

St George's CE School

School Street, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria, LA14 2JN

Inspection dates 5–6 November 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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 achieve well in English and mathematics.
- Too many pupils are leaving at the end of Year 6 not reaching the expected standards for their age in English and mathematics.
- Teaching in Years 1 to 6 is not yet consistently good or better in order for pupils to make good progress.
- In some lessons, good pace does not continue throughout and so pupils lose concentration and their learning slows down.
- Teachers' planning does not always provide effectively for the different needs of pupils to make sure that all are challenged throughout lessons.
- Although teachers check pupils' work during lessons, there are missed opportunities to challenge pupils even further.
- Opportunities to include mathematics through problem-solving activities in other subjects are sometimes missed.
- While leaders check the quality of the school's work regularly, actions taken are not bringing about rapid enough progress for pupils.
- Leaders at all levels and governors have not been successful enough in ensuring that pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching are consistently good or better.

The school has the following strengths

- The Early Years Foundation Stage provides a good start to school. Children settle well and are keen to join in with the many activities.
- Teaching in some classes is good. Information and communication technology is used well by both adults and pupils.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and are keen to take part in a wide range of activities outside lessons.
- The school is good at helping pupils to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding.
- The school provides a nurturing and caring environment which enables pupils to behave well and feel safe. Pupils are polite, courteous and considerate.
- Parents are positive about the school saying that their children are safe and looked after well.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed eight teachers and visited 12 part-lessons which included two joint lesson observations with the headteacher.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, members of the leadership team, the subject leaders for English and mathematics, the Inclusion Manager, the Early Years Foundation Stage leaders, pupils, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors observed pupils' work and listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors examined a range of the school's documentation, including the school's analysis of how well it is doing, documents relating to monitoring and evaluation, systems for tracking pupils' progress, documents regarding safeguarding.
- Inspectors took account of 22 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and the school's most recent questionnaire to parents.
- Inspectors analysed 27 questionnaires completed by staff.

Inspection team

Sue Sharkey, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Prydwen Elfed-Owens

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is well above the national average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium is very high. The pupil premium is additional government funding provided for children who are looked after by the local authority, for children from services families and children known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The majority of children are of White British heritage. Very few children are from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- A higher than average proportion of pupils join or leave the school at times other than normal.
- At the time of the last inspection, the school was housed in temporary accommodation. In September 2011, the school returned to its refurbished building. There has also been long-term absence due to illness among the senior leadership team.

- The school did not meet the government's current floor standards in 2013 which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school offers a breakfast club and a toddler group on the school site. Both provisions are managed by the governing body and were part of this inspection.
- The school holds the Artsmark Silver award, the Sports England Active Mark and the Inclusion Charter Mark Gold.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching to consistently good or better in Years 1 to 6 in order to raise pupils' achievement by:
 - encouraging all teachers to maintain a swift pace throughout the whole lesson to help pupils maintain concentration and produce work of the highest standard
 - ensuring teachers always plan work that caters for the different abilities of pupils in the class so that all pupils are consistently challenged throughout lessons
 - ensuring that the curriculum enables pupils to develop their mathematical skills through regular problem solving in different subjects
 - regularly checking pupils' work during lessons so that activities can be adjusted to ensure pupils' learning moves along quickly.

- Improve the impact of leadership and management on how well pupils achieve by making sure that any actions taken following monitoring activities result in pupils rapidly making at least good progress.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement at Key Stages 1 and 2 requires improvement because not enough pupils make good progress. By the end of Year 6, standards over time are below average in English and mathematics. During Key Stages 1 and 2, a high number of pupils join and leave the school throughout the year so that the mix of pupils in each class can vary considerably from year to year.
- The progress of all groups of pupils requires improvement. Across the school, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, as well as those supported by the pupil premium, make progress at rates similar to those of other pupils. However, not enough of the most able pupils achieve the higher levels of attainment at the end of Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school has a very high proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. Over time, attainment for these pupils is below average in English and mathematics, which is similar to other pupils. The progress of these pupils is also similar to others, reflecting the school's commitment to providing an equality of opportunity for all pupils.
- While standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2013 were lower than those expected nationally, teacher assessments show that the proportion of pupils making expected rates of progress is improving in reading, writing and mathematics but this has not been the case for pupils achieving the higher levels.
- The 2013 unvalidated national test results for Year 6 show that pupils made better progress in English than they did in mathematics because most pupils made expected progress in writing, while in reading and mathematics it was the large majority.
- Pupils often use their writing skills in different subjects to extend the range of different kinds of writing in which they are competent. The proportion of pupils making more than expected progress in writing has improved and is now in line with the national average. However, this is not the case in mathematics, which, although it is used in science, is not developed often enough in other subjects through problem solving in order to improve pupils' skills.
- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with knowledge and skills that are significantly below those expected for their age especially in speaking and listening, reading, writing and mathematical skills. Children enjoy a wide range of exciting activities, both in the classroom and outdoors, helping many to make good progress. For example, outdoors, children enjoy riding their bikes and leading each other around, while others use their hands carefully to measure in spans, recording results on clipboards.
- Pupils say they enjoy reading. In the Reception class, children enjoy looking at books. They are able to follow the story through the pictures, laughing at silly characters or talking about what they are doing. Regular teaching of letters and sounds, often in small groups, helps children to learn basic reading skills. As pupils progress through the school, they enjoy reading different kinds of books and begin to use their reading skills to gather information.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching is not consistently good enough to promote good progress for all pupils across the school.
- Teachers plan lessons that allow for pupils to work in different groups. However, lessons do not always cater for the wide range of pupils' abilities and, as result, not all pupils are challenged sufficiently.
- During the inspection, especially when good teaching was observed, lessons had good pace with pupils focusing on their work and learning effectively. However, sometimes the pace of lessons drops as a result of teachers talking to the whole class. Pupils become distracted and the rate of

their learning slows.

- Teachers talk to individuals or groups of pupils throughout lessons to challenge their thinking. However, teachers miss opportunities during this time to make changes to the work pupils are doing in order to move their learning on more quickly.
- In a combined Year 5 and 6 mathematics lesson, for the more able pupils, pupils enjoyed a shopping activity when they had to plan the quantity of food for a recipe and work out the costs. The teacher reinforced the addition of decimals, checking if pupils had remembered the accurate position of the decimal point. Pupils had good working habits as they shopped well in pairs to find the total cost of all the food. Teachers, however, do not plan enough similar opportunities for pupils to develop their mathematical skills in other subjects.
- Adults and pupils have good relationships which help to ensure that pupils enjoy lessons, are keen to answer questions and are respectful. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well, which is why lessons are calm and pupils are keen to work.
- Classrooms support learning effectively. Teachers plan activities that usually engage pupils' interest in their learning. Pupils say they often work in pairs, particularly if the activity is practical.
- Teaching assistants who often work with small groups of pupils provide effective support to ensure they make progress.
- There is some good practice in the way pupils' work in English and mathematics is marked. Marking is frequent and gives positive comments as well as providing pupils with information so that they know how to improve. On occasions, pupils have responded, showing that they understand the teachers' comments.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils say they enjoy coming to school and that lessons are fun. Their behaviour in lessons and around school is good. Pupils agree that behaviour is good.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe and know about different kinds of bullying, such as name calling or cyber-bullying. All parents who responded to Parent View say that their children are happy in school, that they are safe and looked after well.
- Pupils move around the school in a consistently orderly way. They work hard and are enthusiastic. Pupils are always keen to take part in lessons and to work in pairs or in groups. They happily carry out responsibilities, for example, looking after the library or class cloakrooms.
- Pupils are encouraged to participate in raising funds for charity. The head and deputy head girl and boy and the school council talked enthusiastically about an event open to parents which they are currently helping to plan. They were keen to explain that reading is the focus and all activities are to encourage a love of reading.
- Attendance is average. The school works closely with parents and staff regularly collect pupils from their homes to ensure they attend school.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The leadership team has experienced a turbulent few years but is now more settled. Although leaders are focused on raising standards, leadership and management still require improvement. This is because actions so far have not led to enough pupils making consistently good and better progress in Key Stages 1 and 2, nor have they helped to maintain the consistently good quality of teaching seen at the last inspection.
- The headteacher has been involved heavily in redesigning the school and checking refurbishment over the last five years so that the new building is fit for purpose.
- Leaders and managers have identified appropriate strengths and areas for development and the

school's monitoring activities have led to some improvements.

- The headteacher is providing a clear direction for the school and is well supported by the assistant headteacher and other senior leaders. As a result, leaders and all staff have a strong sense of pride in the school and their capacity to secure further improvement is demonstrated by pupils' accelerated progress in writing and, to a lesser degree, in mathematics.
- All staff work well together as a team. They take advantage of training and partnership with other primary, secondary and special schools. Training is also linked to targets set in performance management which help leaders to make decisions about teachers' pay increases.
- The local authority has a good relationship with the school and knows the school's circumstances well. It provides guidance and support especially in developing middle leaders' skills.
- The curriculum provides many effective opportunities for learning. Pupils benefit from good partnerships which give them chances to explore the arts or sport. There are also strong links with the church where children perform and attend collective worship. Visits, for example to theatres or residential visits, provide pupils with plenty of opportunities to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural skills well.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has recently welcomed many new members and carried out a review of members' skills. This has led to a re-structuring of its committees. Governors are now developing their knowledge and skills through a range of training activities. They are confident that they are now more active in their different roles. They work closely with the headteacher who keeps them up to date with pupils' progress. Governors manage the school's budget well and know how the pupil premium funding is spent and the impact on the progress of pupils who are supported by this funding. Governors have been involved in making decisions on the spending of the Primary School Sports funding so that the school has a designated physical education teacher. Governors are involved in teachers' performance management and help make decisions on teachers' salaries. Governors make sure that safeguarding meets requirements and that all pupils are well supported.

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	112289
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	426316

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	214
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jean Mease
Headteacher	Elaine Kent
Date of previous school inspection	17 May 2011
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