

Maryport CofE Junior School

Camp Road, Maryport, Cumbria, CA15 6JN

Inspection dates 13–14 May 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	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.

- It is a school transformed from the ordinary. Under much improved leadership and management it shows a lot of potential for further improvement.
- Pupils’ progress is good. It is speeding up as teaching improves. Pupils in Year 6 last year reached a higher standard than is expected nationally.
- The relentless drive to improve teaching is working. There is now an expectation of excellence rather than adequacy.
- Teaching is good. There is a good awareness that getting a lot of little things right quickly adds up to pupils mastering big things more rapidly.
- Pupils are kept safe, learn how to keep themselves safe and are happy in school. They attend increasingly well.
- Pupils behave well. They wear their uniform with pride. They show respect for the premises and most are open and friendly to visitors.
- Leadership, management and governance are good. There is a very strong focus on making the school better and raising standards through improved teaching.
- Staff morale is high and the local authority and community are rapidly latching on to the reality that this is a school that has a lot to offer.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Further progress is hindered by issues relating to persistent staff absences which result in some teachers not benefiting from training and performance management.
- Senior leaders and governors do not communicate the ethos and direction of the school sufficiently clearly to all parents.

Information about this inspection

- Parts of 10 lessons were observed. All five teachers present in the school were observed at least once, this included long-term temporary staff. Two permanent teachers could not be observed because they were absent.
- Many informal conversations were held with pupils and staff.
- The inspector met with five governors and a representative of the local authority. He spoke to a few parents and took account of the views of 48 parents who responded to Ofsted's on-line questionnaire (Parent View). He also took account of the greater number of parental views expressed through the school's own paper questionnaire.
- Random samples of pupils' work were checked as well as those provided by the school.
- The environment in which pupils learn and play was explored and evaluated.
- The way that staff and governors make sure that pupils are kept safe and free from bullying or harassment was given particular attention.
- Systems for keeping check on the effectiveness of staff performance were checked.
- This inspection was conducted with the awareness that there was a qualifying complaint that raised concerns about the school. The inspector did not investigate the specific complaint but checked up very carefully on the circumstances that led up to it, especially with regard to the way staff manage behaviour, prevent bullying and respond to parents' concerns.

Inspection team

Alastair Younger, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average junior school. Numbers on roll have almost halved over the past 10 years. The number of parents applying for places next year has risen considerably.
- A below average proportion of pupils are supported through the pupil premium. The pupil premium is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are in the care of the local authority.
- Nearly all pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above average. This varies widely from year to year.
- The headteacher, who was acting headteacher at the time of the last inspection, is now the permanent headteacher.
- Pupils come to this school from four feeder infant schools, the majority are from the infant school that shares adjacent premises and some facilities.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- For the leadership and management, including governors, to tackle with urgency a pattern of staff absences that is affecting the continuity of teaching and pupils' learning.
- Do more to convince all parents that this is a rapidly improving school that is going to help their children to do well and stay happy, fulfilled and safe. Also, reassure them that their worries are being listened to and prompt and fair action is being taken to lessen them.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils achieve well. They arrive at the school in Year 3 from different infant schools and with different levels of achievement. Pupils' attainment on entry is about average for most and above average for a minority. By the time they leave, attainment is usually above average, with many pupils exceeding national expectations.
- Pupils' levels of attainment can vary widely from year to year because of the small year group cohorts. For example, pupils assessed in Year 6 in 2013 reached well-above average levels of attainment but pupils currently in Year 6 are likely to be about average because, in this year group, pupils starting points were much lower. Pupils currently in Year 5 are working at above average levels, with several pupils already working at a level well in excess of national expectations for Year 6 pupils.
- Pupils tend to make very similar progress in reading, writing and mathematics. In recent years, writing has slightly lagged behind but this year shows signs of catching up. Progress is good across all subjects.
- Good attention is being paid to support the most able pupils. This year, those identified as being gifted writers have been set the task of creating a school newspaper 'Camp Road Reporter'; they act as journalists, editors and publishers and are encouraged and guided to do as much as they can for themselves. The result is wonderful. Staff are currently looking at ideas for a project in mathematics that could create similar enthusiasm and results.
- Good attention is paid to making sure that pupils with special educational needs are well supported and achieve to their full potential. There are many successful methods through which the school supports these pupils. At one extreme, it is extra vigilance and support from class teachers and teaching assistants, at the other it is a highly successful nurturing group for pupils with 'volcanoes in their tummies' who sometimes find it hard to make sense of learning. Pupils with special educational needs make just as good progress from their starting points as any other pupils.
- Pupil premium funding is being used effectively. It is imaginatively used to provide extra learning support for those who need it, and broadening horizons when this is considered more important. Every pupil in receipt of the pupil premium last year met, at least, the standard expected of all pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. There is no significant difference in this school between pupils receiving the pupil premium and all other pupils.
- Additional funding for sports is also being used imaginatively and effectively. It is resulting in more and more pupils becoming involved in sports after school and better training for staff to promote physical activity in school. Quite apart from this, it subsidises the cost of getting professional rugby league players into school to listen to boys reading the books they want to (there are no male staff) and to realise that there is nothing 'soft' about reading books.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is solidly good. There is a clear path of improvement on record. When the school was last inspected teaching required improvement. Over a year ago, monitoring by the headteacher and the local authority tended to support this view. However, determined efforts to improve teaching by the headteacher, helped by the local authority, have term by term improved the quality of teaching through guidance, support and excellent training.
- Learning is clearly accelerating as a result of improvements in teaching. Attitudes towards learning and attendance are also improving as more and more pupils respond to the efforts that teachers are making to make learning more interesting and classrooms more stimulating.
- Pupils are responding well to teachers' insistence on high standards of presentation and handwriting. As a result, they are building up bodies of work of which they can be justifiably proud.

- Teachers remind pupils to hold their pens correctly and sit up when writing and this has made a huge difference to the quality of pupils' work. Through good teaching the pupils are learning how to use their imagination and make it accessible to people who might want to read about their thoughts and learn from them. Records show that there have been noticeable improvements in the handwriting of Year 3 pupils this year.
- Other good practice helps enormously. Teachers mark pupils' work consistently well. They give pupils good feedback about what they have achieved, where they have made mistakes and what they need to do improve. This tends to be more refined in English than in mathematics.
- Much of the work contained in pupils' books is completed to a good standard. When pupils are set work they are expected to finish it. Then it is corrected and then pupils do their corrections. Over the past term there has been a good focus on expecting pupils to correct their spellings and not repeat their mistakes.
- It is clear that mostly pupils are being suitably challenged and being moved on to harder work as soon as it becomes evident that they can do the work they have been set, but occasionally this is less noticeable.
- Positive qualities of teaching are the ways that teachers try to identify in each lesson how what pupils are learning applies to their learning in other lessons and to their own lives. In mathematics, for instance, pupils use transport timetables incorporating local stops and in topic work they learn about the history and significance of their own town and culture.
- Reading is well taught. Dedicated time is spent each day in which pupils read either silently from books of their own choice or read set texts in groups while discussing with each other and staff what they are learning from their reading. The initiative to get boys to read with 'heroes' is hugely innovative and effective.
- Teachers make sure that all pupils share equal opportunities to learn by varying work carefully to meet different needs. They are also highly effective in promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils, not only by teaching them but by setting them an exemplary example.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. There is occasional misbehaviour and there have been a few more serious incidents, all of which have been dealt with properly. Pupils report that most pupils behave well most of the time and that other people misbehaving does not worry them unduly or stop them from enjoying their lessons. A very few parents are more critical, usually about isolated incidents.
- Pupils respect each other, their staff and visitors. They also respect the buildings and grounds and were clearly excited about the new playground markings that were completed during the inspection. These are yet another addition to the efforts that the school is making to make this a vibrant and enjoyable place for children to attend. There is harmony at playtimes and lunchtimes are a civilised pleasure.
- Low level disruptive behaviour is dealt with effectively by school leaders and teachers. Staff apply the school behaviour policy fairly and consistently. Pupils are fully aware of the high expectations set. However, the school does not always communicate the impact of its behaviour policy and practice sufficiently well to all parents.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. A lot of work is done to make pupils aware of risks. Good displays in communal areas show the work that pupils are doing to show they understand how to keep safe when using computers and phones. An impressive display shows that pupils are taught with an openness that is refreshing.

The leadership and management are good

- Credit for the transformation of this school has to go to its leadership, management and governance. The headteacher deserves special mention for her single mindedness to promote

improvement. Staff and pupils are already on board. A very small minority of parents remain critical and expressed concerns about how effectively the school leadership responds to their concerns.

- Leaders and managers fully recognise that the success of the school relies on the effectiveness of teaching. To this end, there has been a relentless drive to improve it. With good support from the local authority and with the drive and inspiration of the headteacher all aspects of teaching are getting better.
- What is more, this improvement is gathering pace because the team currently responsible for teaching pupils, including long-term temporary staff, is benefiting from good training opportunities and support. Middle leaders contribute well to the improvements in the quality of teaching by checking on aspects of the subjects they lead.
- Leaders, managers and governors feel they do everything possible to keep parents 'in the loop' about how their children are getting on but should not stop trying to do more to ease parents' concerns and welcome them into school to see what their children are doing.
- Further improvements in teaching are being interrupted by some staff absence which affects the continuity of pupils' learning.
- Since the last inspection, the local authority has given the school considerable support. This has been greatly appreciated by leaders, managers and governors. A good working arrangement between the school and the local authority has ensured that what has been useful has been built upon and what has not been useful has been discarded.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The headteacher appreciates that governors are 'always there'. Through training, governors are becoming more effective as they learn about the responsibilities of governance. At the moment, they rely heavily on the headteacher to tell them about the progress pupils are making, but they recognise this as a weakness and are getting increasingly involved in visiting the school and joining in with activities. For example, a governor accompanied Year 4 pupils on their residential trip during the inspection. They have had support from the local authority aimed at helping them to understand data about pupils' attainment and progress. Governors keep a close check on the headteacher's performance and set her realistic targets for improvement. They also play a significant role in making sure that pupils are properly safeguarded. Governors have a suitable understanding about how effectively extra funding is having an impact on pupils eligible for the pupil premium and promoting greater participation in sport.

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	112274
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	442381

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	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	126
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nicola Scholey
Headteacher	Hilda Beggs
Date of previous school inspection	27 November 2012
Telephone number	01900 812299
Email address	admin@maryport-jun.cumbria.sch.uk

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