

St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School

Princes Road, Windermere, Cumbria, LA23 2DD

Inspection dates 10–11 September 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Governors work closely with the recently appointed headteacher and, along with the staff, all make an effective team committed to improving teaching and ensuring that pupils reach the highest standards possible.
- Governors have a good knowledge and understanding of how well the school is doing. They are fully involved in the school's activities and development.
- The rich curriculum provides pupils with a wide range of learning activities, including visits that greatly broaden pupils' experiences and promote good progress and personal development.
- Pupils are respectful of and considerate to each other. They enjoy school and feel safe and are cared for well.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. They show good attitudes to learning and have opportunities to take on responsibilities.
- Parents are extremely supportive and are very happy with all the school does to support and help their children.
- Pupils of all abilities, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those who are learning to speak English as an additional language make good progress.
- The provision in early years prepares children well for their future learning in school. As a result, pupils are happy, keen to learn and get on well with each other.
- Teaching is consistently good. Teachers use questioning well to challenge pupils' thinking and pupils are keen to respond.
- The relationship between pupils and staff are strong and this helps to create mutual respect and is a strength of the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In mathematics, teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not always high enough nor does marking always encourage pupils to think about what they need to learn next in their learning.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop their mathematical skills in a wide range of subjects.
- The school's system for checking pupils' progress is not rigorous enough for all leaders to easily access.
- Pupils' attendance is average. The school does not work closely enough with parents to ensure that all pupils attend school regularly throughout the year.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed four teachers at work and visited eight lessons.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, staff, pupils, parents, governors and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector observed break time and talked regularly with pupils as they moved around school.
- The inspector scrutinised pupils' work and listened to pupils read.
- A wide range of the school's documentation was observed including systems for tracking pupils' progress, safeguarding arrangements, a record of the school's observations of teaching, and pupils' work in their books.
- The inspector took account of responses of the school's most recent questionnaire for parents alongside 19 responses from the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and letters from parents.
- The inspector analysed 11 questionnaires completed by staff.

Inspection team

Sue Sharkey, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School is considerably smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- A majority of pupils are of White British heritage. A minority of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and many of these pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is well above the national average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is below the national average. The pupil premium is additional government funding for those pupils who are known to be disadvantaged and those children that 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 in English and mathematics.
- The school has an above average proportion of pupils who enter and leave the school part way through their primary education.
- Pupils are taught in four mixed-age classes: Nursery and Reception Years with some Year 1 pupils; Year 1 with Year 2; Years 3 and 4; and Years 5 with Year 6. The number in each year group is sometimes less than three.
- The headteacher joined the school in September 2014.
- The school offers a breakfast club and after-school club managed by the governing body.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching to be consistently outstanding and raise achievement for all groups of pupils in mathematics by:
 - raising teachers' expectations even further of what pupils can achieve
 - making sure that the marking of pupils' work consistently helps pupils know what they have to learn next
 - ensuring that pupils have more opportunities to develop their mathematical skills through real-life problem solving activities across a range of different subjects.
- Strengthen leadership and management even further by developing the school's system for checking the progress of pupils so that all leaders can access it more easily.
- Improve pupils' attendance by working even more closely with parents to reinforce its importance.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The recently appointed highly enthusiastic headteacher is working closely and sensitively with a team of committed staff who are all united in their determination to continue to improve the school.
- The headteacher has quickly established a clear view of the school's strengths as well as development needs. He has the determination to steer school improvement successfully.
- Leaders, including those for English and mathematics, evaluate the school's work accurately, checking the performance of pupils regularly. However the school's system for recording this information is not clear enough to enable leaders to check rigorously enough.
- Leadership of the management of teaching is good. Monitoring the quality of teaching is carried out regularly in many different ways, including checking pupils' books, observing lessons and evaluating pupils' work. Teachers' pay is linked closely to performance management and targets are challenging.
- Staff who responded to the staff questionnaire agree that the school is well led and managed.
- The local authority has a good relationship with the school and has supported it well during the change of leadership, including working with the headteacher to check the quality of teaching.
- Staff training is closely linked to the school's priorities as well as teachers' performance. It has led to the introduction of a scheme to develop pupils' knowledge of letters and sounds. This has already had a positive impact on pupils' reading. Recent training has ensured that staff are well prepared for changes in the national curriculum, not only in mathematics but also other areas of the curriculum.
- The school's curriculum motivates pupils well and also ensures that their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, which contributes successfully to their personal well-being and good behaviour. Pupils enjoy learning a musical instrument and taking part in concerts for their parents. They have plenty of opportunities not only to explore their local area but also to travel further afield. Every two years, Years 5 and 6 pupils have the opportunity to take part in residential activities. This can take them to York to explore city life or to outdoor centres providing them with challenges and opportunities to develop their own skills. In carrying out a wide range of different activities in different situations pupils are developing a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe.
- The school has used its primary school sport funding to enable a coach to work alongside teachers during lessons to develop their expertise and pupils' skills. As a result, the number of pupils taking part in after-school sporting activities has increased.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are very supportive of the school and monitor its work well. They meet with teachers, talk with pupils and, for example, look at pupils' books with staff. The governing body manages the school's finances well and members are fully aware of the positive effects brought about by the pupil premium, as well as the additional primary school sports funding. They know how well the school is doing and how pupils' results compare with those of pupils in other schools nationally. They are very aware of the quality of teaching, ensure that teachers' salary awards are closely linked to the progress of pupils and have systems in place to monitor the performance of the headteacher. They make sure that requirements for safeguarding arrangements are met.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Parents agree. Pupils are polite and well behaved outdoors and around school. During lessons pupils focus well and work hard. This results in a calm and friendly learning environment where all play and work hard together.
- Pupils enjoy school. They say they enjoy their work in lessons as well as learning new things and playing football at lunchtime. Pupils are made to feel extremely welcome, safe and at home in school so they can become successful learners. They have positive attitudes to learning and are very appreciative of the help they receive from their teachers and other adults in the school.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel safe in school; they feel comfortable and know that adults are always watching carefully. Parents who responded to Parent View agree that their children are safe in school.
- Pupils say bullying is rare but if it does occur is dealt with quickly by adults in school. They understand about different kinds of bullying, such as name-calling and appreciate the way the school teaches them about safety.
- Attendance is average. Although the school works closely with parents, leaders acknowledge that there is

still more work to be done to improve pupils' attendance.

- Pupils rise to the challenge of taking on responsibilities. Older pupils volunteer to be a buddy and help younger pupils at break time. Others represent their year groups on the school council and some hold a position of office, such as secretary or Chairperson. The school council helps to organise fund-raising activities and has raised funds to improve activities at lunch time, as well as contributing to a range of international, national and local charities.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is consistently good across the school and parents agree. Relationships between teachers, teaching assistants and pupils are excellent. Pupils listen carefully to explanations and are usually keen to answer questions. When they work on their own, pupils know that they must always do their best.
- As in the rest of the school, classrooms are well organised so that pupils can move around easily and have easy access to equipment. This helps pupils to be well organised and ready for lessons and promotes independence and a positive climate for learning.
- Teachers' marking in English books is of good quality and pupils respond to useful prompts provided to help them improve their work. However, this is not the case in mathematics because teachers do not provide comments regularly to help pupils know what they have to learn next.
- Teachers plan lessons that engage and interest pupils. For example during a Years 5 and 6 lesson, the teacher linked the current class reading book to their work on adjectives. Pupils responded well to the teachers' questions and rose to the challenge when they had to provide suitable adjectives. The lesson continued with pupils using dictionaries and thesauruses for their writing activity.
- Teaching of reading, writing and mathematical skills is good. During a Years 1 and 2 mathematics lesson pupils were looking at two-dimensional shapes. The teacher checked pupils' knowledge of shapes before moving onto new ones. Good use of the interactive white board enthused pupils and challenged their thinking as the teacher showed the shapes 'bit by bit' until they recognised each shape. The lesson moved on to exploring symmetry and pupils enjoyed their work.
- Pupils have many opportunities to work practically in mathematics, but they seldom have the chance to extend the skills learnt in mathematics lessons through carrying out problem-solving activities in other subjects.
- Pupils frequently share their ideas with others. Pupils work successfully in pairs and groups and this helps their social and communication skills.
- Teaching assistants play a key role and are used well to support individuals and groups of pupils with particular needs. Support for disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and pupils whose first language is not English is good across the school. This is the reason why different groups of pupils make good progress.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils in different groups throughout Key Stages 1 and 2 make good progress from their starting points, including those whose first language is not English. For example, 100% of Year 6 pupils made the expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics in the 2013 national tests. Over the last year in other year groups in Key Stages 1 and 2, a high proportion of pupils made the expected progress with many making above the expected progress. All parents who responded to Parent View agreed that their children make good progress.
- The number in each year group can be very small. As a result, standards at the end of Year 6 can vary greatly from year to year. In the 2013 national tests, attainment in reading was above average, with the unvalidated national tests in 2014 indicating that this has been maintained. The recent national test results also indicate that standards in writing are above average and that mathematics has continued to improve, with 100% of pupils achieving Level 4, not only in reading and writing but also in mathematics. This ensures pupils are well prepared for their next stage in education.
- The most able pupils make good progress, particularly in reading. In the national tests in 2013 and the 2014 unvalidated tests, the proportion of pupils achieving Level 5 was above average. Improvements in writing have ensured that the proportion of pupils achieving Level 5 in this subject is also above average as it is in mathematics.
- There are occasions, however, when teachers' expectation of what pupils can achieve in mathematics is not always high enough as fewer pupils achieved Level 5 in mathematics than in reading or writing in the

2014 unvalidated national tests.

- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make progress as good as other pupils. They receive the support they need in order to succeed from teachers and other adults in the school, while their progress is carefully monitored to check how well they are doing.
- The proportion of pupils who enter and leave the school in different year groups is well above average. These pupils are often at a very early stage of learning English. Teachers take every opportunity to engage pupils in discussions throughout all lessons which helps them to make good progress and engage in learning.
- Regular teaching of phonics is helping to improve all pupils' reading and writing skills. Over the last two years, results in the Year 1 national phonics (matching letters to the sounds they make) screening check show that the proportion of pupils meeting the expected standards was higher than among pupils nationally.
- During a Years 1 and 2 phonics lesson, pupils enjoyed extending their vocabulary of words with an 'a' sound. As pupils listened carefully and concentrated well other letters were added so that pupils could sound and write new words which could then be included in sentences.
- Pupils enjoy reading both at home and at school and many have favourite authors. They read regularly and home-school reading diaries provide a clear communication tool for parents. Pupils are enthusiastic readers and their love of books is developed as they move through school. When they reach Year 6, pupils are confident and use a wide range of reading skills to bring stories to life. They use punctuation well, for example, speech marks to add expression to words and sentences.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to support disadvantaged pupils ensuring that they reach standards similar to other pupils. There are too few pupils in each year group to make a judgement on the attainment of pupils who are known to be disadvantaged compared to other pupils, but the progress they make in English and mathematics is good. This reflects well-targeted use of funding for these pupils as well as effective promotion of equal opportunities.
- Progress is also good for pupils speaking English as an additional language. This is because of the continual emphasis on speaking and listening in all classes. These pupils are well supported to enhance their skills in using English.

The early years provision

is good

- Children settle quickly into the early years provision because routines are well established. During the inspection, children had only been in school a few days but it was clear that they were happy and enjoyed playing with other children as well as taking part in a wide range of activities.
- Children start in the Nursery and Reception class with varying levels of individual skills but, overall, speaking and listening are usually well below what is typical for their age with a significant number of children at the very early stages of learning to speak English.
- The early years provision is well led and managed by a team who quickly get to know children and work closely with parents. As a result, children make progress that is at least typical for their age. Activities are well planned and good engagement between adults and children deepens children's learning and develops their skills especially those relating to communication and language. This ensures Reception children are well prepared to enter Year 1.
- Early reading is well taught in the Nursery and Reception class. Adults use different methods to successfully promote children's learning of sounds that letters make. Good learning is promoted both in the classroom and the outdoor area. For example, children thoroughly enjoyed listening to the teacher read 'The Snail and the Whale', following the pictures as the teacher constantly involved children in discussion. Once outdoors, children were involved in a wide range of activities linked to the story. One boy used a brush and water to make 's' shapes to help develop his early writing skills while other children dipped string into glue to mark out the shape of a snail in a picture.
- Opportunities to learn in the outdoor areas are well planned and adults engage with children well. There are many opportunities for children to explore alphabet letters, however, there are few opportunities to readily explore numbers to help develop their mathematical skills.
- Children's activities are well recorded in their learning journey book which is shared with parents, who are happy to support by adding, for example, photographs or children's drawings completed at home. This contributes well to the ongoing assessment of children's learning.

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	112344
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	448422

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	64
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Brendan Drury
Headteacher	Peter Harrison
Date of previous school inspection	7 July 2010
Telephone number	01539 48125
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