

Furness Vale Primary School

Buxton Road, Furness Vale, High Peak, SK23 7PQ

Inspection dates 8–9 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils do not always make the progress they are capable of, because not enough teaching is good or outstanding.
- Lesson activities are not always well matched to the different abilities of pupils. At times pupils spend too long listening to adults before starting their work. When this happens progress slows.
- Teachers' expectations for the quality and quantity of pupils' work are sometimes too low, and they do not ask searching questions to encourage pupils to think hard and extend their ideas.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly but their comments do not always show pupils clearly how to improve it.
- The information the school collects about pupils' attainment is not always accurate, and so leaders are not able to easily track progress over time.
- The checks that are carried out on teaching do not focus enough on the effect that teaching has on pupils' achievement.
- The new subject leaders do not yet have the skills to rigorously check and improve pupils' achievement. The checking role of governors is also underdeveloped.

The school has the following strengths

- The new headteacher has quickly established a well-motivated staff team who are strongly committed to further improvement. Their actions are beginning to have an impact, particularly on teaching of early reading skills.
- Children get a good start to school life in Reception, where they are taught well and make good progress.
- Pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable are supported well by skilled adults.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. Older pupils look after younger ones, and all the pupils spoken to said they felt safe in school.
- A good range of activities promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 10 lessons including small group activities, parts of lessons and the teaching of phonics (the links between letters and sounds). Six lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with two governors, a representative of the local authority, staff and pupils.
- A wide range of school documents were analysed including the school's own data concerning pupils' current achievement, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding arrangements, and records of governing body meetings.
- The 16 responses to the Ofsted online Parent View questionnaire were analysed, alongside the 11 questionnaires returned by staff.

Inspection team

Lois Furness, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Furness Vale is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are White British and very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- A broadly average proportion of pupils are supported by additional funding through the pupil premium. In this school, the funding applies only to pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is broadly average, as is the proportion supported at school action plus or through a statement of special educational needs.
- In 2012, the school did not meet the government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- There have been considerable staffing changes over the past year. A new headteacher was appointed in September 2012. One teacher left at the end of the autumn term and another returned from maternity leave at the start of the summer term. Another teacher has now started maternity leave, and there are two newly qualified teachers working in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching to consistently good or outstanding in order to improve pupils' achievement by:
 - using assessment information better when planning lessons so that activities build on what pupils already know and are tailored to their specific needs
 - reducing the amount of time teachers spend introducing tasks, so that pupils have more time to work independently
 - insisting on a greater quality and quantity of pupils' written work, especially in subjects other than English and mathematics
 - developing teachers' skills in asking questions that encourage pupils to think hard, reason and explain their ideas
 - improving the quality of feedback through marking so that pupils have clear information on how to improve their work and are given time to respond to the advice given.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - making sure that assessment information is accurate, so that pupils' achievement can be rigorously checked by leaders
 - developing the skills of all staff with leadership responsibilities, so they are able to check pupils' progress and give guidance to teachers on how pupils' learning can be improved
 - increasing the frequency and rigour of checks made on teaching and learning, linking the impact of teaching on pupils' work and their ongoing progress
 - ensuring that governors rigorously hold school leaders to account for the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.

An external review of governance should be undertaken to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance can be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because despite improvements made this year, pupils have not been making enough progress throughout the school to reach the standards they are fully capable of.
- Although there is some variation from year to year, children generally join the school with skills and experiences that are below the levels typical for their age. They make good progress because adults know them well and plan activities carefully to meet their interests and needs. By the time children enter Year 1, their knowledge and skills are broadly average.
- The attainment of pupils in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 in 2012 was well below the national average. Improved teaching of phonics (the links between letters and sounds) means that more pupils are expected to attain the expected level this year. In Year 2, however, some pupils still do not use their knowledge of the sounds of letters to read words they are unsure about. This is holding back their progress in reading.
- At the end of Year 2 attainment has been broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics, and in 2012 more pupils reached or exceeded the expected levels for their age than in the past. These improvements are on track to be maintained in 2013.
- Attainment in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6 has dipped for the last three years, and was well below average in 2012. The school has responded well this year and for the current Year 6 pupils, attainment in English overall and in mathematics is on track to rise back up to broadly average by the end of the year. In particular, progress in reading has been good this year, and pupils say they enjoy reading. They are able to name their favourite authors and explain the reasons for their choices.
- Writing requires improvement as too few pupils are working at the levels expected nationally for their age. Although the school's data show a more favourable picture, pupils' books, especially in subjects other than English, shows that pupils are not typically working at a high enough level. In mathematics also, the information held on the school's tracking system is not consistently supported by the work in pupils' books.
- The pupil premium is used effectively, for example to fund an additional teaching assistant and provide one-to-one support. It is helping to reduce any difference in attainment between those known to be eligible for free school meals and other pupils. In 2011 and 2012 there were too few pupils known to be eligible to comment on their achievement without identifying individuals.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make progress similar to that of their classmates. It speeds up when work is adapted specifically for their needs, or they have one-to-one support. The progress of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals also accelerates when receiving extra help.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Too much teaching requires improvement because assessment information is not used consistently well by teachers to ensure that lesson activities are set at the right level to promote good progress for all pupils.

- In some lessons, teachers tend to speak to the whole class when it would be more helpful to speak to one group, for example those who require more help or those who are ready to move forward with their learning. Also, at times when group activities are happening, adults take too much control and this limits pupils' independence.
- In most lessons, teachers use questions well to check pupils' knowledge and understanding. This was seen in Years 5 and 6 as the teacher skilfully used questions to ensure pupils remembered the features to include in their writing of a diary illustrating events during the plague of Eyam. However, not all teachers use probing questions to encourage pupils to extend their ideas.
- Teachers' expectations for what pupils can achieve are not always high enough and they accept some poorly presented work, especially in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Pupils' work is marked regularly, and in writing helpful advice is sometimes given. However, in many of the books sampled the pupils had not responded to this advice, and in too many subjects, including mathematics, the advice given is not consistently helpful.
- Behaviour is managed well and relationships are good. Pupils enjoy learning and in many lessons, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is supported effectively. Pupils are encouraged to share ideas and learn from each other.
- Teaching in Reception is good. The well-organised environment encourages children's independence well. They enjoy a good range of appealing and well-resourced learning activities as staff respond quickly to their interests. There is a suitable balance between teacher-led activities and those that children select themselves.
- Teaching assistants are used well to make sure all pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, are fully involved in lessons. At times they support more-able pupils or those who find managing their behaviour difficult effectively. Teaching assistants are particularly good at providing one-to-one support to help pupils make good progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils have good attitudes to school. They say they find lessons interesting and enjoy playing with their friends. These positive attitudes start in Reception, where children happily play and learn alongside each other. Attendance is broadly average.
- A strength of the school's work is the way in which all pupils are valued as individuals and there is no discrimination. Pupils of all ages get on well together.
- Parents say behaviour is good, pupils agree and behaviour was good throughout the inspection. Pupils are courteous and polite to each other and to adults. They move sensibly around the school, returning swiftly to lessons after break, keen to start their work immediately. Adults manage the behaviour of pupils who at times find it difficult to behave well, very effectively.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the different types of bullying, such as cyber bullying and bullying as a result of prejudice. They say that bullying does not happen in this school, but are very confident that staff would deal with it effectively if it did.
- The school has appropriate systems for keeping pupils safe, and pupils show a good understanding of them, including how to stay safe when using the internet. Pupils say they feel safe in school, and all parents who responded to Parent View agreed.

- Older pupils set a good example of how to behave and how to help everyone to be safe in school. One commented, 'I always keep my eye out for anyone who falls over, so I can help them.' The school council has a range of responsibilities and its members are pleased to have initiated changes to the library, for example.
- Behaviour is good rather than outstanding because at times, pupils' concentration lapses when the work they are set is too easy or too difficult for them.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership requires improvement because until recently the actions taken by leaders have not had a strong enough impact on promoting and maintaining good or better teaching. As a result, pupils' progress has varied too much throughout the school for them to achieve well.
- The new headteacher very quickly identified weaknesses, and swiftly took action to tackle them. He has been successful in eradicating inadequate teaching, but has not yet ensured that all teaching is securely good or better.
- The recently introduced tracking and target setting system is efficient and allows leaders to quickly check pupils' progress term by term. However, the information held on this system is not always accurate, as shown by the work in pupils' books. At times it relies too much on test information, which provides a narrow view of pupils' achievement.
- When checking the quality of teaching, leaders do not have a critical enough eye, and this leads to teaching sometimes being evaluated as good rather than requiring improvement. During the inspection however, the headteacher and the inspector were in full agreement about the quality of teaching seen. Some leaders do not have the skills to evaluate the impact of teaching on pupils' achievement or the quality of work in their books, especially in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- The systems for managing teachers' performance are improving and the headteacher has set appropriate targets for all staff which are clearly focused on improving teaching skills.
- The school provides a broad range of learning experiences. These include a range of clubs, visits and visitors to provide variety and add enjoyment. Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is promoted well.
- The school's leaders have been particularly successful in creating a stimulating, caring and harmonious learning environment. Staff are proud to be part of the school, and pupils and parents are positive about it too.
- The local authority has provided 'light-touch' support, including termly visits and a report for governors. Now it plans to provide more intense support to help the school on its journey to being good.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governors are supportive and regularly visit the school. They are aware that the school has declined from 'outstanding' and were informed by the headteacher, on his appointment, that the school required improvement. However, governors do not have an accurate view of the quality of teaching, as the checking of teaching focuses too much on what teachers are doing rather than how well pupils are learning. As yet they have not checked how the

headteacher is managing teachers' performance and ensuring that pay awards are linked to this performance. They know that the pupil premium money has been spent on one-to one support, computer equipment and educational visits. They have not had details about the impact of this funding on eligible pupils' progress. The governing body ensures that national safeguarding requirements are met, and governors regularly take up training opportunities provided by the local authority.

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	112648
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	411846

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	88
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stephen Wright
Headteacher	John Mollard
Date of previous school inspection	22 November 2007
Telephone number	01663 744103
Fax number	01663 744103
Email address	enquiries@furnessvale.derbyshire.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013

