

Beaconside CofE Primary School

Hutton Hill, Penrith, Cumbria, CA11 8EN

Inspection dates 15–16 October 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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 make uneven progress throughout Key Stage 2. They reach average standards overall for reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- There is too much variation in the quality of teaching in Key Stage 2. This is particularly so for the teaching of writing and mathematics.
- Many older pupils do not write in a joined-up fluent style. The vocabulary used in their written work does not develop quickly enough throughout Years 5 and 6. In addition, they do not write enough across many different subjects. This limits the scope of some of their writing.
- In mathematics, some teachers do not fully appreciate how quickly pupils can absorb new learning. This is especially the case with more-able pupils. Consequently, not all of these pupils make the progress of which they are capable.
- Leadership and management require improvement. Until the past year, leaders' plans have not been focused on quickly raising pupils' achievement, or limited by time to bring about rapid changes in the quality of teaching.
- The governors have a good understanding of how well the school is performing, but have only recently begun to hold the school to account for the quality of teaching and for the progress pupils make.

The school has the following strengths

- Teaching and progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 are good.
- The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection.
- Pupils' behaviour is typically good, and nearly all parents agree. Pupils say that they like school and feel safe.
- Leaders are now holding teachers to account regarding the progress made by pupils in their care.
- The school has put in place effective strategies to improve reading and mathematics. These are beginning to have a positive impact on the most vulnerable pupils.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 27 lessons or parts of lessons. They listened to pupils reading in Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, including subject leaders, the special educational needs coordinator and the Early Years Foundation Stage leaders. Inspectors met with eight members of the governing body, pupils and a representative from the local authority.
- There were 36 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), which inspectors took into account.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school and reviewed various documents, including the school's view of its effectiveness, tracking of pupils' progress, pupils' books and the performance management of staff. Documents relating to behaviour, attendance, school development and safeguarding were also considered.

Inspection team

Robert Pye, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Julie McGrane

Additional Inspector

John Ellwood

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a much larger than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or supported at school action plus is below average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium is broadly average. The pupil premium is additional funding to support pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- Nearly all the pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment.
- A new deputy headteacher has been appointed since the last inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- In order to raise achievement, ensure that all teaching is consistently good or better by:
 - developing teachers' subject knowledge in mathematics in order to raise their expectations of what pupils, especially the more-able, are capable of learning
 - providing all pupils in Years 5 and 6 with frequent opportunities to introduce a wide range of enriched vocabulary into their written work so that it becomes more interesting and meaningful to the reader
 - ensuring that all pupils can apply their writing skills with equal quality across different subject areas, in order to write with different purpose and style
 - insisting that pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 write in a joined-up fluent style.
- Improve leadership and management to accelerate the rate of improvement by:
 - setting realistic but challenging timescales in which to improve the quality of teaching to good or better
 - further increasing the rigour with which governors hold the school to account.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Nationally published data, unconfirmed results of the 2013 national tests for Year 6 and the school's assessment data all indicate that progress made by pupils in Key Stage 2 is inconsistent. As a result, achievement requires improvement.
- Standards at the end of Year 6 are broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In Key Stage 2, progress in reading is good as a result of the importance that the school places on reading daily.
- Although progress requires improvement overall, it is improving in many year groups as a direct result of improved teaching. However, a review of pupils' books in Years 5 and 6 shows that the vocabulary used in their written work does not develop quickly enough throughout these two years. For some pupils, the standards of writing produced in their topic books does not match that found in their literacy books.
- The school has introduced joined-up writing to most year groups successfully, however in Year 5 and Year 6 too many pupils still print words.
- Progress in mathematics has improved but still requires improvement in Key Stage 2 because it is not yet consistent enough to ensure that all pupils achieve well. More-able pupils do not always make the progress of which they are capable.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is improving rapidly throughout the school so that it is now similar to that of other pupils.
- Children join school with skills and abilities that are, typically, well below those expected for their age. Aspects of numeracy and speech and language are particularly low. Achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good, because teaching is good. This means that by the end of Reception, most children's skills are much closer to, although still below, the standards expected for their age.
- Standards reached at the end of Key Stage 1 are broadly average. Pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Data held by the school and substantiated by the local authority, indicate a sharp rise in standards achieved in 2013. Pupils use their good knowledge of letters and the sounds they make (phonics) to read words successfully.
- Sport has a high profile in school helped by the primary school sport funding. Pupils take part in many sporting events to a high standard. This year pupils reached the top tier in the regional football and cricket competitions.
- The school uses the pupil premium funding to support those known to be eligible for free school meals. They make good progress in reading but progress for these pupils is not yet consistently good in writing and mathematics. The school is fully committed to ensuring every pupil has an equal opportunity and has taken suitable action to close the gaps in learning between different groups in most, but not yet all, year groups.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because it is not consistently good or better. The school's records, the improvement in achievement and inspection observations of a significant amount of good teaching, indicate that the quality of teaching is improving. However, over time it is not yet good enough.
- Where teaching requires improvement, pupils make only adequate progress. In some Key Stage 2 mathematics lessons, although the teachers know the abilities of the pupils well, they are unaware of what pupils, and especially the more-able, can achieve. Consequently, pupils are not 'stretched' as much as possible and their progress is not rapid enough.
- In Years 5 and 6, some teaching does not introduce pupils to enough new words that would add

more meaning and interest to their work. In addition, teachers do not always provide enough opportunities for pupils to practise quality writing across different subjects in order to further develop their writing. Most teachers in Years 5 and 6 do not insist on a joined-up fluent handwriting style, yet pupils in younger classes are successful at this.

- Reading is taught effectively. Teaching of phonics helps pupils to read unfamiliar words and is given high importance throughout the school. Teachers actively encourage pupils to read at home for pleasure as well as for purpose.
- When teaching is good, pupils learn well, quickly and make good progress. Teachers ensure that tasks are hard enough, interesting and fun. For example, in a Year 3 lesson, pupils became excited at the prospect of making puppets. They examined and learnt about different types and were able to discuss these in depth because the teacher had introduced them to the appropriate technical language. The teacher ensured that all pupils learnt well by effectively checking progress at regular points in the lesson.
- Pupils' work is being marked increasingly well by teachers and this complements the peer assessment used by many of the pupils.
- Skilful teaching assistants liaise closely with teachers and know the pupils well. They offer effective support in lessons and lead timely interventions to ensure the most vulnerable pupils, including the disabled and those with special educational needs, make the same rate of progress as their peers.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils enjoy school and are eager to learn. Behaviour in lessons and attitudes to learning are good. Pupils settle quickly to work and learning is rarely disrupted. Pupils' good behaviour over time and the positive relationships they have with each other and with the staff, contribute well to the improvements made in their rates of progress.
- Pupils are very polite and helpful. Behaviour was good during the inspection and school records show that this is typical. Pupils reported that they place their trust in the adults who care for them and appreciate the many opportunities they have to express any worries they may have. Pupils report that incidents of bullying and all forms of harassment are rare and that, if they occur, they are dealt with swiftly and appropriately by teachers. This view was supported by the parents who responded to the Parent View questionnaire.
- Pupils say they feel safe and nearly all parents agree. Through a range of assembly themes and the school's curriculum they are guided well so that they have a good understanding of how to stay safe and healthy.
- The school has taken a firm stance on pupil absence. As a result, while attendance is still broadly average, it is improving and thus improving pupils' chances to do well at school.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because there is still not enough good and outstanding teaching. The school's views of its own performance are accurate and leaders have put appropriate priorities in place during the past year; these have resulted in improvements to achievement and the quality of teaching.
- Leaders conduct a suitable range of activities to check teaching, including scrutinising pupils' books. Staff are supported by a programme of on-going training and they are increasingly being held to account for the progress of pupils in their care. However, some teaching still requires improvement and very little is outstanding. The support offered by the leadership team to teachers does not identify clearly enough the time expectation in which improvement should take place. Teachers are set targets as part of the annual procedures for reviewing their

performance. Success is linked to promotion up the pay scale.

- The appointment of a non-teaching deputy headteacher has significantly improved the overall leadership of this large school. There is now sufficient focus on pupils' achievement and clearer timescales to deliver or check the effectiveness of actions linked to the school's priorities.
- Leaders ensure that the school's arrangements for safeguarding meet requirements.
- The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well and pupils enjoy the range of visits and additional activities that are provided. However, it requires improvement because it does not develop writing and numeracy skills well enough to make sure that all pupils make consistently good progress.
- Links with other organisations, such as social care and health services are strong and reflect the school's caring ethos. Links with other schools to improve teaching are currently being established. The local authority has a very accurate view of the school's position and has helped bring about improvements in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body has a clear overview of how well the school is performing, including how it compares to other schools nationally, because its members review data about pupils' progress and the quality of teaching. However, although they ask challenging questions, it is only relatively recently that they have begun to hold the school to account for its performance. This has contributed to the school's relatively slow improvement. Governors manage finances well. Pupil premium funding has been allocated to employ and train teaching assistants in reading and mathematics as well as providing additional management time to ensure that any interventions led by the school are successful. Governors have a good understanding about the difference this makes to pupils' achievement. They are very aware that the grant to promote physical education and sports is only available for a short time and have, therefore, employed specialists that work alongside staff in order for new sporting arrangements to be sustained.

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	112423
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	426131

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	460
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Judith Markey
Headteacher	Timothy Glendinning
Date of previous school inspection	3 October 2011
Telephone number	01768 840868
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