

Kirkby Stephen Primary School

Nateby Road, Kirkby Stephen, Cumbria, CA17 4AE

Inspection dates

26–27 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		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- This is a happy school. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are outstanding. They feel very safe and well cared for. Pupils respect the staff, themselves and one another.
- The quality of teaching is good overall and some is outstanding. Lessons are interesting and enjoyed by pupils.
- The leadership of the headteacher has been a strong driving force in the significant improvements made since the last inspection.
- Senior leaders and subject managers are an effective team and contribute well to school improvement. Their robust checks have brought good improvements in the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Pupils are courteous and considerate. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong as a result of the rich and varied range of experiences provided by the school.
- From starting points which are typical for their age, pupils make good and sometimes outstanding progress as they move through the school. Attainment in English is above average and that in mathematics is improving rapidly.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage receive a good start to their education as a result of the stimulating teaching and high levels of care they receive.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding.
- Information about how well pupils are achieving is not yet fully used by teachers when planning their lessons.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 12 lessons taught by six members of staff. Two lessons were carried out as joint observations with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with staff, pupils and members of the governing body. A meeting was also held with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents including its plan for future development. Additionally, records of pupils' progress, arrangements for safeguarding and documentation on the monitoring of teachers' performance were scrutinised.
- There were insufficient responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) for inspectors to consider. Inspectors spoke to parents as they visited the school and looked at the results of the school's own parental questionnaires. They also took account of eight staff questionnaires.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read.
- During the two days of the inspection Year 6, accompanied by their class teacher, were absent from school on a residential trip.

Inspection team

Ray Biglin, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Gary Kelly

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than most primary schools.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average.
- The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding provided for children in local authority care, those from service families and those known to be eligible for free school meals) is well below the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- There were no children from Forces families in Year 6 in 2012.
- The school has been awarded the Arts Mark Bronze award.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching and pupils' progress to outstanding by:
 - making sure that the most able pupils move quickly to work that is hard enough for them
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to improve their work in response to teachers' marking and comments in their books
 - supporting teachers to make full use of the good information available about pupils' progress when planning lessons.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children's attainment on entry to the school is at the expected level for their age, and they make good progress in the Reception class as a result of the stimulating teaching and high quality of care they receive.
- Children in the Reception class settle quickly and enjoy learning. Interesting activities, such as handling the equipment used in falconry and letting children choose the story book for the teacher to read, promote children's learning well.
- The teaching of early reading skills is a strength in the Early Years Foundation Stage as children are taught letters and their sounds (phonics) effectively each day. Phonics is taught well to the end of Year 6 and is clearly having a positive impact on pupils' reading skills.
- All pupils in the school take part in a shared reading scheme where pairs of pupils read to each other once a week and, recently, older pupils took part in a reading challenge where they were rewarded for reading a minimum number of books.
- Pupils continue to make good progress as they move through Key Stages 1 and 2, particularly in reading where for many pupils progress is outstanding. Pupils really enjoy reading and do so fluently and with confidence. One Year 2 pupil talked enthusiastically about reading to people at home and who her favourite authors were.
- Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is above average in English, with pupils doing particularly well in their reading. Last year almost all pupils made the progress expected of them in English, with more than half of them doing better than expected in reading. Although standards in mathematics last year were average, current information about how well pupils are achieving indicates that standards this year will again be above average as they were in 2011.
- Current school assessments show that the gap between pupils who are eligible for free school meals and other pupils has closed, and that pupils supported by the pupil premium are on course to achieve as well as all other pupils. This indicates the impact of the school's careful targeting of pupil premium funding and the good impact of measures taken to provide equality of opportunity for all pupils to achieve well.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs also make good progress because they work with staff to produce their own learning plans and are well supported by well-trained and skilful teaching assistants.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved since the last inspection because leaders and middle managers regularly check the quality of lessons and provide staff with good professional support in order to improve. Teaching is consistently good and some is outstanding.
- Teaching in mathematics and English is good and lessons are generally well planned to meet the needs of individual pupils. However, sometimes the most able pupils have to wait too long before moving to work which is hard enough for them. For example, in one mathematics lesson on calculations the most able pupils were ready to move to solving problems more quickly than the teacher's plan allowed.
- Relationships between pupils and staff are excellent. Teachers have high expectations and clearly explain tasks to pupils and show them how they can check if they have understood what they have learnt. In the best lessons pupils learn at a brisk pace and teachers use questions skilfully in order to deepen pupils' understanding.
- Pupils particularly enjoy lessons where there are given the opportunity to work by themselves and with others. In one English lesson pairs of pupils talked together enthusiastically about the clues to a character's identity in their class reader.

- Pupils' books are thoroughly and consistently marked by their teachers. There are comments that praise hard work and comments that suggest what pupils could do to make their next piece of work better. Although pupils are encouraged to respond to the advice they are given, they do not always do this and, consequently, opportunities to improve their work are sometimes missed.
- Throughout the school there is a good variety of resources available to help pupils learn and teachers ensure that their classrooms are welcoming, with stimulating displays which celebrate pupils' work. On a number of occasions inspectors observed electronic whiteboards being well used. In a lesson about the links between letters and sounds pupils were able to check their progress by playing a variety of interactive word and sound games.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' attitudes to learning are exemplary. They understand how their own behaviour contributes to everyone's successful learning and, as a result, listen carefully in class and respect and value the views and opinions of others.
- Behaviour around the school is outstanding. Pupils are well-mannered in the dining room and behave maturely and respectfully in assemblies. They are courteous to adults and were keen to talk to the inspectors and help them find their way around school.
- The vast majority of parents and pupils and all members of staff agree that behaviour is outstanding and that if there are any incidents of inappropriate behaviour they are quickly dealt with. There is a clear behaviour management system in place which is fully understood by pupils and consistently applied by staff.
- Pupils say they are very well cared for in school and that they feel entirely safe. Parents who completed the school's own questionnaire agree with this view. Pupils understand the various forms bullying can take, including cyber-bullying, and say that it rarely occurs in their school.
- This is a happy school where pupils enjoy learning and, as a result, their attendance is above average and very few are away for any length of time.

The leadership and management are good

- Due to the headteacher's determined leadership the school has improved significantly since the last inspection. She is well supported by a team of effective senior leaders and the governing body.
- The school has recently introduced a new system to record how well pupils are doing in their lessons. Leaders have not yet ensured that all teachers are confident in using this information to plan their lessons to further raise achievement for all pupils.
- Since the previous inspection the management of teachers' performance has been the cornerstone of school improvement. Leaders have tackled underperformance well and made some effective staffing appointments. This, coupled with high expectations linked to the teachers' standards and the regular checking of the quality of lessons, has successfully raised the quality of teaching from satisfactory to good. All teachers know that they are responsible for pupils' progress and how this responsibility is linked to their salary progression. This ensures equality of opportunity for all groups of pupils.
- The way in which the school organises pupils' learning uses a topic-based approach to enthuse pupils and ensure they develop their basic skills. For example, Year 4 pupils study the Second World War, which has created more opportunities for reading and writing and further raised achievement in English.
- The curriculum makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There are many opportunities for pupils to take part in a range of activities including sport. There is an active school council which regularly meets to discuss matters of concern for pupils. The school prepares pupils well to take their place in the wider world. People from different cultures and religions are regular visitors to the school and pupils recently helped

organise an evening restaurant for their families and members of the local community.

- As a result of improvements, especially in leadership, since the previous inspection the local authority has been able to reduce the amount of support needed and has helped the school set up a peer review system with the local secondary school.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors review information about pupils' progress and understand that the priority for the school is to continue to raise achievement for all pupils by improving teaching to outstanding. School finances are managed well and the governors have used the extra pupil premium money to help these pupils improve their basic skills. They know that teachers' targets are linked to improvements in teaching and progress and are linked to pay awards. They ensure that the school is a safe and secure place for pupils to learn and all statutory safeguarding requirements are met.

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	112180
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	405379

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	160
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	William Barr
Headteacher	Lynne Wade
Date of previous school inspection	9 March 2011
Telephone number	01768 371387
Fax number	01768 371387
Email address	head@kirkbystephen-pri.cumbria.sch.uk

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