

# Upperby Primary School

Uldale Road, Carlisle, Cumbria, CA2 4JT

## Inspection dates

19–20 February 2013

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school.

- Achievement is outstanding due to the excellent teaching and classroom support staff, who have extremely high expectations of the success each pupil can achieve.
- Children start school with very low skills for their age and make a flying start settling into classroom routines in the happy, friendly and safe Nursery atmosphere.
- Pupils make rapid and sustained progress through the school to reach average standards by the end of Year 6. Achievement is a little more consistently high in English than in mathematics. Those pupils supported by pupil premium funding and those with specific needs, make the same progress as their classmates.
- The often inspirational and imaginative teaching relentlessly challenges pupils' thinking and understanding. This motivates pupils to learn quickly.
- Spiritual, moral, social, and cultural experiences are excellent and support pupils' personal development extremely well. Their behaviour is outstanding.
- Pupils enjoy their lessons and take great pride in their achievements and those of the school. They are extremely well cared for and parents praise this.
- The headteacher provides dynamic and informed leadership. She expects the very best from all staff and pupils. She is extraordinarily well supported by the deputy headteacher and a highly committed and talented team of governors and staff.
- The outstanding curriculum provides rich learning experiences, which are highly successful in boosting pupils' aspirations and self-esteem. Now and again, however, opportunities are overlooked for pupils to apply their mathematical skills to solve even more complex problems.
- The astute governing body is reflective and self-critical. The governors' ambitions are evident in the school ethos, 'You can do it', and also in the development of the site as a high quality community learning establishment. Together, this makes the school a special place.
- The school enjoys the trust and confidence of all parents.
- The school rigorously checks its performance. Plans for the future and improvement priorities are very well thought out. Improvement targets for staff, closely linked to training programmes, are very effective in securing and sustaining improvement.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 18 lessons. Four of these lessons were observed alongside the headteacher and deputy headteacher. In addition, inspectors made a number of short visits to lessons and conducted walks around the school site to check the quality of what is provided for pupils.
- Inspectors held discussions with pupils, members of the governing body, school staff, including senior leaders and those with responsibilities (such as leadership of subjects), and a local authority general adviser.
- Inspectors took account of the 48 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View).
- Inspectors observed the school's work and examined a range of documentation, including the school's own records of pupils' current progress, records from the observation of lessons and checking on pupils' work and the school's improvement planning. Records relating to behaviour and attendance and documents relating to safeguarding were also taken into consideration.

## Inspection team

Clive Petts, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Sheila Mawer

Additional Inspector

Derek Sleightholme

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Upperby is a larger than average sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding (which is provided by the government to support the learning of pupils who are known to be eligible to free school meals, in the care of the local authority or the children of members of the armed forces) is higher than the national average.
- The school provides a breakfast club each day and an after-school club each evening, both managed by the governing body. Upperby Community Development Centre, also managed by the governing body, has its own purpose built facilities integrated within the school building. This includes space for Barnardo's Carlisle South family and parent support services.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is little below the national average. The number supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below the national average.
- Almost all pupils are White British. Very few are from minority ethnic groups, with none at an early stage of learning to speak English.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- In order to provide for increased numbers of pupils, contractors are due to start work in April 2013 building four new classrooms with play area and activity space.

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

- Ensure that achievement in mathematics is as consistently high as the exceptional achievement in English by:
  - extending the opportunities for children to investigate, explore and discover number, shape and space even more in the Early Years Foundation Stage
  - increasing the opportunities, including for the more able and talented, for pupils to apply their mathematical skills to solve a variety of real-life problems.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### is outstanding

- Achievement is outstanding because all groups of pupils, including those supported by the pupil premium, make rapid and sustained progress. All parents agree that their children make at least good progress.
- Children enter the Nursery with very low starting points for their age. Their personal needs are quickly identified to enable them to make continuous rapid progress. Speaking, listening and developing children's self-control are priorities in the vibrant and inspiring classrooms. Their rapid progress continues in Key Stage 1 with skills that are broadly typical for their age at the end of Year 2. In Key Stage 2, progress zips along and attainment at the end of Year 6 is close to above average in reading and writing and average in mathematics. Pupils receiving pupil premium, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, attain similarly to their peers. Achievement in English is a little more consistent than it is in mathematics.
- The proportion of pupils exceeding what is expected of them is high in both English and mathematics. Recent tests show that attainment in English for more-able pupils was a little higher than in mathematics. Current school information, confirmed by inspection evidence, reveals that equal numbers of Year 5 and 6 pupils of all abilities are achieving highly in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Systems to check pupils' progress and development are rigorous and skilfully managed and make sure that activities are carefully shaped to meet pupils' individual needs and interests. For example, pupils were observed totally engrossed reading about the life-style of wolves. As a result, writing is imaginative and full of emotion and feeling.
- In mathematics, pupils gain a strong grasp of basic concepts and they use their skills successfully. Yet, opportunities are occasionally missed to allow more-able pupils to apply their skills to solve more complex real-life problems.
- Disabled pupils and pupils with special educational needs make excellent progress and achieve highly. This is because staff are masterly in pinpointing gaps in pupils' learning, eradicating any obstacles which may hinder progress and capturing and holding their interest.
- A whole-school focus on reading fosters pupils' enjoyment of reading, both for pleasure and for a purpose. Pupils' attainment at the age of six in reading is broadly average. Their skills are improving quickly as their confidence rises and fluency increases. Imaginative approaches to capturing the interest of older pupils encourage them to learn things for themselves. Pupils in Year 6 are particularly well-informed about a range of writing styles and themes, such as in Michael Murpurgo's book, *War Horse*. One pupil described how much she enjoyed looking at war through the eyes of a horse. Pupils' skills are above those typical for their age.

### The quality of teaching

### is outstanding

- Teaching is outstanding overall and never less than good. The inspiring curriculum enables pupils of all ages and abilities to achieve highly, as it brings learning to life. Staff expectations of what pupils can achieve know no limits. Consequently, pupils are totally committed to learning in lessons.
- Magical classroom environments, inspiring visits, fascinating visitors and discussion in pairs all add to pupils' skills in practical active ways. Pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted in creative and inspired ways. For example, inviting pupils to imagine what Doctor Barnardo would think after seeing the poverty in the streets of Victorian London.
- Teaching fosters pupils' rapid progress and high achievement because:
  - teachers provide excellent role models, constantly encouraging responsible and sensible attitudes

- imaginative approaches enthuse pupils and hold their interest
  - teachers shape activities carefully to ensure pupils of all abilities can achieve success
  - tasks and activities continuously build upon earlier learning
  - questioning constantly checks and stretches pupils' thinking and understanding
  - marking is accurate and helpful and makes certain that pupils know exactly how to improve their work
  - booster sessions and help in the classroom are carefully matched to the different needs of pupils, including those whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable.
- When progress is most rapid, thought-provoking questions demand that pupils explain their solutions and justify their thinking. Teachers make effective use of new technology to help pupils learn more successfully.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, there is a successful focus on developing early reading and writing. A wide variety of activities, both indoors and outdoors, are provided for children to explore and investigate. However, now and then, opportunities are missed to add to their grasp of number, space and shape. The positive involvement of parents enables them to be increasingly involved in their children's learning.

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

- The high quality of care and support, high expectations, and well understood rules and routines ensure that pupils feel safe and happy. Consequently, pupils are keen and eager to learn. The happy calm atmosphere in the breakfast club sets a positive tone for the day. After school, pupils of all ages enjoy the opportunities to pursue their interests, such as in the book club.
- Pupils respond extremely well to the guidance they are given. The high level of mutual respect is evident throughout the school. Classrooms are lively places in which all pupils are interested and involved. Those pupils whose circumstances and needs are complex or might put them at risk are skilfully managed by staff. They are helped to manage their emotions and their behaviour. Excellent use is made of meaningful rewards and praise to nurture respect and consideration.
- Pupils are safety conscious and play happily and sensibly together. In conversations, pupils confirm that they recognise, 'that bullying hurts' and that 'you must not keep it to yourself'. They report that staff are never too busy to listen to a worry or concern that a pupil may have. They are well informed of how to avoid risk and danger. Pupils thrive on the responsibility they are given to acquire real-life skills, such as having a say in the drive to improve the quality of play at break and lunchtime.
- The school has a very effective range of approaches to encourage regular attendance and punctuality. For example, using the text messaging service to encourage and remind parents. As a result, attendance is improving and is now above average.

### **The leadership and management** are outstanding

- The strong leadership of the headteacher motivates all staff. Innovations are successfully introduced and their effects are checked rigorously. Consequently, the school is continually building upon its many strengths. Resolute senior leaderships' approaches ensure that any variations in the quality of school performance are accurately identified and decisively addressed.
- The school's procedures for gaining an accurate view of its performance are appropriate. Teaching and learning is exceptionally well led. Those with responsibility for subjects have a first-rate understanding of how to use the information gained from the checks made on pupils' progress in order to steer the drive to sustain high achievement. Performance management and training are sharply focused upon maintaining continuous improvement in lessons. Those newly qualified teachers are very capably supported.
- The excellent curriculum encourages pupils to develop and practise their basic skills. It is highly successful at developing pupils' personal skills. Art and sport receive a high priority. For example,

a group of talented school gymnasts recently attended a training clinic in Liverpool run by the Olympic medallist Beth Tweddle.

- The extensive range of enrichment activities, both during and after school, add to the high level of pupils' enjoyment. This has an extremely good effect on developing pupils' independence, resilience and confidence. Good use is made of the working relationships the school has with other schools in this country and with an African village. For example, the link with a school in Leeds provides pupils with wide cultural experiences.
- Disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those potentially vulnerable are thoughtfully included in all activities, so that they can all achieve equal success. Any discrimination is tackled promptly and effectively.
- Links with parents, the local community, and the network of schools are excellent. This, together with very well managed on-site childcare and adult learning facilities, as well as all that the school offers, reflects the drive and ambition of the school's senior leaders to ensure that the school continues to improve.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements, with much first-class practice reinforcing the high quality of care and support for pupils.
- The school works successfully with the local authority which provides light touch support for this highly successful school.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body has an accurate knowledge of the school's strengths in teaching and in classroom support. Governors hold leaders and managers to account in open and positive ways. Their confident grasp of the school's performance information, enhanced by regular training, enables them to make accurate comparisons with similar schools. Financial control is effective, including the checks made on the impact of pupil premium funding on the progress made by pupils who are entitled to that funding. Governors also ensure that staff performance is recognised through appropriate incentive and reward.

## 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>	112243
<b>Local authority</b>	Cumbria
<b>Inspection number</b>	403174

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

<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>	325
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	William Atkinson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jane Hodgson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 December 2007
<b>Telephone number</b>	01228 815460
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