

Beetham CofE Primary School

Stanley Street, Beetham, Milnthorpe, Cumbria, LA7 7AS

Inspection dates 9 January 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress and achieve well.
- Attainment in mathematics has risen significantly since the previous inspection and now matches that in English. This is because leaders and managers have improved teaching and pupils' mathematical experiences successfully.
- Pupils who are disabled or with special educational needs achieve well because of the effective care and support they receive.
- The school prepares pupils well for the next stage of their education.
- Teaching is good with some that is outstanding. Teachers plan their lessons well. They mark pupils' written work meticulously and their comments are consistently helpful in showing pupils what they need to do to improve their work.
- Pupils enjoy school greatly and feel very safe. Attendance levels are consistently above average.
- Pupils' behaviour is excellent. They are exceptionally considerate and courteous. They are very proud of their school and the 'family-like' environment it provides.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exceptionally strong because of the outstanding curriculum that provides them with a wide range of stimulating and enriching experiences.
- Leaders and managers, including the governing body, have an accurate understanding of what the school does well and plan effectively for what it needs to do to become even more successful. As a result, the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement are improving securely.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although improving strongly, not enough teaching is yet consistently outstanding to raise achievement to outstanding.
- Leaders and managers do not use outstanding teaching routinely as a model to spread best practice and take the quality of teaching to outstanding overall.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector spent one day in school and observed teaching and learning on seven occasions including observations of the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) and guided reading sessions.
- The inspector listened to four Key Stage 1 pupils read.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, pupils, staff, three governors and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector took account of a wide range of documentation including: data about pupils' attainment, progress and achievement; policies and records relating to behaviour and safety; attendance data; and the school's summary of how well it is doing and development plan.
- The inspector scrutinised 18 parental responses on Parent View, as well as a summary of responses to a recent questionnaire sent out to parents by the school. The inspector also spoke to eight parents as they brought their children into school at the start of the school day.

Inspection team

Stephen Wall, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (extra funding provided for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals in this school) is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is below average. However, the proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- More pupils than is normal join or leave the school at other than normal times.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught separately for some lessons and together with Year 1 and Year 2 pupils for the remainder. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are taught together in one class for most of the time.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make more teaching consistently outstanding and thus raise achievement further by:
 - making sure that teaching is always at the right level of difficulty for all pupils according to their abilities and interesting and motivating for their ages
 - ensuring that teachers always ask questions that make pupils think deeply and deepen their understanding
 - using outstanding teaching more effectively and routinely as a model to share and spread best practice.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most children start school with skills that are generally those expected for their age. However, because of the small numbers of pupils in each year group, this can vary significantly from year to year.
- Children get off to a good start in the Reception class where good teaching and a stimulating range of activities both indoors and outdoors enable them to make good progress from their starting points.
- Pupils continue to make good progress and achieve well in Key Stage 1 where solid foundations are laid for later success as they move into Key Stage 2. Attainment at the end of Year 2 is generally above average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- By the end of Year 6 attainment is also above average. Since the previous inspection attainment has been on a secure upward trend with more pupils in Year 6 reaching the nationally expected standards in their tests year on year. Standards in mathematics, especially, have improved as a result of the school's sharp focus on improving pupils' mental calculation and problem-solving skills.
- School data, supported by lesson observations, scrutiny of work and hearing pupils read, show that the upward trend in attainment is set to continue.
- The vast majority of pupils make the progress expected of them by the end of Year 6 given their starting points. The proportion of pupils who do better than this in English and mathematics compares favourably with national figures and is rising.
- The few pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium make progress and achieve as well as other pupils because leaders and managers use the funding effectively to provide extra, targeted support. Consequently, the gap in their attainment compared to other groups nationally is closing. Their progress is checked closely. The headteacher reports regularly to the governing body on how the money is allocated and its impact on pupils' achievement.
- Pupils who are disabled or with a statement of special educational needs make good progress and achieve well, and some outstandingly well. This is because of the very good support they receive from an able and dedicated team of teaching assistants.
- Pupils who join the school at other than normal times settle quickly and nearly all achieve as well as other pupils.
- All groups of pupils achieve well which demonstrates the school's successful commitment to providing equality of opportunity.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good across the school with some that is outstanding. Good teaching of reading, writing and mathematics enables pupils to achieve well in these key subjects.
- Teaching provides pupils with a good range of interesting activities that stimulate their learning and keep them fully and actively interested in lessons. Consequently, pupils say that they find lessons fun and that they enjoy learning. Parents, too, think highly of the teaching their children receive and are pleased with the progress it enables them to make.
- Teachers have a wealth of information about pupils' abilities and progress. Most teaching makes good use of this information to set pupils things to do that are challenging and neither too easy nor too hard. However, on some occasions, activities are set that do not take account of what pupils can already do. This slows the progress that a few pupils make.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. They are skilful at asking questions that make pupils think hard about their answers and encourage them to explain their thinking. Sometimes, however, teachers provide answers too quickly and miss opportunities to extend pupils' learning and reasoning skills further. This also slows the progress and the quality of learning for a few

pupils.

- Where teaching is outstanding it is fast paced and makes very good use of information on pupils' targets, progress and prior knowledge and understanding. In these lessons, pupils are presented with high levels of challenge that stretch them and make them think hard about what they are doing. Questioning is used skilfully. For example, in a Key Stage 2 mathematics lesson on using and understanding timetables, very challenging oral questioning made pupils think hard about their answers and required detailed explanation of how they had worked out the solution. Pupils rose eagerly to the challenge. Their enjoyment and sense of achievement were both exceptionally high. The progress they made was, consequently, outstanding.
- Teaching assistants make a highly effective contribution to supporting the learning and achievement of pupils who are disabled or with a statement of special educational needs with the result that these pupils make good progress.
- Pupils enjoy using their writing and mathematical skills successfully in other subjects.
- Teachers mark pupils work regularly. Their comments are consistently of high quality in showing pupils how well they have done and what they need to do to improve their work further.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils have exceptionally positive attitudes to school and learning. They are very proud of their school which they describe as 'like a big family'. They welcome visitors warmly and with commendable courtesy. They treat the adults working with them and each other with great respect. Pupils say how much they enjoy school and this is borne out in their above-average attendance.
- Pupils say how exceptionally safe they feel in school. They show excellent awareness of potentially dangerous situations and how to avoid them or deal with them. They are fully aware of the potential dangers posed when using social media and the internet. Pupils say that bullying in any form does not happen and, were it to occur, they are fully confident that it would be dealt with swiftly. School records show that over time there have been very few incidents of bad behaviour or bullying.
- Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities in school such as running the school tuck shop and by becoming members of the highly successful and well-regarded school council. It has brought about improvements to playground equipment and organises the host of charity fund-raising events. They are heavily involved in the local community where the school enjoys an excellent reputation.
- The result of these and other activities, such as involvement in the 'Forest Schools' initiative and annual residential trips to such exciting venues, such as London, is to produce pupils who confident, mature and outward looking. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is of the very highest order.
- Parents are almost unanimous in strongly agreeing that behaviour is a real strength of the school.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has a very clear view of how successful the school can be. Together with the very supportive governing body, the headteacher drives the school forward purposefully. Leadership promotes strong teamwork at all levels in the pursuit of improvement.
 - Accurate evaluation of how well the school is doing leads to effective planning for what needs to be done to make the school even more successful.
 - The headteacher makes regular and rigorous checks on the quality of teaching. This leads to staff training and development that are closely linked to teachers' needs and school priorities. As a result, the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' achievement are improving securely.
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However, opportunities to use the existing outstanding teaching in the school as a model of best practice are not fully exploited to improve teaching further and increase the proportion that is outstanding.

- Leaders and managers have tackled successfully the issues for improvement identified at the time of the previous inspection, especially improving pupils' achievement in mathematics and making more effective use of information on pupils' progress. This shows that the school is in a strong position to bring about further improvement.
- Leaders and managers provide pupils with a curriculum that is outstanding, especially in the range of enrichment activities that play a pivotal role in pupils' excellent personal development and love of school. The fact that all pupils in Key Stage 2 learn to play a brass instrument and take part in community events, including the art of clog dancing, are not only exceptionally popular but also extremely rewarding for all concerned.
- All pupils, regardless of background or ability, are valued equally and fully included in all the school offers. This testifies to the school's strong and successful commitment to equality of opportunity for all and lack of discrimination in any form.
- Strong relationships with parents have been forged. Responses to Parent View show that the vast majority of parents are happy with all aspects of the school's work and value it highly.
- Safeguarding policies and procedures are exemplary and give no cause for concern whatsoever.
- The local authority provides light touch support for this good school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body provides good support and holds the school to account well. It sets challenging yet realistic targets for the headteacher's performance to hold her fully to account for the success of the school. The governing body has an accurate view of the quality of teaching and how the performance of teachers is managed to improve its quality. The governing body fully understands the link between the management of performance and teachers' progression on the pay scale. Governors receive regular and detailed reports from the headteacher which enable them to understand how the school is performing in comparison with similar schools both locally and nationally. The governing body has a firm grip on the school's finances including how pupil premium funding is used and the impact it has on the achievement and personal development of pupils supported by it.

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	112313
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	403178

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	32
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Lomax
Headteacher	Wendy Nicholas
Date of previous school inspection	8 July 2008
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