attaining higher levels, especially in mathematics by:
  - making sure that all pupils know their targets for improvement and that these are precise enough to help them improve.
- Strengthen the quality of teaching and learning so that it is consistently good or outstanding by:
  - ensuring that learning activities are planned to meet the needs of all pupils especially those with higher ability.
- Further develop the role of middle leaders to strengthen monitoring and evaluation by:
  - ensuring teachers act on advice after lesson observations, especially in mathematics.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children settle quickly in the Nursery and the Reception thanks to the good links with parents. They develop a sense of respect for each other and adults around them. They enjoy both adult and child-led activities indoors and outdoors. As a result they make good progress, particularly from their low starting points in social and writing skills.
- Pupils continue to make good progress and are much closer to national averages in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2. They make more rapid progress at Key Stage 2, especially in the upper school. By the time they leave Year 6, they have made good progress in writing and mathematics from their various starting points, with some making outstanding progress. However, the more-able pupils are not always challenged to achieve their best in mathematics. Attainment is securely average for English and mathematics although mathematics is not as high as English.
- Pupils' work in their books indicates that over time they make good progress in both English and mathematics. They learn skills such as writing letters to parents. In Year 5, they enjoy debate and role-play in English about developing a new factory in their town. This helped pupils to develop their social skills and gain an awareness of the local environment.
- In reading, children enter Nursery with skills generally lower than expected for their age. Effective teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) increases pupils' confidence in linking letters and sounds so that they can practise difficult words themselves. They make good progress and by the time they leave school their standards in reading are broadly average. As a result of individual support, pupils' reading skills improve rapidly. This was demonstrated by highly skilled readers in Year 6 who read fluently and with expression.
- Pupils' progress is now analysed more rigorously. The attainment gap between different groups of pupils is narrowing as a result of highly effective deployment of support staff. Strategies to support disabled pupils, those with a special educational need and those who fall behind, are more effective. The impact on the progress of these pupils is good with some now making outstanding progress. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds make the same good progress as other pupils.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Standards are continuing to rise and as a result of the strong subject knowledge of the teachers and support staff, most pupils make good progress.
- In the Nursery and Reception Years, teachers use a good range of resources and provide activities that the children enjoy. For example, one parent brought some chickens in to the Nursery and the Reception classes. Children made the link between the colour of the chickens and the colour of the eggs. For many children, this helped to develop their knowledge and understanding of the wider world.
- Teachers encourage children to develop their own activities, with many activities helping children to improve their hand and physical movements as well as number skills. The more-able children are not always challenged enough because adult-led activities are not always well matched to their individual needs.
- In Key Stages 1 and 2, teachers plan lessons carefully. They use good strategies to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. For example, in a Year 2 English lesson, pupils worked out 'bossy' words and were able to give clear instructions when speaking and in their writing. In a well-paced Year 5 mathematics lesson, pupils were working on multiplication with the teacher correcting any misconceptions such as the position of the decimal point. Behaviour is managed well and lessons run smoothly.
- Assessment and marking is regular. Pupils' progress is put in place quickly through strategies and short term one-to-one support. However, especially in mathematics, the more-able pupils

are not always given work that is hard enough to extend their learning. Pupils have individual targets for improvement but they are not always precise enough and pupils are not clear how to achieve them.

- Teachers provide good opportunities for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils. In a harvest festival assembly, pupils demonstrate their skills in use of musical instruments such as saxophone and recorder. Pupils, parents and staff were all spell-bound by the high quality, confident singing of one pupil.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- The behaviour around the school is typically good because pupils' attitudes are positive. Parents are very pleased that behaviour has improved. This is because of the consistent approach of the school towards rewards and sanctions.
- Teachers and other staff have a strong relationship with their pupils because they interact effectively and give plenty of rewards and praise. As a result pupils develop greater self-confidence and self-esteem.
- The use of exclusion is rare. Most pupils are courteous and respectful towards their peers and adults. Pupils are happy to be in school. They say that they feel safe because there are so many friendly and supportive adults around them.
- Pupils have a good knowledge of different forms of bullying such as racism and name calling. They are very clear what actions to take if such incidents occur and are confident that the adults in school will deal effectively with any such incidents.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are integrated well into the whole life of the school. Pupils and adults ensure that pupils with different backgrounds are well treated and supported.
- Attendance has improved over time and it is now broadly average. Persistent absence has been reduced owing to additional work done on hard to reach families such as visits by the headteacher to meet parents at their homes.
- The breakfast club provides a valuable resource and helps many pupils get off to a good start to the day.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- Since the appointment of the new headteacher, there has been a sharp focus on identifying strengths and weaknesses of the school. As a result priorities for improvement are clear. A concerted effort by the headteacher, some middle managers, the governing body and the local authority has resulted in better teaching and an improvement in pupils' achievement. The school is strongly placed to continue this improvement.
- There is an effective tracking and evaluation system in place. Performance management is closely linked to achievement and teacher performance. Good quality professional development and the sharing of good and outstanding practice, both within the school and with outside partners are all helping to improve teaching.
- While monitoring of teaching is good, the monitoring carried out by some middle leaders lacks rigour. Occasionally, they do not check whether teachers have acted upon the advice given after lesson observations and some variations in the quality of teaching remain. Pupils' progress to meet their targets is not closely checked to see how well pupils are doing and if their targets need adjusting.
- Pupil-premium funding is targeted appropriately, attainment is rising and any gaps in attainment are narrowing between the different groups represented in the school. Those pupils considered to be more vulnerable make good progress because of the good one-to-one support they receive. The 'school councillor' provides valuable support to pupils and their families and this has

had a positive impact on improving pupils' attitude and attendance. The school promotes equality of opportunity well and tackles discrimination through actions and support provided for all groups of pupils in the school.

- The curriculum is sharply focused on reading, writing and mathematics. For example, strategies are starting to have a positive impact on the progress of pupils in the lower school, where some pupils have made two terms progress in one term in mathematics.
- Safeguarding procedures, including safer recruitment and staff vetting arrangements, meet requirements. Effective support by the local authority has helped the school to improve in the past. However, there is now only light touch support as a result of recent improvements.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body is strong and provides effective challenge to leaders and managers of the school. Governors make effective use of resources and staff. Pupil premium funding is targeted well as seen in the improvement in the achievement of these pupils. A strong and supportive performance management committee sets appropriate targets for the headteacher and staff.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	112232
<b>Local authority</b>	Cumbria
<b>Inspection number</b>	405383
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	279
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Janet Heffernan
<b>Headteacher</b>	Helen Pemberton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	22 November 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01229 483960
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