

# South Walney Infant and Nursery School

Amphitrite Street, Walney, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria, LA14 3BZ

**Inspection dates** 4–5 March 2014

<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		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

■ This is a good school.

- This school is highly valued by pupils, their families, staff and the local community.
- From usually low starting points when they begin, pupils acquire a desire to learn and make good progress throughout their time at this school.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage provides an environment in which children develop a love for learning.
- The indoor spaces provide children with a high quality learning environment. The outdoor areas and opportunities for learning beyond the school contribute extremely well to children’s learning and development.
- Teaching is good. Staff plan together daily and consider carefully what children enjoy. Learning activities excite children.
- Pupil’s behaviour is good and they say they feel safe in school.
- The school works extremely well with pupils and their families.
- The senior leadership team is strong. It has successfully introduced many positive changes to ensure whole school improvements. These include a new behaviour policy, an effective system for checking pupils’ progress and a curriculum which engages girls and boys alike.
- Together, the senior leadership team and the governing body are building on the many strengths in teaching and achievement found at the previous inspection.
- Leaders’ and governors’ commitment to excellence makes sure that the school continues to improve.

## It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not consistently good with some that requires improvement.
- The older pupils do not always respond to teachers’ comments in their marking and correct their work.
- The teaching and learning of phonics (matching letters and the sounds that they make) does not help pupils to learn quickly enough because occasionally activities are too easy or too hard for a few pupils.
- Some middle leaders do not have enough opportunities to contribute fully to raising standards in their subject.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching in 13 lessons, two of which were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, the inspectors 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; parents and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors 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, development plans, records of pupils' standards and progress, documents relating to attendance and behaviour, and pupils' work in their books.
- There were 29 parental responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) which the inspectors took into account alongside the responses to the school's own parental survey. Twenty responses to the inspection questionnaire for staff were also reviewed.

## Inspection team

Naomi Taylor, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

David Woodhouse

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- South Walney is an average sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium is lower than that found nationally. (This is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children who are looked after by the local authority and the children of service families.)
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is higher than that found nationally.
- The proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is much higher than the national average.
- The vast majority of pupils are White British.
- A new headteacher and assistant headteacher have been appointed since the previous inspection.
- The school holds Eco Schools Silver and Green flag, Healthy Schools, and Artsmark Awards.
- The school is affiliated to Heartstart with the British Heart Foundation.

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

- Increase the proportion of teaching that is consistently good or outstanding in order to raise attainment and achievement further by making sure that :
  - when phonics are being taught the activities are not too easy or too hard for pupils' differing abilities
  - older pupils use teachers' marking in order to correct and improve their work and learn from their mistakes
  - there are more opportunities for teachers and teaching assistants to share best practice within and beyond the school.
- Increase the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
  - improving the skills and opportunities of some middle leaders to measure progress made by pupils and taking action to raise achievement in their areas of responsibility.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Most children start school with skills and knowledge that vary between below, and sometimes well below those typically expected for their age. Communication, language and emotional development are particularly weak.
- There is a strong emphasis on activities to promote the core skills of language and mathematics which ensures children make good progress across the Nursery and Reception classes. As a result, they leave the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills in speaking and listening, and number that are now close to the level expected for their age. Despite good progress, attainment in reading remains lower than expected.
- Results of the screening check in phonics (letters and their sounds) in 2013 reflected this lower level when children leave the Early Years Foundation Stage and were below average. Current Year 1 pupils are on track to be much closer to the expected standard this year. This is as a result of a whole school approach to teaching phonics. However, there are times in these sessions when pupils find the work too easy or too hard and activities are not adapted quickly enough.
- Pupils build on the good start they have made and continue to make good and, at times, better progress across Key Stage 1. Most pupils reach expected standards, and some are moving to above average, in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2.
- An exciting choice of books capture pupils' interest in reading and pupils make good use of library books, which they enjoy sharing at home. By the time they leave school pupils are competent readers. They can explain what is happening in a story, predict an ending and most use reading confidently to help them in other lessons. Younger pupils occasionally guess unfamiliar words in the text rather than working them out and this slows their progress.
- Observations of teaching and learning and the scrutiny of pupils' work show that pupils achieve well in mathematics. An increasing number apply their knowledge well to solve problems and to extend their numeracy skills in other subject areas.
- Writing is taught well and daily sessions of 'funky fingers' in Reception, provide activities for pupils to develop strength in their fingers and help to build their stamina for writing letters and numbers. Displays around the school celebrate pupils' good achievement in writing from Nursery through to Year 2.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress as a result of the extra help and support they receive from school and other agencies.
- Published results in 2013 and current school records for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals show that they make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupil premium funding is used well to ensure individual pupils who are entitled to the funding receive the support they need. There is no gap in the standards these pupils reach compared with their classmates and they usually attain standards higher than this group nationally.
- The most-able pupils make good progress. Although there was a dip in 2013 of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 they nevertheless made good progress given their starting points. There are currently several pupils on target to meet the higher levels in English and mathematics.
- Throughout the school, all groups of pupils make equally good progress. This demonstrates the school's successful commitment to promoting equality of opportunity.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good and encourages all pupils to become inquisitive and aim high. A real understanding of how these young children learn and develop is a strength in teaching.
- Classrooms and outdoor areas are organised well and activities and resources carefully match pupils' interests. There is a consistent approach to making clear to pupils what they are going to

learn and pupils know what is expected of them. As a result, they arrive at their lessons eager to learn and settle quickly to work.

- Pupils are totally captivated by imaginative topics and events. Sometimes they arrive at school having found there have been unexpected visitors. For example, having enjoyed 'Horrid Henry' stories, the pupils arrived one morning to find that Henry had visited the school during the night and left a trail of mess throughout the school. This captured pupils' imaginations and Key Stage 1 pupils were very keen to write about what he had been up to.
- The teaching of reading is effective overall. Children have ample opportunity to extend their skills in small groups and individual reading with an adult. Phonics are taught on a daily basis and often include practical activities. However, during these sessions tasks are not always adapted quickly enough when pupils find activities too easy or too hard.
- Although the outdoor areas are limited, they have been very imaginatively developed to enhance pupils' learning through discovery and creativity. For example, in the pond area, pupils have eagerly watched as tadpoles have developed into frogs. Pupils plant seeds in the garden to grow and then eat their own vegetables.
- New and inventive ideas make learning relevant and interesting. This was seen in mathematics when pupils were working out what they could do with the money they had, given the cost of various items. Good progress was made with their mental mathematics skills.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children's learning journeys give a detailed account of their progress and information is used well to guide future planning. They are also a source of great pride to the children who love to discuss the things that they have done. Parents are kept well informed about how to support learning at home. They are encouraged to contribute to their child's learning journey to enable them to be fully involved in their learning.
- Marking of work in Key Stage 1 is of a good quality and helps pupils to improve their understanding. Occasionally, older pupils do not correct or edit their work so that they can learn from their mistakes.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good. There is a strong commitment to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Consequently, pupils are very happy in school, behave well and look after each other. This is a view shared by parents during the inspection and from the schools' own parent survey and the results on Parent View.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children play, share, cooperate and take turns exceedingly well. Pupils appreciated the Shrove Tuesday celebrations with a pancake theme. In the Nursery, children were eager to eat a freshly made pancake. They patiently worked in their chosen play areas until it was their turn to sit with the teacher, choose a topping and then eat their own pancake.
- In lessons and around school pupils are courteous towards each other and the adults around them. One grandmother told an inspector how she relishes the opportunity to come into school every week to bake with a small number of pupils.
- On the rare occasions when behaviour is not as it should be, pupils are encouraged to reflect on the impact of their actions on others and on themselves and to learn from this.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. They have a wide range of opportunities to learn about how to look after themselves.
- For example, when they go to the beach they know they have to stay close together and not wander off. They also use computers, scissors and art resources safely from a very early age.
- Community police officers visit the school to help pupils to understand how to take care crossing the road.
- Pupils told inspectors there is very little bullying in their school, and they know that if they have a problem adults and peer buddies will help them to sort it out. Pupils understand bullying in its different forms and say that when it does happen it is dealt with very effectively. Parents support this view.

- Attendance is average and the vast majority arrive to school on time.

## **The leadership and management** are good

- The highly effective leadership of the headteacher provides a strong commitment to achieving good outcomes for all pupils. With the full support of her leadership team, staff and governors, the headteacher has successfully implemented strategies to improve teaching and achievement. Priorities are clearly stated in the school's improvement plan. They are supported by all, showing the school is well placed to move forward.
- The school's new tracking system ensures that pupils' progress is regularly checked against the targets set for them by senior and middle leaders. Any differences in the progress of the different groups of pupils are closed. Pupils at risk of underachieving are identified quickly and supported well so that they do not lose ground in their learning.
- Through their rigorous monitoring of teaching, senior leaders have a clear view of the strengths of teaching and how this can improve further. Only a few aspects remain needing attention.
- Teachers are well supported in improving the quality of teaching, particularly through performance management and the training they receive. More opportunities are now needed for teachers and teaching assistants to share best practice within and beyond the school.
- Although the overall role of checking on teaching and achievement are effective, some middle leaders' skills are not sharp enough in checking the progress of pupils in their areas of responsibility. They do not always have enough opportunities to ensure recent changes have the intended impact.
- The school chooses to 'buy-in' additional support from the local authority which is enhancing the quality of teaching. The local authority, quite rightly, has confidence in how the headteacher is leading the school and implementing positive changes.
- The curriculum is successfully planned to teach the core skills of reading, writing and mathematics, as well as creative and investigative skills, in school and beyond. The curriculum also places emphasis on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development which permeates all aspects of school life.
- From an early age, pupils develop an understanding of other people's beliefs and cultures as seen in photographic evidence of pupils celebrating Diwali and Chinese New Year through dance, food and costume.
- The school successfully promotes exercise and healthy living. The school is now providing additional activities, such as dancing and football coaching using the recently introduced Primary School Sport funding which is engaging more pupils in keeping active.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are highly supportive of the school. They are knowledgeable about pupils' progress, including those eligible for the pupil premium funding, from their review of data and effectively hold senior leaders to account for the performance of staff and pupils. They are very well informed about the quality of teaching because they visit the school regularly. They are each all linked to a class and to a subject area. Governors also check that teachers' salary progression is linked to pupils' progress. The governing body has a secure understanding of the school's strengths and priorities for development. Governors are also keen to take part in any training that will help further improve their skills and carry out their duties. Statutory safeguarding duties are carried out effectively and the budget is well managed.

## 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>	112212
<b>Local authority</b>	Cumbria
<b>Inspection number</b>	439618

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>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	188
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Karl Stephens
<b>Headteacher</b>	Nancy McKinnell
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 May 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01229 471457
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