

Brunswick School

Brunswick Road, Penrith, Cumbria, CA11 7LX

Inspection dates

5–6 March 2013

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.

- Strong leadership from a conscientious headteacher, supported by an enthusiastic team of staff and governors, has improved the school since its last inspection.
- Key factors in securing improvement are the setting of high expectations of pupils and teachers, rigorous monitoring of pupils' progress and giving teachers feedback, after seeing them teach, on how they can improve.
- Typically, good teaching ensures that pupils achieve well, from lower than expected starting points, both academically and in their personal development.
- Standards are rising and the current Year 2 pupils' attainment is above average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour are good. They are well mannered and respect one another's feelings.
- Disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those eligible for support provided by extra funding the school receives, all make good progress.
- Pupils are given a wide range of interesting activities including a range of visits and visitors. They recall many of these memorable experiences with great enthusiasm.
- Pupils and parents feel the school is a very safe place. Bullying is very rare and dealt with quickly. Pupils say they enjoy school.
- The school has battled hard to improve attendance, which is broadly average.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding.
- Pupils are not consistently given opportunities to manage and assess their learning.
- At times, the teaching does not fully challenge the more-able pupils.
- Pupils are not always given time to respond to teachers' marking.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 14 lessons and part-lessons taught by eight teachers.
- Discussions were held with pupils, members of staff, members of the governing body, school leaders and a representative of the local authority.
- Pupils' books were scrutinised and progress data provided by the school was analysed.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and discussed the work they had been doing in class.
- The school improvement plan, safeguarding documents, attendance data and the school's evidence collected through lesson observations were examined.
- The inspectors met some parents informally at the start of the school day and took into account the responses to the school's own survey of parents' views. There were 18 responses from parents to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) which were reviewed by inspectors.

Inspection team

Gordon Alston, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Derek Sleightholme

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized infant school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is below average.
- The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. A small proportion of pupils belong to minority ethnic groups. A few pupils, mainly from Eastern European countries, speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported with a statement of special educational needs or at school action plus is average.
- Every morning there is an in-school drop-in session, for pupils whose parents have to leave early to get to work.
- There have been a number of staff changes since the last inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of teaching that is outstanding by:
 - spreading the outstanding practice the school already has in place
 - extending the current system of target setting so as to allow pupils to assess and manage their personal learning targets
 - ensuring that the more-able pupils are consistently challenged in order to achieve high levels of learning
 - providing pupils with time to reflect upon, and respond to, teachers' marking of their work.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 have been broadly average for the past three years. Teaching has improved and standards in the current Year 2 class have risen and are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. There is a similar picture in Year 1.
- Children enter the Nursery with skills that are below those expected for their age, especially in language and personal development. A strong focus on teaching the basic skills in reading, writing and number through an exciting range of activities, ensures that children make good progress. This good progress continues through Key Stage 1. However, at times the more-able pupils are not pushed hard enough to extend their thinking.
- Additional funding through the pupil premium is used well for additional support in either small groups or one-to-one, and, in particular, to ensure those eligible pupils have more practise with reading. As a result, these pupils make good progress and, based on their average points score, attain higher standards than similar pupils nationally.
- The attainment of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is above average. Well-trained staff give pupils effective support with compassion and care. Pupils respond positively, developing confidence in their abilities and, as a result, make good progress. Similarly, pupils who are from minority ethnic groups and those who are learning to speak English as an additional language make good progress.
- Pupils make good progress with their knowledge of linking letters and sounds (phonics) and they apply them confidently in unlocking new words as they read. As a result, pupils become fluent readers who can read with expression and a good understanding of what they have read, and make good progress.
- A strong focus on the teaching of basic writing skills, plus many opportunities to write, have improved standards in writing. Pupils make good, and at times, outstanding progress and are developing a love of writing.
- Basic number skills are well taught and regularly reinforced in songs and rhymes, which pupils enjoy. Challenges in mathematics lessons, and effective teaching ensure good progress, particularly in written calculation.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers have high expectations of pupils. Generally, work is well matched to the needs of all pupils. There is a good pace to learning and, because tasks are interesting and challenging, pupils concentrate well and strive to do their best. Pupils achieve well and are well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage classes, teachers plan challenging activities, such as retelling stories or counting forwards and backwards, that promote children's language and number skills successfully. Phonics teaching is strong and children quickly develop a good knowledge of letters and sounds. A very important contributor is the warm, caring learning environment that staff have created. As a result, children are happy, confident and very keen to learn.
- Frequent, rigorous monitoring of pupils' progress by teachers, alongside senior leaders, ensures teachers know their pupils' abilities well. The information is generally used very well not only to plan relevant tasks for all ability levels, but to identify any pupil who is underachieving. These pupils then receive additional support to help them get back on track. Not all teachers use the information as effectively in order to provide challenge for more-able pupils.
- Work is marked regularly and thoroughly, providing pupils with feedback on how well they have performed and pointers for improvement. However, there is little evidence of pupils responding to these comments. Pupils are not always given time at the start of lessons to reflect upon what the teacher has written. As a result, the feedback from marking is not fully impacting on pupils'

learning.

- Pupils are given individual targets to meet, such as 'to use more WOW words in my sentences'. The impact of these targets on pupils' progress is inconsistent across classes. This is because teachers do not ask pupils to refer to them often enough and, as a result, it takes pupils too long to achieve their target and then move onto the next target.
- Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are developed well, underpinned by a strong focus on teaching basic skills. Disabled pupils, those learning English as an additional language and pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as their peers. Conscientious teaching assistants, who are well-trained and skilled, make sure individuals or small groups of pupils are well supported and move on with their learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- A noticeable feature of the school is the eagerness of pupils to share their thoughts and ideas with adults; they appreciate how keen adults are to listen to them. They show great affection and respect for their teachers and try very hard to do their best. On occasion, the development of pupils' independence is restricted because teachers give them too much help rather than encouraging them to think for themselves, limiting their overall achievement, particularly for the more-able pupils.
- Pupils speak very enthusiastically about school. 'I love coming to school' or 'its fun in lessons' are regular comments that pupils make. They talk enthusiastically about visits to the museum or activities they did when learning about the Chinese New Year.
- Pupils' learning is good when working at a task they have been set. They listen attentively, follow instructions carefully and ask for help politely if they are unclear about something.
- When outside at break or lunchtime they play with one another happily. The school provides a wide range of equipment which pupils use sensibly, collaborating well and being sensitive to the needs of others. When the bell is rung they return the equipment quickly to the storage boxes, showing a great sense of responsibility.
- The ethos that the school has created helps pupils to develop a strong sense of self-confidence. They are very proud of their school and, when given the opportunity, speak with confidence and express themselves clearly. Attendance is similar to that found in most schools.
- Pupils feel very safe at school and they say behaviour is good. 'We are friends with everybody' one pupil said. They are adamant that there are very few incidents of bullying and are confident that their teachers would quickly stop it happening. They are clear about what bullying is and its different forms, and can explain about the dangers of computers and strangers.
- Through assemblies and well-planned activities, pupils have a good understanding and respect for other cultures and their beliefs. Parents with whom inspectors spoke feel that their children are kept safe and are happy to come to school.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has a very clear view of how successful this school can be. The strong leadership she has shown, with the support of energised senior leaders and governors, has been instrumental in taking the school forward. There have been changes to the building, and improvements in the quality of teaching and teachers' accountability for their pupils' achievement.
- The procedures to appraise teachers' performance are well established. Teachers are set targets based on pupils' progress and their own individual development. This process is linked in closely to lesson observations. Teachers are given feedback to provide pointers for improvement; teachers feel this is key to the success of this system. As yet, there has not been enough spreading of the outstanding teaching practice that exists within the school.

- The school has effective procedures in place to gain an accurate picture of its performance. They inform plans for the future that are clear about how the necessary improvements will be made.
 - The school's leadership promotes and checks well on equality of opportunity. It has developed rigorous systems that regularly check that all pupils are doing as well as they should. Additional money to support those pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is used well and has closed the achievement gap with other pupils.
 - The curriculum that the school offers benefits from input from pupils and parents. This helps to provide a rich range of learning experiences that pupils enjoy and ensures that pupils' motivation and interest levels are high. The school develops pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness very well through arranging a wide range of extra activities to support pupils' learning.
 - The school has very good links with parents and has worked hard to develop these successfully. As a result, pupils' attendance is rising. Comments expressed through Parent View are very positive and supportive of the school.
 - The local authority provides light touch support, including effective training opportunities for the school.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is focused on improving the school and is effective in holding it to account. Aspects of the school improvement plan are reviewed, giving the governors a clear overview of impact and progress. They hold the headteacher to account by setting performance management targets that link to pupils' progress. Governors know that the quality of teaching is improving and how this has informed the rewards that teachers receive. They also know about the effective allocation of the school's finances and pupil premium funding, the impact of which they check regularly. The governing body has received the necessary training and keeps well informed about the school's performance. The governing body carries out its statutory duties effectively, ensuring, for example, that safeguarding procedures are followed, regularly reviewed and ensure that pupils are safe.
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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	112117
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	401237

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	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	183
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Pierre Crubilier
Headteacher	Sharon Sanderson
Date of previous school inspection	6 October 2009
Telephone number	01768 213 200
Fax number	01768 213 209
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