

# St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School

Eastend, Wigton, Cumbria, CA7 9HZ

**Inspection dates** 22–23 October 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
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

- The quality of teaching requires improvement. In recent years it has not been good enough to enable pupils to achieve consistently well between Year 1 and Year 6.
- Activities in lessons are not always at the correct level to help pupils learn, whatever their ability. Sometimes, pupils do not have opportunities to find out things for themselves. Teaching assistants are not always deployed effectively throughout lessons.
- Standards over time have been too low. Pupils' progress in improving their skills in mathematics is slower than in English.
- There are not enough opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to practise and develop their mental mathematics skills. This slows the pace at which they can solve mathematical problems and leads to mistakes.
- Some subject leaders are not taking swift enough action to raise achievement further in their areas of responsibility.
- The ability of the governing body to challenge the performance of the school is limited because they rely too heavily on reports from the headteacher. As a result the schools' evaluation of its performance is too generous.

### The school has the following strengths

- Pupils' behaviour is generally good in lessons and around school. They feel safe in school.
- This is an improving school. The headteacher is bringing about change and as a result the quality of teaching and pupil achievement is beginning to improve.
- Almost all pupils now reach higher than national standards in reading by the end of Year 6.
- Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage because of a team of staff who provide consistently good teaching.
- The school works well with a range of professionals beyond school to support pupils whose circumstances might put them at risk.
- A new tracking system has been introduced to enable closer checks to be made on pupils' progress and to help teachers to plan work.
- Governors are committed and keen to develop their skills.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed five teachers and visited seven lessons, one of which was observed jointly with the headteacher. In addition, the inspector made a number of short visits to lessons and listened to pupils read.
- Discussions were held with: school staff; groups of pupils; senior staff and leaders with responsibility for a specific subject; the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative from the local authority. A telephone conversation was held with a teacher at The West Cumbria Centre Pupil Referral Unit.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation including safeguarding documents, the school's procedures for gaining an accurate view of its own performance, its development plans, records of pupils' standards and progress, documents relating to attendance and behaviour, and pupils' work in their books.
- The inspector took account of the 13 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and talked to many parents. The 11 responses to the inspection questionnaire for staff were also taken into account.

## Inspection team

Naomi Taylor, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- St Cuthbert's is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below that found nationally. (The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children that are looked after by the local authority.)
- The number of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well below the national average as are those who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is above average and those supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The school works in partnership with The West Cumbria Learning Centre to provide for the needs of pupils with a range of vulnerabilities.
- Since the previous inspection the headteacher has returned to her post following a lengthy period of unavoidable absence. There have also been several staff changes and some long-term absences.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning especially in Years 1 to 6 in order to raise standards, particularly in mathematics, by making sure that:
  - pupils are always given activities that are at the correct level to help all pupils to learn consistently well
  - pupils have enough time to develop their own learning by providing opportunities to deepen their understanding, challenge ideas and find out things for themselves
  - teaching assistants are always effectively deployed throughout lessons
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
  - developing the role of subject leaders in measuring progress made by pupils and taking swift action to raise achievement in their areas of responsibility
  - ensuring that pupils are provided with more opportunities across subjects to secure their ability in mental mathematics so that they solve mathematical problems more accurately and at a quicker pace.
  - making sure that the headteacher and school leaders, including the governing body, have an accurate view of how well the school is doing.

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

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Pupil assessment data indicates that over time, progress made by pupils has been inconsistent between Year 1 and Year 6.
- Standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 declined in both English and mathematics in 2011 and again in 2012 due mainly to turbulence in staffing. From standards in 2012 that were well below national averages, the school's actions, together with the good support of the local authority, have led to improvements. In 2013, pupils' standards were close to the national average in reading and below average in writing and mathematics but improving.
- In 2013, standards reached by the end of Year 6 in reading were above the national average, broadly average in writing but below in mathematics. Current progress of pupils across all year groups now shows a rapidly improving picture.
- Most children start school with skills that are below those expected for their age. They make good progress in all areas in the Early Years Foundation Stage so that they are well prepared for learning in Year 1. This is as a result of an Early Years curriculum which provides a balance of activities led by adults and opportunities for children to play together and find out things for themselves.
- Almost all pupils now make the progress expected of them but too few pupils make better than expected progress in mathematics, although the proportion is increasing as a result of more stable staffing and better teaching.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are well supported and make similar progress to their peers. In 2013, Year 6 pupils eligible for the pupil premium grant made good progress in reading and mathematics as a result of carefully targeted additional support. Writing was not as strong but the school is fully committed to ensuring every pupil has an equal opportunity and recognises that any gaps in pupils' achievement must be eradicated.
- The most-able pupils have not been making as much progress as might be expected but leaders and managers are addressing this with, for example, some pupils now being taught in a higher year group for some subjects. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make the progress expected of them. The school works effectively with The West Cumbria Learning Centre to support a small minority of pupils who are potentially vulnerable and this is ensuring that these pupils make the progress expected of them.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Although mostly good teaching was observed during the inspection, this is not a consistent feature across the school and does not yet result in good and sustained pupil progress across the school over time.
- Teachers do not always plan precisely enough for the range of abilities in their class to ensure that pupils continually reach their full potential. Sometimes, too long is spent with all the class working at the same pace on teacher-led activities; opportunities are missed for pupils to find out things for themselves to deepen their understanding and challenge ideas.
- In a mathematics lesson with Year 5 and 6, pupils demonstrated a good understanding of how to work out mathematical problems but their insecure mental mathematics skills led to many errors and slowed their pace of learning.
- Occasionally, teaching assistants are not involved enough in the planning of pupils' work and are not always fully deployed throughout lessons.
- In the best lessons, teachers and teaching assistants plan lessons well together and work very effectively as a team in class. A range of stimulating activities is designed to meet the needs of the full range of pupils' abilities and the pace of learning in these lessons is swift.
- These are typical features seen in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Here, there is a good

balance of activities led by the adults alongside opportunities for children to experiment for themselves both in the classroom and outdoors. Children are highly stimulated and make good progress.

- In a mathematics lesson with Years 3 and 4, the teacher introduced using coordinates to plot the position of various objects using the 'x' axis followed by the 'y' axis. Pupils demonstrated their understanding by plotting coordinates on the electronic whiteboard before moving quickly onto a range of different tasks to challenge their individual needs. Pupils were thoroughly enjoying finding out things for themselves, with the teacher supporting their learning. Good progress was made and pupils' excitement in their learning was clearly visible.
- Developing pupils' reading skills from an early age has been a focus of the school. The teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) is a strength of the school and has resulted in pupils gaining confidence in their reading abilities.

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

- When children join St Cuthbert's, they learn from an early age how to value each other, the adults around them and their school community. They learn about different forms of bullying but say it is rare and secure systems are in place to deal with such instances. This is supported by the schools' records and leads to pupils feeling happy, safe and secure. Attendance is average and improving.
- All of the parents who spoke to the inspector expressed how happy they are with the school. The parent of a child who recently joined the Reception class explained how her daughter is disappointed when she cannot come to school at the weekend. Another parent, whose child had previously attended another school, explained how much she appreciates the staff and the fact that her daughter is now doing work which is a year in advance of that typical for her age. She described the ethos of the school as being 'very respectful' and the inspector supports this view. Taking into account the responses on Parent View, the majority of parents would recommend the school.
- A small minority of pupils exhibit challenging behaviour but strong links with professional agencies beyond school contribute to supporting these pupils and their families. The newly formed Nurture Group and the link with the West Cumbria Learning Centre encourages positive attitudes towards learning.
- The school council organises fundraising events and the older pupils act as good role models to the younger children. They play well together during breaks and the older pupils enjoy the responsibility of running the tuck shop.
- The school makes sure that pupils know how to keep themselves safe and prepares them well for the future. Lessons in physical education and activities after school are enjoyed by pupils and this encourages them to pursue sports which help them to stay healthy and promotes their well-being. In 2013/14 there are plans to use additional funding to develop the skills of staff and develop sporting opportunities with the support of the local secondary school and network of primary schools.

### **The leadership and management** requires improvement

- The return of the headteacher, more stable staffing and changes to the responsibilities held by leaders and managers are beginning to secure improvements in the quality of teaching and learning. However, changes have not been in place long enough to see sustained improvements in how much pupils achieve and in the standards they reach.
- The headteacher has a clear view of how successful the school can be and a detailed evaluation of what is happening in school is available. However, the headteacher's perception of the quality of the school's work is a little overly positive and the governing body has not been involved enough in checking and judging the school's work.
- There is a new system in place for checking how well pupils are progressing but some subject

leaders do not use this precisely enough to improve achievement in their areas of responsibility.

- Teaching is closely checked by the headteacher in conjunction with the local authority, which has continued to provide effective support. Staff are encouraged to attend training that fits with school priorities and their own developmental needs.
- Targets are set for all teachers and school leaders to check on their performance. Systems are in place to reward teachers where performance is good or better and to deal with underperformance.
- The curriculum engages pupils but there are not enough opportunities for pupils to develop their mental mathematics skills across the curriculum. A range of trips and overnight stays inspires pupils to learn. Year 6 pupils talked animatedly about their residential trip to London last year, which had clearly broadened their horizons. Many pupils learn to play a musical instrument and the orchestra is led by a visiting musician. Such opportunities are a key feature in developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are supportive of the school. However, they have not asked sufficiently searching questions and they have not acquired the skills needed to be able to analyse national performance data. As a result they have not rigorously held school leaders to account regarding the progress pupils make. Governors are aware of the quality of teaching and actions being taken to improve it. They ensure that the headteacher's appraisal and salary progression is linked to and dependent upon her meeting her targets. The budget is managed effectively, including the pupil premium grant, which is used to pay for increased staffing to help those pupils who are eligible for the funding to make the progress expected of them. Governors fulfil their statutory duties; including making sure that safeguarding procedures meet requirements.

## 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>	112310
<b>Local authority</b>	Cumbria
<b>Inspection number</b>	426129

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>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	100
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Fiona Paisley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Paula Holden
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 February 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01697 343119
<b>Fax number</b>	01697 349894
<b>Email address</b>	admin@stcuth-wig.cumbria.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](http://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](mailto: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](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2013

