

Borrowdale CofE Primary School

Stonethwaite, Keswick, Cumbria, CA12 5XG

Inspection dates 17 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Children get off to a flying start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, which prepares them well for learning in Key Stage 1.
- In the last two years, pupils have achieved well above average standards in reading by the end of Year 2. Above average standards have been reached in writing and mathematics.
- By the time they leave school, most pupils usually reach above the national norm in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils make good and some better progress throughout their time at school. Pupils with special educational needs and those who are disabled progress at least as well as their peers.
- The quality of teaching is good, and at times outstanding, throughout the school. Activities are well-planned and excite and inspire pupils.
- Behaviour is outstanding. From an early age, pupils develop a strong desire to learn and find out things for themselves. They spontaneously help others in lessons and around school.
- The innovative curriculum provides an extensive range of stimulating experiences within and beyond school which pupils clearly enjoy. They experience an extensive range of sporting activities which encourages healthy lifestyles and which many pupils pursue in their own time.
- The school is extremely well led by the inventive headteacher. All staff share his vision of bringing out the best in pupils' personal development and academic achievement.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exceptional.
- All staff, including the governing body, work very well as a team. Their successful actions have a positive impact on improving the quality of teaching and pupils' achievements. This is an improving school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils do not always progress as rapidly in writing as they do in reading and mathematics. Some pupils' written work contains errors in spelling and grammar.
- Pupils do not always have enough time to respond to teachers' marking and learn from their errors.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in seven lessons. 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; the headteacher; governors; 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, its development plans, records of pupils' standards and progress, documents relating to attendance and behaviour, and pupils' work in their books.
- There were 18 parental responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) which the inspectors took into account alongside the responses to the school's own parental survey. Three letters from parents and two responses to the inspection questionnaire for staff were taken into account.

Inspection team

Naomi Taylor, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

John Ellwood

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Borrowdale is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium is much lower than that found nationally. (This is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.)
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs supported at school action is similar to that found nationally.
- The proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is higher than the national average.
- Most pupils are White British.
- Pupils are taught in mixed-age classes.
- There is a growing number of pupils joining the school other than at the usual times.
- A new headteacher was appointed in January 2012. An additional teacher has also been appointed to the school since the previous inspection.
- The school has recently been nominated as a School of Excellence for the Global Learning Programme.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching further in order to continue to raise pupils' attainment and achievement, particularly in writing, by:
 - embedding the school's focus on spelling, punctuation and grammar and encouraging pupils to check the accuracy of their written work across all subjects
 - ensuring pupils have enough time to respond to teachers' marking and learn from their mistakes.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The dedicated staff team works closely with parents to make sure that children settle extremely well into school life. Most children start school with skills and knowledge typical for their age, although their skills are sometimes lower than this, especially in personal development and communication.
- In the 2013 Year 1 reading screening check, all pupils achieved the expected level or higher. This is because teachers and teaching assistants are highly skilled in the teaching of phonics (matching letters to the sounds that they make). Those pupils who struggle to read are given one-to-one support leading, in most cases, to rapid improvements.
- Since the previous inspection, standards reached by the end of Year 2 have risen rapidly. Published results from teacher assessments in 2012 and 2013 show that by the end of Year 2 standards in reading are well above the national average. In writing and mathematics standards are higher than average although no pupils reached the higher level in writing in 2013. Pupils' progress in these subjects from their previous starting points is good and for some outstanding.
- Published results for pupils leaving school in 2012 and 2013 are to be viewed with caution as the very small number of pupils skews data. By the time pupils leave school they usually reach higher than average standards, although this varies depending on the nature of the cohort and the length of time that they have been at this school. When pupils join the school during Key Stages 1 and 2 they usually do so at standards lower than those expected for their age. Although they make good progress this sometimes affects the overall attainment for particular cohorts.
- Current data and pupils' work show that the current Year 6 pupils are on track to reach above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. This demonstrates good and for some, outstanding progress, from their starting points. Throughout almost every year group there is evidence that most pupils are making at least good progress in writing and for many better in reading and mathematics.
- Progress in writing has not been consistently as rapid as in other subjects. For example, no pupils reached the higher levels at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 in 2013. The school has recognised this and introduced strategies to improve spelling, punctuation and grammar across the school. As a result, progress in writing is accelerating.
- The larger than average proportion of pupils who have special educational needs make good progress, and some do better because their different needs are quickly identified. Excellent support from teachers, teaching assistants and external agencies helps each of them to make good progress in reaching their challenging targets.
- The school provides very good support for the very few pupils who are eligible for support by the pupil premium funding so that they make equally good or better progress as their peers in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The most able pupils are challenged to aim high. A small number are currently working at levels higher than is typical for their age in reading and mathematics. This demonstrates the school's commitment to equal opportunities.

The quality of teaching is good

- Good or better teaching is the norm at this school. This has ensured that, following a dip in the progress of pupils after the previous inspection, pupils' progress has improved and is consistently good, and for some outstanding, across almost all year groups.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage start the day eager to learn because they find activities so interesting and engaging. Throughout the school, whole-school projects are used to allow pupils to use and apply their literacy and numeracy skills, and the activities that are provided ignite pupils' enthusiasm for learning.

- This was seen first-hand as the Key Stage 2 pupils were preparing for the school's ambitious performance of '*A Midsummer Night's Dream*'. Several pupils worked diligently with a professional director and a parent who had adapted the script. They acted out their lines and made pertinent suggestions on improving their performance. Others worked on costume design, scenery, music and advertising and, by the end of the session, at least good and some outstanding progress was made in developing a wide range of literacy skills.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, detailed learning logs inform parents of how they can support learning at home with useful ideas, activities and websites. Many parents successfully use these to accelerate pupils' progress. Homework for Key Stage 2 pupils is well planned to consolidate pupils' learning.
- A whole school approach to teaching mathematics is in place and opportunities to make the learning relevant and useful to pupils brings learning to life. When Years 5 and 6 considered the question 'How big is a million?' tasks were well planned to meet the range of ages and abilities of the pupils. One group used a map of the world to consider distances and another went outdoors to measure the length of the grounds. Good progress was made by all pupils.
- Pupils' work is marked regularly and there is usually good quality written advice given to pupils on how to improve their work. However, pupils do not always respond to teachers' marking and comments in books so that they can learn from their mistakes. Pupils are not always given enough time to check their work for errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Effective teamwork by teachers, skilled teaching assistants and volunteers ensures a high level of support for all groups of pupils.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Staff, pupils and parents share this view and school records show that this is typical. Several parents wrote to the inspectors to say what an 'inspiring place' the school is. Some parents who moved their children here from other schools wish they had done it sooner.
- Pupils are superbly polite and show respect for each other and the adults around them. They value their learning, and this is reflected in the stunning presentation of their work. Pupils have an incredible sense of fairness and really appreciate that, 'Teachers treat everyone the same.'
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- Pupils say they feel very safe in school because adults care for them well and children look after each other. Pupils can explain different forms of bullying and the difference between bullying and falling out. Pupils agree that bullying is 'just not an issue' at their school.
- Borrowdale provides a range of opportunities for pupils to develop a sense of responsibility. Pupils are keen to contribute to improving the school and village community and periodically there is a whole school council, which involves all pupils and staff in deciding on how they can make positive changes.
- When it is Harvest Festival, pupils invite the elderly into school for a meal, which is prepared by the pupils using food which they have grown in the school garden.
- All parents who responded on Parent View strongly agree that the school keeps their children safe.
- The primary school sport funding is used to broaden sporting opportunities for pupils while developing the expertise of staff using specialist coaches. This has, for example, led to ghyll scrambling, multi skills and dance being offered to pupils. A week after the Tour of Britain, pupils visited the Velodrome and indoor cycling track in Manchester, resulting in several children taking up cycling. More pupils are now taking part in a wider range of sporting activities to help them stay healthy and promote well-being.
- Despite several pupils having to travel long distances to this school, they are punctual. The school's attendance data are adversely affected by a very small minority, but the vast majority of pupils attend regularly because they greatly enjoy school and are keen to do well.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher has a very clear vision of how successful this school can be and this is shared by all staff and governors. One parent praised the headteacher and staff for their 'incredible commitment and enthusiasm'.
- The headteacher has introduced a very precise tracking system to pinpoint the progress being made by pupils. When there is evidence of pupils' progress being slower than expected, swift action is taken to support them. The quality of teaching has been raised because of accurate and robust checks on the performance of individual teachers and pupils' learning. There has been high quality training for staff when needed.
- Staff work exceptionally well in partnership with external agencies and other schools to meet the needs of pupils whose current circumstances make them vulnerable.
- The local authority supported the headteacher well when he first took on the role but this has reduced as new policies and procedures have become established and evidence of an improving school became apparent.
- All teachers work together to plan innovative and inspiring projects and topics. The work in Key Stage 1 books illustrates how the whole school project on 'Space' captured the imaginations of the younger pupils. Parents referred to how well the 'teachers make learning interesting and make superb use of the wonderful landscape around them by taking learning outside the classroom'.
- There is a vast range of visits and visitors to the school which contribute extremely well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils have a high level of awareness of global issues and they contribute to taking responsibility for the well being of the environment.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors bring with them a wide range of skills. Those who spoke to the inspectors had an extremely accurate view of the strengths of the school and are clear about actions in place to ensure ongoing improvements. New initiatives are closely monitored by governors and they have a good understanding of data showing pupils' achievement and how this compares with other schools. This enables them to challenge the headteacher effectively. They check the progress of the pupils supported by pupil premium funding to make sure that spending has a good impact on improving their achievement. The finance committee and headteacher ensure good value for money in all that the school does, including the use of the primary sports funding. Governors have an accurate overview of the quality of teaching and how it is now directly linked to the salary structure of staff. They undertake statutory duties, making sure safeguarding meets requirements so that pupils and staff are extremely safe.

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	112333
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	439564

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	46
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gary MacRae
Headteacher	Ralf Smits
Date of previous school inspection	4 June 2009
Telephone number	01768 777686
Email address	adminborrowdale@keswick.cumbria.sch.uk

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