

Arlecdon Primary School

Arlecdon Road, Arlecdon, Frizington, CA26 3XA

Inspection dates

4–5 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	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		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Due to a legacy of ineffective teaching in the past pupils' attainment in reading is inconsistent. Attainment in reading is weakest in current Years 3 and 5. At the end of Key Stage 2 attainment in reading at the higher Level 5 has been in decline for the past three years.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to read a range of fiction and non-fiction texts. Consequently, their skills in understanding these texts are under developed.
- Too many pupils do not read for pleasure and so widen their horizons and develop a love of literature.
- The quality of marking and, as a consequence, its impact on pupils' learning is inconsistent.
- Senior leaders' analyses of pupils' performance is not sharp enough as it does not measure the progress individual pupils have made from their respective starting points.
- The improvement targets in the school development plan are not in an order of priority, so it is not clear how their implementation can be most effectively managed.

The school has the following strengths

- Improvements in outcomes at Key Stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Improvements in outcomes at Key Stage 2 in writing and mathematics.
- The behaviour of pupils, who are invariably well mannered and polite, which contributes to an effective learning atmosphere.
- The school's effective work to keep pupils safe and free from harm.
- The visionary leadership of the executive headteacher and the care, commitment and hard work of the staff who, together, are effecting inexorable and positive improvements in the quality of teaching across the school.
- The governing body are a knowledgeable and well-informed group of individuals, who are supportive of the work of the executive headteacher and her staff; holding them rigorously to account for the quality of teaching and the standards achieved by pupils.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed five part-lessons taught by four teachers. Four of these lessons were jointly observed with the headteacher. He also made short visits to other lessons and observed one assembly. These observations enabled him to see all the class teachers teaching.
- Separate meetings were held with the headteacher, the senior teacher and two members of the governing body. The inspector also met with a representative of the local authority, all the class teachers, groups of pupils of differing ages and a group of parents. He had telephone conversations with a member of the executive governing body and the local leader of education who is working with the executive headteacher, supporting her work to improve the school.
- The inspector heard a number of children read. This allowed him to assess how fluent they were as readers and also determine their understanding of what they had read.
- The executive headteacher joined the inspector to scrutinise pupils' work. The inspector analysed the school's development plan and leaders and managers evaluation of how well the school is doing. He also examined information related to the performance management of teachers, data relating to pupils' progress in a range of subjects and the school's attendance and behaviour records.
- The inspector also took account of the opinions expressed by 20 parents in response to a questionnaire issued by the school. However, he was unable to take into account parents' views as expressed on Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, as there have been too few responses to it over the last year.

Inspection team

Charles Lowry, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005 (as amended), Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.'

Information about this school

- Arlecdon is much smaller than the average-sized primary school and is located about seven miles due east of Whitehaven town centre.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and who are supported through school action is below average.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and who are supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is smaller than the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding the school receives to support those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or who are being looked after by the local authority.
- All pupils are of White British heritage.
- The school has four mixed-age classes. They are: Nursery and Reception; Years 1 and 2; Years 3 and 4; and Years 5 and 6.
- Since the previous inspection there have been significant changes in staffing. Four of the five current teachers, including the executive headteacher are relatively recent appointments.
- The governors have agreed a formal partnership with Thornhill Primary School so that the headteacher of Thornhill is now the executive headteacher of both schools.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which is the minimum expectation for students' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to improve the quality of the teaching of reading, particularly in Years 3 and 5, to overcome the legacy of weak teaching in the past and raise attainment, particularly of the more able pupils by:
 - maximising the opportunities for pupils to read a range of fiction and non-fiction texts and then carefully checking their understanding of what they have read
 - encouraging pupils to read for pleasure in order to fuel a passion for the written word and fire their imaginations
 - making sure that all marking in the school is of high quality and brought up to the standard of the best. With teachers' comments describing what pupils have done well and what pupils must do to improve their work; then making sure that pupils act on this advice.
- Sharpen the school's systems for evaluating how well it is doing by:
 - making sure that analyses of pupils' performance measures their progress from their individual starting points
 - ensuring that the targets in the school development plan are in a clear order of priority. So there is no doubt which are the most important and which will have the greatest impact on pupils' outcomes.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- At the end of Key Stage 2 attainment in reading has declined at Level 5 and above for the last three years. The school's internal data also show that attainment and progress in reading are inconsistent across the school with pupils in current Year 3 and Year 5 having made slower progress in reading than their peers in other year groups.
- Improvements in the quality of teaching have led to improvements in attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 in writing and mathematics, reversing the weaker performance in both subjects in 2013. Concerns about pupils' attainment and progress in writing raised at the previous inspection are being effectively addressed.
- Children arriving at Arlecdon in the Early Years and Foundation Stage show levels of development which are typical for their age. As a result of effective teaching in the Nursery and Reception Year the children make good progress and are well prepared to start Key Stage 1.
- As a result of consistently good teaching the substantial decline in attainment at Key Stage 1 in 2013 in reading, writing and mathematics has been reversed. With the school's data showing that current attainment at Level 2 and Level 3 in each subject is now above 2013 national averages.
- The attainment and progress of the small numbers of pupils eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority is closely monitored by their teachers. The school's data are showing that as a result of this degree of scrutiny and activities that meet their needs there is no appreciable difference between the achievement of those pupils supported by the pupil premium and their peers either at the end of Key Stage 1 or Key Stage 2.
- The small numbers of pupils with special needs are well supported and, as a result, make progress in line with that of their peers in the school.
- Those parents who expressed an opinion said that they felt their children were now achieving well and that their children's progress had accelerated since the previous inspection.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Weaker teaching in the past has led to progress in reading being inconsistent across the school. The progress in reading of the more able pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 and pupils currently in Year 3 and Year 5 is below expectations.
- Although pupils are fluent readers and are able to use their phonic skills (the sounds that letters and groups of letters make) to read unfamiliar words, some pupils, particularly those in Year 3 and Year 5, often display weak comprehension skills. As a result their written responses to questions, which check their understanding of what they have read, whether this is fiction or non-fiction, lack depth. Teachers recognise these gaps in pupils' reading skills and are addressing them. However, the rate of improvement, particularly for pupils in Year 3 and Year 5, is from low starting points and as result remains below expectations.
- Too many pupils do not read for pleasure or read when they are not in school. Therefore opportunities are missed for them to hone their reading skills, increase their knowledge of genres of literature and have their imaginations stimulated by skilled writing.
- Teachers mark pupils work regularly and invariably provide positive and supportive comments, with teachers describing what pupils have done well and pointing out how their work could be made even better. However, pupils do not always act on their teachers' advice and, as a result, opportunities for pupils to learn from their errors are missed.
- Senior leaders' determination to improve the quality of teaching allied to wisely targeted staff training and rigorous monitoring of classroom practice has led to improvements in pupils' progress. This has reversed the decline in results in 2013 at Key Stage 1 and mathematics and writing at Key Stage 2. However, senior leaders are aware that further work needs to be done to improve attainment and progress in reading. Pupils' reading skills have not been sufficiently

developed as a result of the legacy of weak teaching in the past.

- Teachers' expectations of their pupils are high and, as a result, they learn well.
- Teachers plan lessons well, taking account of pupils' current levels of attainment when designing activities to meet pupils' needs and enabling them to make good progress. This was illustrated in one very effective mathematics lesson. The teacher had set the pupils the task of finding the combinations to open three padlocks using a series of cryptic clues. In order to solve the problem the pupils had to decide which mathematical operation they had to use to solve each clue and so find the numbers in the combination. The teacher had carefully tailored the activity so that each group had a different set of clues but the resulting combination was the same for everyone. This ensured that all the pupils were suitably challenged and included. There was a palpable energy for learning in the classroom as pupils rose to the challenge of finding the solution to the problem and competed with each other to see who could find the answer the quickest.
- Teaching assistants provide effective support for those pupils with special needs; as a result these pupils make good progress.
- Those parents who responded to the school's questionnaire or who spoke to the inspector said that their child is well taught and making good progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Relationships between teachers and pupils, and pupils and their peers are positive and strong.
- Pupils work hard, display a zest for learning and tackle the challenges they are set by their teachers with gusto.
- Pupils play well together and the presence of pupil 'play leaders' at play times and lunchtimes means that no child need feel left out.
- Pupils are invariably cooperative, polite and well mannered. School uniform standards are high and the litter and graffiti-free school site provides compelling evidence of the respect that pupils have for their school and its surroundings.
- Pupils' clear sense of fair play, their understanding of right and wrong, their knowledge of difference and their eager involvement in a variety of activities both during the school day and after it ends contribute well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Teachers manage behaviour well. The policy for rewards and sanctions is well understood by the pupils and implemented consistently by their teachers. This contributes to a calm and orderly atmosphere around the school, with little loss of learning time.
- Senior leaders monitor behaviour well and take appropriate and effective action should any pupil's behaviour fall below the school's high expectations.
- Parents spoken to by the inspector and respondents to the school's parents' questionnaire all agreed that behaviour in school is good and has improved since the previous inspection.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Those parents, carers and pupils who expressed an opinion said the school is a safe place where children are well looked after by the staff. Pupils are confident that should they have any concerns these will be dealt with effectively. As a result they enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in their above-average attendance.
- Pupils spoken to by the inspector are knowledgeable about how to keep themselves safe in a number of situations. They have been taught about road safety, water safety, fire safety and how to keep safe when using the internet. A visiting police officer has also raised their awareness about keeping themselves from harm should someone act inappropriately towards them.
- Pupils are knowledgeable about the different forms that bullying can take. When asked they were able to describe how the internet and mobile phones can be used to intimidate and upset people. Work covered in assemblies and in lessons has alerted them to the impact that racism, homophobia and other prejudiced behaviour can have on others.

- Pupils say that incidents of bullying have declined. This is supported by the school's behaviour log. This shows that the few incidents of bullying that have occurred, since the appointment of the executive headteacher, have been thoroughly investigated and effectively dealt with.

The leadership and management are good

- The passionate and hardworking executive headteacher has united the staff behind her vision for improving the school. Staff have grasped the opportunities afforded by new ways of working and, as a result, standards across the school are rising. However, teachers are having to work hard to overcome the legacy of weak teaching in the past. This is certainly the case in relation to the teaching of reading.
- The executive headteacher, supported by the governing body and with the help of the local authority has taken effective and robust action to eradicate inadequate practice in the school. As a result teaching now is at least consistently good and pupils' progress accelerating.
- Senior leaders keep a close eye on how well pupils are progressing. They collect data on pupils' performance every half-term and use this information to determine how well pupils are achieving. This allows them to identify those pupils who are not doing as well as they should be and then agree with their teachers what extra help these pupils will need to help them get back on track. However, senior leaders are aware that this data is not as sharp as it could be as it does not measure how much progress each pupil has made from their starting points.
- Senior leadership have an accurate understanding of the school's performance and this informs the targets in the school development plan. However, these targets are not in an order of priority so it is not clear which are the most important. Consequently, the demands made on the executive headteacher and her colleagues in addressing a range of improvement priorities, all at the same time, are high.
- The work of teachers is now closely monitored by the executive headteacher. Aply supported by the local leader of education and local authority adviser she has ensured that her judgements on the quality of teaching are reliable. As a result she is confidently identifying teachers' strengths and areas for development in relation to their classroom practice. This has led to substantial improvements in the quality of teaching and learning across the school and, as a consequence, improved pupils' progress, particularly in mathematics and writing. Although with writing this is from a lower base.
- Systems for managing the performance of teachers and classroom support staff are now in place. This is enabling senior leaders to hold these colleagues to account for the quality of their work and its impact on pupils. The performance of the executive headteacher is being managed by the executive governing body. This is a sub-group of governors from the governing bodies of both schools in the Arlecdon-Thornhill partnership. There is compelling evidence that the executive headteacher is currently making consistently good progress against her performance targets. However, as most teaching staff are relatively new to the school performance management has yet to be used to determine their salary progression.
- Teachers spoken to by the inspector value the links that have been made with a local successful primary school. They have had the opportunity to learn about effective classroom practice by working alongside outstanding practitioners and then apply these techniques, effectively, in their own classrooms.
- The school's drive to promote equal opportunity and tackle discrimination is increasingly effective. The achievement of all groups of pupils is improving and the staff are working hard to overcome past weaknesses in the teaching of reading.
- The school uses the additional funding it receives through the pupil premium, effectively, to meet the needs of targeted pupils. Additional one to one teaching and the provision of before- and after-school care has enabled these pupils to make progress in line with their peers.
- The additional funding the school receives through the sports premium has been used competently by senior leaders to fund a number of initiatives. These include the purchase of play and sports apparatus to replace outdated and broken equipment, meeting the fees for sports coaches and funding transport to sporting events. Using the funding in this way has enabled the

school to actively promote healthy lifestyles and encouraged a number of pupils to try a new sport such as archery. In addition, the physical education coordinator has been given the opportunity to increase her knowledge and expertise and so widen the range of sports activities available to pupils.

- The local authority has provided effective support on the school's journey of improvement. The local authority adviser has continued to monitor the work of the school since the previous inspection and provide senior leaders and governors with an objective view of the progress the school is making against each of the priorities in the school development plan. This has enabled them to gauge the pace of change and maintain it. The local authority has also worked with governors to secure effective partnership working with two successful local primary schools. One of these partnerships, namely the one with Thornhill Primary School laid the foundations for the successful senior leadership model that is currently in place for both schools.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body has a detailed understanding of the school's strengths and areas for further improvement. Their regular half-termly meetings enable them to keep a close check on the work of the school and hold senior leaders robustly to account for the progress the school is making against each of the areas for improvement in the school development plan. Governors have a good understanding of the improvements in teaching that have been made since the previous inspection and the impact that improvements in classroom practice are having on standards of achievement. The executive governing body, comprising of a group of governors from both schools in the Arlecdon-Thornhill partnership, are overseeing the work of the executive headteacher and managing her performance. This is enabling them to hold the executive headteacher to account for the success of both schools and monitor the impact of the joint senior leadership arrangements. Arrangements for managing the performance of teachers are in place and have been effective in securing improvements in the quality of teaching. Governors have recently agreed a policy for the performance management of classroom support staff. This is enabling support staff to recognise their strengths and identify their professional development needs in order to further increase their effectiveness in the classroom. In order to advance their skills, governors have undertaken a programme of training led by the local authority governor development officer. This has enabled them to increase their effectiveness in long-term strategic planning and confidently fulfil their statutory obligations.
- The governing body has ensured that statutory requirements for safeguarding are being met.

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	112151
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	441688

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	77
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ged Toman
Executive Headteacher	Wendy Figes
Date of previous school inspection	27 February 2013
Telephone number	01946 861409
Fax number	01946 861409
Email address	head@arlecdon.cumbria.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2014

