

# Netherton Infant School

Rydal Avenue, Maryport, Cumbria, CA15 7LT

**Inspection dates** 1–2 October 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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.

- Pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching continue to improve at Netherton Infant School. This is because of the excellent leadership of the headteacher, the good support provided by governors and the skilled teaching and first-rate care all staff give pupils.
- Leaders and managers are realistic in assessing the school's strengths and weakness and know what is needed to make it even better. Consequently, the school is well placed to improve further.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and attend regularly. They behave well and are kept very safe. Parents are fulsome in their praise of the school and particularly of the support and care it provides for all pupils.
- Work in pupils' books shows that they make good progress because they are taught well. Teachers are knowledgeable, manage their classes very effectively and provide varied and interesting tasks, so pupils enjoy learning.
- Children enter the Nursery with skills which are below those typical for their age. In the Early Years Foundation Stage they soon become more confident learners and most have reached standards much closer to the level of development expected by the time they leave the Reception class.
- Pupils' good progress continues through Key Stage 1. By the end of Year 2 they usually reach above average standards in reading and writing and average standards in mathematics.
- A rich curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. This, combined with their good grasp of basic skills, ensures that Netherton pupils are well equipped for both the next stage of their education and for their future lives in modern Britain.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' achievement in mathematics is not quite as good as it is in reading and writing.
- The school website is not easily accessible to parents and other users. It has not always been kept fully up to date.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons in a range of subjects, including mathematics and English, being taught to full classes and smaller groups of pupils of all ages. The headteacher and inspector made several joint visits to classrooms. The inspector heard pupils reading.
- Discussions were held with parents, pupils, staff, governors and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at pupils' books, progress data, safeguarding information and other documentation.  
Thirty responses to the on-line questionnaire, (Parent View), were considered, as well as those from the school's own parental surveys and from school staff.

## Inspection team

Ann Ashdown, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This infant school is much smaller 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 above average.
- A well below average proportion of pupils is from minority ethnic backgrounds, while a below 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 above average, while the proportion supported at school action plus and with a statement of special educational needs is well below average.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve achievement in mathematics by:
  - giving pupils more opportunities to use their mathematical skills to solve real-life problems
  - giving parents practical information sessions about how mathematics is taught, so they are better able to support their children's learning
  - giving teachers further training and more opportunities to observe outstanding teaching in mathematics in their own and in partner schools.
  
- Ensure that the school website is updated regularly and is easily accessible for parents and other users.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The very effective and determined leadership of the headteacher has been instrumental in moving the school forward and creating a happy, calm atmosphere in which good teaching and learning can flourish.
- School self-evaluation is accurate and the school has clear priorities for further improvement, such as raising achievement in mathematics. Teaching is carefully monitored and staff performance is well managed. Staff feel that their views matter and that they are very well supported by the headteacher. They are well trained, for example, in the teaching of phonics (the sounds letters make). The school now recognises that further training in teaching mathematics will help to develop their already good skills even further.
- Middle leaders, particularly the experienced Early Years Foundation Stage leader, monitor the work of their areas carefully and are bringing about further improvements.
- Pupils' progress is assessed accurately and tracked very carefully. The school has begun to explore new ways of assessing pupils' attainment, following the removal of National Curriculum levels.
- The school works closely with a cluster of partner schools. This has allowed staff, particularly the headteacher, to share their expertise and to help new leaders develop their skills. The benefits of this strong partnership have yet to be further utilised to provide staff with more opportunities to observe outstanding teaching in mathematics.
- All pupils are given good equal opportunities to succeed. Pupil premium funding is spent well to ensure disadvantaged pupils are given the same opportunities to achieve as well as their classmates.
- Primary sport funding has been used very effectively to provide high quality specialist sports coaching, more training for teachers and to give pupils opportunities to take part in competitions and try new sports. This promotes both their healthy lifestyle and improves their sporting ability.
- The school works closely with parents and has been very successful in involving them in information and teaching sessions to keep them informed about how literacy is taught. This success has yet to be built upon, by giving parents the same sort of information about mathematics so they are in an even better position to help their children learn.
- Safeguarding meets requirements. Staff are well trained and fully aware of child protection and risk assessment procedures.
- The local authority provides no direct support for the school, but keeps in touch with schools in the area by attending school cluster meetings.
- The school's website is not easy for parents and other users to access. It has now been updated and the school recognises the need to ensure that it is always kept fully up to date to keep all users fully informed about the school's good work.
- The curriculum is balanced, includes a good range of enrichment activities and promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very effectively. It allows pupils to develop good basic skills and also gives them, for example, opportunities to be creative, to sing and to develop their sporting talents. Pupils speak very enthusiastically about numerous visits to places as varied as Loweswater and the local fire station.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are extremely supportive of the school. The Chair of Governors provides valuable support for the headteacher, particularly on matters connected with the school premises and on managing staff. Each governor is linked to a particular class, so they are able to monitor the work of the school closely. They are kept very well informed by the headteacher and are knowledgeable about how well the school is doing, compared to other schools and the quality of teaching. They understand how staff are rewarded and how their performance is managed. Finances are carefully monitored and governors hold the school accountable, for example, for the way in which funds such as the pupil premium are spent. Governors have close links with the community where the school is very well regarded.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils are good****Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils play harmoniously in the school yard, are polite in the dining hall and attentive in assemblies. Older pupils show kindness and respect for staff and model good behaviour that younger children soon learn to copy.
- Records show that incidents of challenging behaviour, including racist or homophobic behaviour, are very rare. Pupils clearly understand the school's system of sanctions and rewards and respond to the high expectations of good behaviour that the school has. They know the difference between right and wrong and understand the need to look after others as well as themselves.
- Pupils attend school regularly and are punctual. Most are proud to wear their school uniform and arrive ready to learn.
- In lessons most pupils have good attitudes to learning and want to do well. A very few pupils lose concentration during longer tasks. They are keen to answer questions and make sure that work in their books is completed and well presented.
- Older pupils are happy to take on responsibility. They take care of younger children and enjoy acting as members of the school council. They enjoyed baking cakes for charity and organising an Easter egg hunt.
- Pupils' social and moral development is promoted well through lessons and meaningful assemblies. A typically thought-provoking assembly encouraged them to forgive and to give each other a second chance.

**Safety**

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils say how very safe they feel in school. Pupils clearly understand that the school site is secure and that any visitors will be wearing badges. They know that there are different types of bullying, but are confident that should this occur, school staff will soon sort it out.
- Parents agree that the school keeps their children very safe. They are also hugely appreciative of the good care and support their children are given. Many parents spoke warmly of how much their children enjoyed school, how welcome they felt in school and how approachable the headteacher and other staff were.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. They understand what to do if they see anything unpleasant when using a computer. They are aware of the possible dangers of, for example, fire, water, strangers and busy roads.

**The quality of teaching is good**

- Work in pupils' books shows that they make good progress over time as a result of the good teaching they receive. Teachers are knowledgeable and their clear explanations extend pupils' understanding and successfully develop their skills. Well-planned lessons, good questioning and well-managed classes all promote pupils' good achievement.
- Pupils enjoy learning because they are given tasks which are interesting and varied. Older children made good use of computers to draft their writing and used speech bubbles very effectively to develop their language skills as they described the different expressions on the face of an old man. Teachers use visitors well to encourage writing. For example, pupils received excellent stimulus for their writing from pictures taken in Sherwood Forest of their expert storyteller dressed as Robin Hood.
- Pupils usually learn at a good pace and work in literacy is sufficiently challenging to enable them to make rapid progress. In mathematics the pace of learning is sometimes slightly slower when work is less challenging and pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to use their skills to solve problems, such as those they will encounter in real life.
- Pupils' books are marked regularly and, particularly in literacy, they are given good pointers as to how to improve their work.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive good support in lessons from teachers and teaching assistants. The timely and sensitive help they are given allows them to take part in all activities and to understand work they may otherwise find too difficult.
- Pupils' cultural development is promoted successfully through the study of other religions and countries. A specially themed 'Indian' day and a visit to a Buddhist temple both helped pupils to understand cultures which differ from their own.

**The achievement of pupils is good**

- Work in pupils' books, that displayed on walls and the school's own detailed progress data all confirm the good progress that all groups of pupils make.
- From starting points which are below those typical for their age, pupils achieve well during their four years in school. By the end of Year 2, standards are often above average in reading and writing and a little lower in mathematics.
- Good teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) helps pupils to become confident readers quickly and a strong focus on literacy across the school ensures that they are equally capable writers. Pupils' progress in mathematics is slightly slower and the school has, rightly, prioritised this as an area for further improvement.
- The very small number of pupils who speak English as an additional language, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. Work is carefully matched to their needs and they are given appropriate extra help, if and when this is needed.
- Those disadvantaged pupils for whom the pupil premium provides support achieve at least as well and sometimes even better than their classmates. There are no gaps between their level of attainment and that of their classmates in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupil premium money is spent wisely on providing specialist extra tuition, educational visits and teaching resources.
- The most-able pupils achieve well. In teacher assessments in 2013, almost one third of pupils achieved the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics. These pupils are given even more challenging work and extra tuition to help them achieve the very best they are capable of.

**The early years provision is good**

- Children enter the Nursery with skills below those typical for their age, especially in speech and communication. The school's close links with parents help children to settle into school routines quickly and make good progress. After two years in the Early Years Foundation Stage they reach standards much closer to national averages in all areas of learning and are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Children enjoy choosing from the wide range of interesting learning activities that are provided for them, both indoors and outside. For example, they developed their fine motor skills successfully by using scissors and tongs, very accurately hammered golf tees into melons and carefully threaded beads to make necklaces.
- Knowledgeable and lively teaching and a stimulating curriculum, often based on children's interests, contribute to children's good achievement. Children were very enthusiastic about a recent visit to the park, where they had collected conkers, leaves and acorns as part of their topic about autumn. Other children made good progress in developing their language skills as they enthusiastically used large wooden blocks to build a 'café'.
- Children behave well and soon learn to share and take turns. They are kept very safe, learn basic hygiene and are encouraged to eat healthily.
- Good leadership of this stage ensures that children's progress is carefully monitored. Detailed tracking data show that all groups of children, including those who are disabled, those who have special educational needs and the more able make good progress. Staff and resources are deployed very well.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	112137
<b>Local authority</b>	Cumbria
<b>Inspection number</b>	448903

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	92
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Neil Humes
<b>Headteacher</b>	Lynn Millington
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15 March 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01900 812709
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