

Clifton Primary School

Clifton, Penrith, Cumbria, CA10 2EG

Inspection dates 18–19 April 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.

- The headteacher with the support of other staff has successfully brought about good improvement since the previous inspection. Effective strategies have raised the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Pupils make good progress overall and some do much better than this in reading, ensuring it is a strength of the school. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress due to effective teaching and the special arrangements the school makes for them.
- The quality of teaching is good and sometimes outstanding in its impact on pupils' achievement over time. Teachers ensure lessons run smoothly and this enables pupils to learn well.
- The curriculum provides many interesting activities that have a positive impact on the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development which is excellent.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They are unfailingly courteous and considerate of others. They settle quickly to their work and are eager to show what they have learnt.
- Older pupils help support younger ones in the playground and during lunch times. Pupils say they feel safe in school and know that adults can always be relied upon for support.
- The governing body contributes well to the management of the school. Its members are well informed about the quality of teaching and hold the headteacher to account for his actions.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not yet consistently outstanding in its impact on pupils' overall achievement and especially in mathematics.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics across the school, while good, is not as strong as that in reading and writing.
- In a small number of mathematics lessons, teachers do not always set new challenges in order to extend pupils' learning even further when they have successfully completed a task.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons. In addition, he made a number of shorter visits to lessons.
- Meetings were held with pupils, two members of the governing body, a representative from the local education authority and members of the senior leadership team and teaching staff.
- The 11 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) were taken into account when planning and conducting the inspection.
- The inspector listened to pupils read, spoke to them about their learning and looked at work in their books. He looked at a number of documents, including the school's systems for checking pupils' progress, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and those relating to attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Robert Pye, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Clifton Primary School is a smaller than average-sized primary school. The overwhelming majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding allocated for pupils in the care of the local authority or known to be eligible for free school meals or whose family are in the armed forces) is below average.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs who are supported at school action is above average.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs who are supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Numbers in each year group are small and so pupils are grouped into mixed-age classes. Reception children and pupils in Year 1 are taught in one class, Year 2 and Year 3 in a second and the third contains Years 4, 5 and 6.
- Since the previous inspection, there has been a significant change in the school's leadership with the appointment of a new headteacher in 2011.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the quality of teaching to be outstanding overall in order to raise pupils' achievement further, especially in mathematics, by:
 - providing work that matches pupils' learning needs in mathematics lessons, so that all pupils are consistently challenged to do their best
 - checking that teachers' marking in mathematics identifies the next level of challenge and that pupils have the opportunity to respond to teachers' feedback to produce better work in the future.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the school with skills and abilities that are mostly typical for their age. They quickly gain confidence and a 'can do' attitude in the well organised Reception and Year 1 class. This was seen when a group of children worked independently to select their own mathematics challenge. One child showed great perseverance constructing a complex shape, whilst another showed excellent concentration developing a numerical pattern with counting pegs. Children enjoy learning and make good progress.
- Standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 vary from year to year because of the small numbers in each year group. Nevertheless, pupils achieve well from their different starting points.
- In recent years, there has been a slight decline in standards by the end of Year 6, especially in mathematics. Effective action taken by senior leaders has successfully tackled this and standards are now rising again. Evidence gained during the inspection from looking at the school's own data, pupils' work and lesson observations shows that pupils' progress is never less than good and sometimes outstanding in some year groups. As a consequence, there has been a rapid improvement in standards in all classes; standards in reading are now high, with writing above average. Mathematics standards are at least broadly average and rising rapidly.
- The high importance given to reading ensures that it is a particular strength of the school. Pupils read with fluidity and expression and can readily discuss any reading material they are using.
- Writing too has improved rapidly. Older pupils add similes, personification and a wide range of interesting vocabulary to their work in order to make it more interesting to the reader.
- Progress in mathematics is not as strong as that made in reading and writing. This is because teachers do not always act quickly enough to set new challenges more difficult for pupils when it is clear they are ready for more difficult tasks.
- Although numbers are small, data from national tests and from the school's own systems, show that those pupils entitled to the pupil premium funding, including those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, do as well as other pupils throughout the school. This is evidence of the school's success in giving all its pupils equality of opportunity to succeed.
- The school provides effective additional support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, and also those who are found to be in danger of falling behind, by taking them out of lessons for extra help. This additional support is led by skilled teaching assistants. School data shows that these pupils are make the same progress as others in the school.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is consistently good and sometimes outstanding in its impact on pupils' progress and achievement over time.
- All lessons include good features, including positive relationships, ensuring that lessons run smoothly. Teachers have good subject knowledge and are clear about what they want to teach. They plan lessons that take into consideration the different ages and abilities found within each class. This was very evident in a mixed Years 2 and 3 geography lesson, during which the pupils learnt how to make their own maps of the area and create their own symbols to represent local features.
- Teachers have become skilful in teaching pupils how to read. The teaching of the use of phonics (the letters and the sounds they make) to help pupils read unfamiliar words is given high importance and reinforced throughout the whole school. Teacher-led reading activities have been recently developed to promote greater understanding and is having a very positive impact on increasing pupils' skills. A Year 5 group, for example, worked effectively with the teacher, who invited pupils to identify and explain the writer's purposes and how they may use this in their own writing.
- Throughout the school pupils enjoy learning. For example, in a mixed Years 4, 5 and 6 science

lesson, the pupils bustled with excitement and anticipation when carrying out an investigation relating to measuring forces. Pupils respect their teachers and appreciate the interesting lessons that teachers prepare for them. Pupils' books are well kept and they take pride in all they do.

- The teaching of mathematics is good. However, in a small number of lessons, teachers do not always match the work set, to the learning needs of all the pupils. Likewise, on some occasions, teachers' marking does not always point out what pupils can do to improve their work even further.
- Recently, the school has provided coaching for those pupils who are in danger of falling behind, or who find it difficult to learn. This out-of-classroom support is largely provided by teaching assistants and effective arrangements are enabling these pupils to make faster progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Behaviour is excellent. Pupils take pride in themselves and their school, making every effort to do their best. In lessons, about school and on the playground, they are dependably polite and courteous to others. Excellent behaviour is reinforced from the outset: the use of the school 'Golden rules' and Golden Time help set high expectations. 'House points' are highly valued and pupils strive to earn them at every opportunity.
- Pupils have a strong sense of community and support one another extremely well. Older pupils help and care for younger ones by helping them during their lunchtime meal. Pupils were genuinely keen to find out how the hockey team had performed upon returning from a tournament. Such behaviour creates a trusting and caring school.
- Pupils are extremely eager to learn. When working in class pupils get on with each other when they work in pairs or groups. They are aware that friendships may change and minor fall outs will occur, but say that pupils are never mean to others. School records confirm that this is always the case.
- They have an excellent understanding of the different forms that bullying can take and are very aware of the safety issues with the use of modern technology. They say they have no concerns about such things and have complete confidence that staff would sort out any problems that any pupils might have in school or beyond.
- The parents who responded to Parent View agree their children are safe and happy in school.
- Pupils' above average attendance and good punctuality reflect their commitment to school life.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has a very clear view of how successful the school can be. Teamwork is strong and staff share his high ambitions for the school. Teachers have embraced the many changes and successfully carried out well-formulated plans that have ensured immediate improvements in pupils' achievement.
- The headteacher accurately assesses all teachers' performance and provides appropriate feedback and training to ensure they continue to develop their skills. This has improved the quality of teaching. Teachers have targets based on their performance and increases in salaries are based on the achievement of these targets.
- The school keeps an accurate track of the progress that individual pupils are making. The progress of different groups of pupils, for example, those entitled to the pupil premium, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are checked regularly. Where there is a suggestion that a pupil is at risk of falling behind, appropriate help is arranged. This has been most effective in increasing the progress of all pupils.
- Leadership of the curriculum is good. As a result, there are clear and effective methods for teaching spelling, punctuation and grammar. Pupils benefit from a range of interesting topics taught throughout the school. For example, pupils in the mixed Years 4, 5 and 6 class made wind turbines from recycled materials. Pupils also benefit from frequent inter-school sports

competitions.

- Pupils' personal development is a significant strength. Through assemblies and a wealth of other activities, including the Fair Trade project, pupils gain a reflective appreciation of life. They have respect for other cultures, which are taught through learning about other faiths and countries.
- Leaders ensure that child protection and safeguarding arrangements meet all requirements.
- The local education authority has provides effective support for the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body contributes well to the management of the school. By reviewing data about pupils' progress, governors have a very clear overview about how the school is performing. Governors are very well informed about the quality of teaching and rigorously hold the headteacher to account for actions taken to improve the quality of teaching through the professional training of staff. They seek to gain assurance that salary levels are closely linked to performance and seek advice from outside when setting the headteacher's targets. Governors keep a very close check on the school's budget and ensure that the pupil premium funding is used effectively for the purposes intended.

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	112178
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	411978

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	62
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jamie Walker
Headteacher	Roy Chambers
Date of previous school inspection	24 June 2009
Telephone number	01768 868817
Email address	admin@clifton.cumbria.sch.uk

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