

Ghyllside Primary School

Gillinggate, Kendal, Cumbria, LA9 4JB

Inspection dates 30 April 2014–1 May 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	Select
	This inspection:	Good	2
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.

- The headteacher, ably supported by senior staff and governors, provides very effective leadership of the school. Any weaknesses are tackled effectively and consequently pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching continue to improve.
- Pupils make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage from starting points which are often below age-related expectations when they enter the Nursery. In 2013 they reached above average standards in reading and writing and broadly average standards in mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- Teaching is knowledgeable and develops pupils' skills and understanding well. Classes are sensitively managed and pupils are highly motivated by the wide range of resources teachers use and the interesting tasks they set.
- Pupils' good behaviour is a strength of the school. They are very keen to learn, show respect for each other and school staff and work hard in lessons. They are proud of their school and feel very safe both in the classrooms and in the very well designed and equipped school grounds.
- Staff and pupils feel valued at Ghyllside Primary and morale is high. The school is aware of its strengths but is not complacent and is well placed to improve even further.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is good, but not outstanding. Pupils do not always make rapid progress because occasionally expectations of what they can achieve are not high enough and they are not given consistently clear advice about how to improve their work.
- Pupils in Year 6 have not achieved quite as well in recent national tests in mathematics as they have in English. They do not always have sufficient opportunities to use their mathematical skills in other subjects. New approaches to teaching mathematics have yet to become fully effective in speeding up pupils' progress even further.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 24 lessons and part-lessons. The headteacher and lead inspector made several shorter visits to classrooms. Inspectors listened to pupils read.
- Discussions were held with parents, pupils, staff, governors and a representative of the Kendal Collaborative Partnership.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at pupils' books, progress data, safeguarding information and other documentation.
- One hundred and twelve responses to the on-line questionnaire, (Parent View), were considered as well as those from school staff.

Inspection team

Ann Ashdown, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Paul Smith	Additional Inspector
Sheila Mawer	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Ghyllside Primary School converted to become an academy school on 1 September 2012. When its predecessor school, of the same name, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good.
- This school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, is average.
- A below-average proportion of pupils is from minority ethnic backgrounds, while an average proportion speaks English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported at school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus and with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The on-site provision for childcare, 'Ghyllside Out of School Club', is inspected separately. Its report is on the Ofsted website.
- The headteacher, who is a local leader of education, and senior staff share their expertise with other local primary, secondary and special schools through the Kendal Collaborative Partnership.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that more is outstanding by:
 - making sure that pupils are moved on to more challenging work as quickly as possible
 - having consistently high expectations of what all pupils can do
 - always giving pupils clear advice about how to improve their work by checking that they read, understand and act upon it.
- Raise attainment and speed up pupils' progress in mathematics further by:
 - giving pupils more opportunities to use their mathematical skills in all areas of the curriculum
 - checking that new approaches to teaching mathematics are having maximum impact on raising pupils' achievement and modifying these when needed.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Work in pupils' books, that displayed on walls and the school's own detailed data which tracks pupils' progress all confirm that the achievement of pupils at Ghyllside Primary is good.
- Children enter the Nursery with skills which are often below those expected for their age, particularly in speech and language and in social development. They settle quickly into school routines and make good and sometimes outstanding progress in the Nursery and Reception classes.
- Pupils continue to make good progress as they move through the school. In tests and assessments in 2013 pupils in Year 2 reached average standards overall, but attained their highest marks in mathematics. At the end of Year 6 pupils reached above average standards in reading and writing, but attainment was lower in mathematics.
- The school has addressed this relative weakness in mathematics and pupils' progress, particularly in Years 1, 2 and Year 6 is now speeding up markedly. However some pupils still have too few opportunities to practise using their mathematical skills in all areas of the curriculum consistently.
- Pupils read confidently. They benefit from good quality phonics (letters and the sounds they make) teaching and have well developed strategies to decode unfamiliar words. Pupils are given good opportunities to write at length and many produce lively stories using language which clearly conveys emotions such as suspense and excitement.
- Pupil premium funding is spent wisely on extra staffing so pupils can be taught in small groups or receive one-to-one tuition. As a result, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals make the same progress as their classmates do in English and the gap in their attainment has narrowed to less than two terms behind their peers. In mathematics, pupils' attainment is approximately three terms behind that of their classmates.
- Pupils with English as an additional language and those from minority ethnic backgrounds make good progress because they receive skilled help in developing their language skills, when and if this is needed.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs get sensitive and timely support from teachers and teaching assistants so they make the same good progress as their peers do.
- The most-able pupils make good progress. Current Year 6 pupils receive extra help and are given challenging work to enable them to reach the higher Level 6 in both English and mathematics.

The quality of teaching is good

- Work in pupils' books shows that all groups of pupils make good progress over time as a result of the good teaching they receive.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage children are given good opportunities, both indoors and out, to choose from a wide range of exciting activities. They quickly become confident and enthusiastic learners. In the Reception class children developed a good understanding of the life cycles and characteristics of animals from watching chicks and tadpoles develop and were most enthusiastic about collecting snails and observing their behaviour.
- Teachers have very good relationships with pupils and lessons are conducted in an atmosphere of respect and trust. Pupils enjoy learning because teachers use varied resources and set tasks which capture their interest. In Year 6 pupils made good progress in developing their persuasive writing skills as they described the attractions of Kendal that would appeal to visitors.
- Teaching assistants are well deployed and they provide skilled and sensitive support in the classroom for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. They also give specialist help to pupils who benefit from small-group and one-to-one teaching to improve and extend their literacy and numeracy skills.

- Pupils make good progress because teachers are knowledgeable and plan work carefully. New approaches to teaching mathematics are already having an impact on speeding up pupils' progress and ensuring that they have instant recall of important mathematical facts. The school recognises that checking that these new approaches are having maximum impact on pupils' learning and modifying them, where necessary, is an area for further development.
- Teachers usually have high expectations of their pupils. However, occasionally expectations are lower and pupils are not moved on quickly enough to more challenging work, so their progress is slower.
- Marking is often of good quality so pupils know how to improve their work. However, this is not always the case and sometimes pupils are not clear about how to improve their work or are not given the opportunity to act on the teachers' advice and make their work even better.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development is promoted very well in lessons. They share ideas, resources and information sensibly, discuss topical events knowledgeably and learn about other cultures and religions.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are very supportive of each other and show kindness and respect to staff and visitors. They are polite and well-mannered in the dining hall, in classrooms and when they play together in the school grounds.
- Pupils are keen to learn. Most work hard in lessons, answer questions readily and show a pride in the way they present work in their books.
- Attendance is above average and pupils arrive at school on time, with the right equipment and ready to learn.
- Records show that there are very few incidents of challenging behaviour and the school deals with these swiftly and effectively. No pupils have been excluded from school.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils say how safe they feel in school. Parents are also very confident that the school keeps their children safe and almost all are very appreciative of the good education it provides.
- Pupils are knowledgeable about how to keep themselves safe. They are aware of different types of bullying, including cyber-bullying but are very confident that should this happen in school, it will be quickly sorted out.
- Pupils enjoy taking responsibility as, for example, members of the very active school council. The school council recently was proud to win a national prize for its work on encouraging people not to drop litter and made a confident and knowledgeable presentation in connection with fair trade at the town hall.

The leadership and management are good

- The leadership of the headteacher is good and has been instrumental in creating a climate for learning where good teaching and good behaviour can flourish.
- Together with senior staff and governors, and with the full support of all staff, he has identified areas for improvement and been successful in addressing weaknesses. Raising attainment in mathematics, improving teaching quality and tracking of pupils' progress are all areas of recent improvement.
- Senior and middle managers monitor the work of their areas of responsibility effectively. Through work scrutiny and lesson observations they are working towards ensuring even greater consistency in the marking of pupils' work.
- Resources are well deployed and the performance of staff is well managed. Staff feel that their opinions and talents are valued and that they have good access to extra training to improve their

skills further.

- All pupils have good equal opportunities to succeed. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. Extra funding, such as the pupil premium, is used well to close gaps in achievement between those pupils eligible for free school meals and their classmates.
- Funding for school sport is also used effectively to provide extra training for staff and give more pupils opportunities to take part in after-school clubs and sporting competitions. Very enthusiastic sports staff ensure that pupils have every opportunity to develop healthy lifestyles, improve their physical well-being and perform to the best of their ability.
- The headteacher and staff work closely with other primary and secondary schools through the Kendal Collaborative Partnership. They exchange expertise, for example, in leadership and management, information and communication technology and languages.
- The curriculum meets pupils' needs well and promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very effectively. It allows pupils to develop their literacy skills across a wide range of subjects, but opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills are more limited. A wide range of enrichment activities adds greatly to pupils' enjoyment of school. They talk with great enthusiasm about exciting trips to outdoor centres and interesting talks from visitors to the school. They also make the most of the school's well-designed grounds to study nature, grow potatoes, practise their climbing and find lots of snails to examine in class.
- Safeguarding fully meets requirements. Staff are well trained and knowledgeable about risk assessment and child protection policies and procedures.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are both supportive and challenging. They have a range of expertise which is used to good effect to ensure that finances are well managed and that the school is held to account for how pupil premium funding is used. They are kept well informed about the school's performance data compared to that of schools nationally and ask challenging questions about the progress of groups of pupils. They are clear about the quality of teaching and how staff are rewarded and weaknesses tackled.

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	138744
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	440167

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	475
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dan Shiels
Principal	Mark Woodburn
Date of previous school inspection	5 June 2009
Telephone number	01539814930
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