

# Newlaithe Infant School

Langrigg Road, Carlisle, Cumbria, CA2 6DX

**Inspection dates** 23–24 April 2013

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Pupils' achievement is improving quickly. Attainment by the end of Key Stage 1 has risen a great deal since the previous inspection.
- Progress across the school is consistently strong, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage, for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs as well as for those eligible for the pupil premium funding.
- Teaching is good and some is outstanding. The highly supportive approach of staff creates classrooms where pupils feel happy, safe, secure and ready to learn. Staff plan activities that pupils really enjoy and help most pupils to do their best.
- Pupils' behaviour is often exemplary. Pupils feel safe in school. They love going to school and attendance is above average. They are very industrious in lessons and work together exceptionally well. They are very curious about the world around them. The school council does its job very well indeed, helping to choose new reading books and play equipment.
- The headteacher is highly ambitious for the pupils and the school. Her outstanding determination and inspiration have united staff into an exceptionally strong team who have successfully and rapidly improved teaching and pupils' achievement. Governors are fully supportive and know the school well.
- Training for staff and systems to assess their performance are robust and tightly linked to school priorities.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding. Some features are not yet consistently strong.
- Learning in the outdoor area of the Reception classes is not as well planned as learning is indoors.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 18 part-lessons. Two of these observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher. Inspectors analysed pupils' work in their books and listened to children reading.
- Discussions were held with staff, pupils and governors. A telephone conversation was held with a representative of the local authority.
- Documents looked at included the self-evaluation summary, improvement plans, information on pupils' progress, records of pupils' behaviour and attendance and documents relating to safeguarding.
- Parents' views were taken into account through the 28 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and the school's most recent survey of 118 parents' views carried out in October 2012. An inspector held conversations with parents as they brought their children to school in the morning.

## Inspection team

Gillian Salter-Smith, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Graeme Clarke

Additional Inspector

# Full report

## Information about this school

- The school is smaller than other primary schools.
- An average proportion of pupils is eligible for the pupil premium funding. (The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and children that are looked after.)
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- An average proportion of students is supported through school action. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The headteacher works through the National College of School Leadership with a local consortium of schools to provide support and advice and sharing of best practice.

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

- Improve teaching so that more is outstanding by:
  - planning every lesson very carefully so that more-able pupils are fully stretched in all parts of lessons and make even better progress
  - giving more emphasis to helping pupils understand underlying concepts in mathematics through using their skills to solve problems and practical situations
  - making sure that all marking is helpful to pupils and leads to them making improvements to their work.
- Improve learning in the outdoor area of the Early Years Foundation Stage by finding ways to make it more readily accessible to children when they are choosing what they will do, and planning learning activities more carefully so they reflect the good quality of learning that takes place indoors.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Attainment has improved since the previous inspection and is average overall. In 2012, attainment was strongest in reading because few pupils gained above-average attainment in writing and mathematics. The attainment of pupils in the current Year 2 is on track to improve with more pupils set to reach above-average levels in writing and mathematics.
- In the Reception Year, children happily follow class routines, play and explore independently. Systematic approaches to teaching early reading, writing and numeracy skills help them to make good progress from starting points that are often well below those typical for their age.
- Pupils make consistently strong progress across the school and in a wide range of subjects, including in science, design and technology, physical education and religious education.
- Well planned teaching of reading and the development of an interest in and a love of books are helping pupils to make good progress. The results of the Year 1 check for learning phonics (letters and the sounds they make) was above average and achievement in reading continues to be strong.
- Most pupils make good progress in using punctuation and some develop more complex sentence structures. Pupils enjoy writing about many different topics and mostly in one book so that high expectations are maintained. Pupils' handwriting is usually carefully formed and some pupils use a cursive style in Year 2. Increasingly, pupils reach above-average levels in their work.
- Pupils' learning in mathematics is well sequenced so that they make good progress. Their understanding is not always deepened by applying their thinking to solving problems and practical activities.
- Disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and pupils who fall behind age-related expectations make at least good progress because of exceptionally well planned additional support.
- In 2012, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals did not achieve quite as well as others and were around a term behind other pupils in the school in their learning. The pupil premium funding has been targeted well and provides additional skilled adult support. As a result, current Year 2 pupils are ahead of others in the school by a term in reading, and achieving similarly to other pupils in writing and mathematics.
- There are variations in attainment between girls and boys with each cohort. However, the school tracks every pupil very closely and makes sure that no individual falls behind for very long, reflecting its outstanding commitment to equality of opportunity.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Relationships between staff and pupils are highly supportive so that pupils are happy and ready to learn.
- Across the school, reading, writing and mathematics are taught systematically through themes and activities that capture pupils' interest so that they thoroughly enjoy learning. In an outstanding lesson on the use of speech marks, the teacher inspired the pupils and they were captivated by the story. They were very keen to write out what they wanted characters to say. Tasks were very carefully planned to ensure that every pupil was challenged at their own level.
- Occasionally in mathematics, there is not enough emphasis on helping pupils understand underlying concepts through using their skills to solve problems and applying them to practical situations.
- Thorough assessment of progress in writing, reading and mathematics supports good planning so pupils' prior learning is usually taken into account and gaps in learning are identified and filled. Occasionally, more-able pupils are not fully challenged. In mathematics, they sometimes

repeat work where they have already been assessed as secure, or do the same tasks as everyone else for too long before moving on to more challenging work.

- Teachers continually check for understanding and use questioning well to encourage pupils to explain their thinking. This works well in mathematics, where teachers pick up quickly on pupils' misunderstanding. They mark work regularly and give frequent oral feedback to pupils. This informs teachers' assessments and planning well. Occasionally, there are missed opportunities to encourage pupils to make improvements to their work.
- Teaching assistants are skilled and work effectively with small groups. Additional programmes of support are successful in helping pupils who fall behind to catch up. The support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is especially well planned and includes very good use of external expertise.
- In the Reception classes, there is a good balance between activities directed by adults and those initiated by the children. The indoor areas are well planned to interest and excite children and give them lots of practice in using their developing literacy and numeracy skills. Staff know the pupils very well and are highly skilled in making the most of every opportunity to develop language and imagination through their talk with children, especially in role-play areas. The outdoor area is not used as effectively as the indoor area and it is not always readily accessible to children when they are choosing what they will do.

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

- Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning are exemplary. They love to learn and are always busy and industrious in the classroom. Pupils are very happy to come to school; attendance has improved since the previous inspection and is above average.
- Behaviour is outstanding. Pupils are well mannered and considerate. They are very proud of their school.
- In Reception, most children become totally absorbed in their play and, as a result, produce carefully crafted work including models and paintings. In the role-play areas in all classrooms, such as 'At the vet's', or 'The train station', pupils love to take on different roles and, as result, they learn to listen to and get along with one another exceptionally well.
- The playground is a very happy and secure place where the pupils are very keen to be active. Pupils feel very safe in school. They understand what bullying is and say that it seldom happens. They know what to do when they or others are upset and they know that adults will help. They are developing a very secure understanding of how to stay safe, including when using modern technology.
- Behaviour is exceptionally well managed. Pupils understand and enjoy gaining rewards for all sorts of different positive behaviour and effort. The school provides outstanding support for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties and there are clear cases of pupils who have settled to learning as a result. Excellent care and support is provided for all pupils.
- Pupils take their responsibilities very seriously. The school council has helped to improve the school by advising on new reading books and playground equipment.

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

- The headteacher is exceptionally strong in providing clear direction on what to improve and focusing the energies of staff on the correct priorities. Staff morale is high. Leaders and staff work exceptionally well as a team and are highly committed to and successful in improving achievement.
- Staff training is very carefully planned to meet school priorities and support personal ambitions. Partnerships with local schools contribute well to professional development and provide useful

opportunities for sharing of good practice. Staff performance is managed stringently and good performance is recognised appropriately. As a result, teaching has improved and is leading to rapidly improving progress.

- Leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and what needs to improve because of highly rigorous checks on pupils' progress and close checks on the effectiveness of teaching. This accurate view informs the planning that helps to drive through improvements.
- Class teachers are held to account for pupils' progress and systems are in place to check that every pupil who falls behind gets the support needed to catch up.
- The curriculum is very carefully planned to ensure pupils are keen to learn and are taught skills in literacy and numeracy systematically. It is adapted well to priorities. For example, the longer and carefully structured time spent on learning early reading skills across the school has had a positive effect on raising standards.
- Pupils enjoy a wide range of after-school activities that support their personal development well.
- The school works highly effectively with parents to help them support their children's learning, especially the families who face difficult circumstances in their lives. Parents have been fully involved in successfully improving pupils' attendance.
- The local authority provides light-touch support for this successful and rapidly improving school.
- Arrangements for safeguarding meet requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are highly supportive. They bring a good range of expertise to their role. They have undertaken training to improve their understanding of data so that they can pose even greater challenge to leaders. They are aware of how the school is performing in relation to other schools. They know about the performance of staff and support decisions on performance management. Governors are ambitious for the school and hold leaders closely to account, challenging them to bring about improvements. They manage the budget well and ensure it supports long-term developments. They look closely at the impact of the pupil premium funding.

## 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>	112226
<b>Local authority</b>	Cumbria
<b>Inspection number</b>	419850

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>	4–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	178
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ian Smith
<b>Headteacher</b>	Julie Willows
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 November 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01228 525756
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