

St Herbert's CofE (VA) Primary and Nursery School

Trinity Way, Keswick, Cumbria, CA12 4HZ

Inspection dates

6–7 March 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
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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.

- Pupils' achievement is good. From below average starting points, pupils in Year 6 reach standards that are above those expected for their age in reading and mathematics.
- Teaching is typically good and some is outstanding.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils behave very well in lessons and around school. They show enthusiasm for their learning and try hard.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Pupils are always polite and courteous. They take on responsibilities willingly and carry out their duties enthusiastically.
- This is a very caring school. Pupils say they feel secure and know how to keep themselves safe.
- The headteacher's leadership is very effective and she is supported by leaders at all levels. They have worked hard to raise pupils' achievement and improve the quality of teaching in recent years.
- Members of the governing body are very effective and make a strong contribution to school improvement using their skills and expertise well to provide strategic direction for this improving school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils do not always know what to do to improve their work and do not have opportunities to make these improvements promptly.
- Pupils are not always given work to do that is hard enough for them.
- Pupils are not always asked questions that make them think deeply about what they are learning.
- Standards in writing are a bit lower than in reading and mathematics because some younger pupils do not have a secure enough foundation in spelling, punctuation and grammar to build on as they move through the school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 16 lessons. One lesson was observed jointly with the headteacher. They also listened to pupils read in Years 2 and 6.
- Inspectors took account of 75 responses to the Ofsted on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and 14 responses to questionnaires completed by the staff.
- Inspectors held meetings with pupils in Year 6 and members of the school council. They talked informally with pupils at lunchtimes and break times. The inspectors also talked to six members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. They held discussions with leaders with different responsibilities, including the leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage, the special educational needs coordinator and the leader for numeracy.
- Inspectors observed the school at work and looked at a range of documentation, including internal and external information relating to pupils' progress, their workbooks, school improvement planning and the school's procedures for gaining an accurate view of its own performance. They also considered reports written by the local authority, documents relating to the management of teachers' performance, minutes of governing body meetings, safeguarding and child-protection documents.

Inspection team

Peter Evea, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Sue Sharkey	Additional Inspector
Sheila Mawer	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary and nursery school.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is lower than average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is lower than average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is lower than average. 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 who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The proportion of pupils who join the school other than at the usual times is above average.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to outstanding in order to raise achievement further by:
 - ensuring that there is always a high level of challenge for pupils so that they are always fully involved in their learning
 - improving the quality of questioning so that pupils are enabled to think more deeply about what they are learning
 - consistently providing pupils with suggestions for how to improve their work and then giving them opportunities to make the improvements
 - ensuring a sound foundation of basic skills in spelling, punctuation and grammar upon which to build later in school.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children start in the Nursery class with skills and abilities that are below those typical for children of their age. They make good progress in their knowledge, understanding and skills so that, by the end of Key Stage 2 they reach standards in reading writing and mathematics that are above average.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get off to a very good start. They settle in quickly as a result of the caring environment, the good teaching and the detailed knowledge that all adults have of individual children's needs. As a result, they leave the Reception Year well prepared for learning in Year 1.
- Programmes to help develop pupils' reading skills help younger ones make a good start to learning to read. Pupils in Year 2 read accurately and can decode new and difficult words with increasing confidence. This very good start is built on as they move through the school so that by the end of Year 6 pupils read very well.
- Pupils write with imagination, particularly when the subject captures their imagination. They can adapt their writing styles to suit a range of audiences and purposes. Although achievement in writing is good, it is not as good as it is in reading and mathematics. The development of some younger pupils' skills in spelling, punctuation and grammar is not as secure as it might be.
- Pupils' mathematical skills and understanding are good. They develop a sound foundation of basic numeracy skills early in their school life and these are systematically built on through their time in the school.
- A number of pupils in Year 6 are working at a high level in English and mathematics.
- The school's own data and other inspection evidence show that pupils throughout the school are making consistently good progress, and pupils in Years 2 and 6 are on track to reach standards that are above average in English and mathematics at the end of the year. A number of pupils who joined the school in Years 5 and 6 have not attained as high standards because they have a long way to catch up with those who have attended the school since Year 1. This can mask the real picture of achievement in Key Stage 2.
- Pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and supported by the pupil premium achieve at least as well as others in the school. School data shows that there are no gaps in their attainment and progress in English and mathematics compared with other pupils in the school. This is due to the good quality of the extra help provided for them, such as learning in smaller groups.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is closely checked and reviewed regularly. Carefully planned support, which closely matches individual pupils' needs, makes sure that these pupils make progress that is similar to that of others.
- The most able pupils make very good progress to reach standards that are above average in English and mathematics because they are given work that challenges them and makes them think hard.
- Equality of opportunity is central to the work of the school and the school is successful in removing any barriers to learning so that there are no differences in the achievement of different groups of pupils in the school.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is good and some is outstanding. The improved quality of teaching across the school has had a positive effect on pupils' learning and achievement, enabling them to make good progress.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are provided with a wide range of interesting indoor and outdoor activities, which cover all areas of learning. Good attention is paid to

developing children's speaking and listening skills, which prepares them very well for the future. Close attention is paid to developing pupils' ability to make marks as they begin to learn to write.

- Pupils enthuse about the interesting work they are given, especially enjoying learning outdoors in the school's attractive setting. For example, in mathematics, pupils used the school grounds to learn about using coordinates to translate polygons.
- There are very good relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils cooperate very well together in pairs and small groups when given opportunities to work together.
- Usually, tasks are set that are based on a good knowledge of pupils' different level of ability and which provide work that is just right for them. However, occasionally, the work set for pupils is not hard enough to keep them fully involved and interested in their learning. At times, the questions asked of pupils do not make pupils think deeply about their learning.
- Pupils' work is regularly marked and indicates where pupils have achieved success. However, marking does not consistently point out how work could be improved and sometimes pupils are not given opportunities to make these improvements before moving on to the next piece of work.
- In mathematics, pupils develop the skills that they need to make good progress.
- Pupils, including the most able pupils, respond to high expectations and typically try their hardest to rise to the challenges set for them. In Year 6, for example, pupils worked enthusiastically to find effective ways to filter dirty water linked to their topic on Africa.
- Some pupils, especially younger ones, are not given a secure foundation in the basic skills of spelling, punctuation and grammar because the standards expected of them are not consistently high enough.
- Teaching assistants are deployed very effectively and carefully guide pupils' learning. They know pupils well and have a very clear picture of the needs of individual pupils, especially disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Behaviour is good both in and out of lessons. The records kept by the school confirm that behaviour is typically of a high order.
- The school has an effective system for encouraging pupils to behave well. All teachers follow this system consistently, and pupils say that they know how to behave well, both in and out of lessons, and that they expect others to behave equally well.
- In the playground, pupils play well with each other and appreciate the wide range of play equipment provided for them.
- Older pupils have roles of responsibility, such as monitors, and they take these very seriously and carry them out conscientiously. Older pupils for example, assist in the smooth running of the school's office and some help younger pupils to learn to read.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say that they feel safe and parents agree that their children feel safe in school. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe including when using the internet.
- Pupils say that bullying is rare. They have a good understanding of the different forms of bullying and are certain that if any bullying occurred it would be swiftly challenged by the staff.
- Attendance is above average and has improved and the school is prompt in checking on the reasons for any absences. Pupils are encouraged to attend school regularly and on time.
- Pupils very much enjoy the wide range of activities and clubs provided for them, especially the outdoor activities and the residential visits. When asked what they would like to change, most found it difficult to think of any significant improvements to their school.
- Through the curriculum, pupils develop a good understanding of different faiths and cultures and show respect and consideration for others. There are many opportunities for pupils to think about and express their feelings and to reflect on their learning and behaviour. This does much to promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding which is a strength of the

school.

The leadership and management

are good

- The school is well led by a very effective and determined headteacher ably supported by an equally determined senior leadership team and by leaders at other levels within the school and by an effective governing body.
- There have been improvements in both pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching as a result of concerted action of all the staff.
- The school has an accurate picture of its strengths and areas for development and produces comprehensive plans to tackle these. All staff and governors play an important part in creating these plans and checking on the progress made.
- The headteacher carries out regular checks on the quality of teaching and learning which provides an accurate view of its quality. Where improvements are needed, teachers are able to improve their skills through effective professional development. The links between the checks on the quality of teaching and training for staff are effective and arrangements for pay and promotion of staff are closely linked to staff's performance and pupils' progress.
- This is a very caring and inclusive school where all pupils are known and cared for as individuals. All pupils are able to access all that the school has to offer. Staff work hard to make sure that all groups of pupils do as well as they can, for example, in removing any gap in achievement between those pupils eligible for pupil premium funding and their peers.
- Parents have a very positive view of the school and the overwhelming majority of those who responded to the questionnaire on Parent View would recommend the school to other parents.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and caters very well for the individual needs of pupils, particularly in relation to developing their literacy and numeracy skills. There are excellent opportunities for pupils to be involved in a range of additional activities and clubs, such as the marathon club and pupils appreciate the opportunities to go on educational visits and residential visits.
- The primary school sport funding to promote pupils' physical development and extend sporting activities is being very well used. Support is provided to enhance teachers' skills in teaching a range of different sports and in providing additional sporting opportunities, such as the pupils' triathlon and karate.
- Safeguarding and child protection procedures are effective and meet all current statutory requirements.
- The local authority has provided a light touch support.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is effective and governors are determined to help the school to improve further. They are well informed about all aspects of school life and have a good knowledge of the school, particularly about the comparative achievement of pupils through their analysis of national data. They monitor the school's performance and ask challenging questions to promote further development. Governors bring a range of skills, which they use to good effect in carrying out their roles. Where there are gaps in their knowledge and skills they make sure that they receive appropriate training. They are ambitious for the further development of the school and the achievement and welfare of its pupils. Governors are knowledgeable about the quality of teaching. They are familiar with Teachers' Standards and use them to help manage teachers' performance and award pay increases for good teaching. They oversee the spending of pupil premium funding and are aware of the positive impact this is having on pupils' achievement. They are also involved in planning the spending of the primary school sports funding and are considering how its impact on the physical well-being of pupils will be measured.

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	134789
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	430961

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	261
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Leanne Day
Headteacher	Shelagh Hughes
Date of previous school inspection	25 April 2012
Telephone number	01768 773017
Fax number	01768 775279
Email address	adminstherberts@keswick.cumbria.sch.uk

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