

# Grasmere CofE Primary School

Stock Lane, Grasmere, Cumbria, LA22 9SJ

**Inspection dates** 12–13 November 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- The headteacher provides a clear sense of direction for the school and her expertise is highly valued by staff and governors.
- This strong leadership has led to improvements in attendance and more recently to improvement in the quality of teaching and standards achieved by pupils by the end of Reception class, Year 2 and Year 6.
- The curriculum is planned well and provides pupils with rich, stimulating experiences.
- Governors are supportive and committed to the school and its community. They play an effective role in driving the school forward.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding, they show high levels of care and respect for one another and the adults around them.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They feel safe in school because they know that the adults care for them very well.
- The quality of teaching is good with aspects being outstanding. Teachers provide exciting learning experiences for pupils that help them to learn well.
- Achievement across school is at least good in reading, writing and mathematics. Achievement is outstanding for pupils who need additional support with their learning.
- Children in the early years make outstanding progress because of excellent teaching and activities that are very well planned to maintain children's enthusiasm for learning.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The leadership skills of staff, other than the senior leaders, are not sufficiently well developed. They are not always fully accountable for standards in their area of responsibility.
- The quality of teaching and pupil achievement is not yet outstanding because not all pupils, particularly the most able, always make the best progress to enable them to reach even higher levels.
- When marking work teachers do not always give pupils clear guidance on how they can improve, neither do teachers consistently check that pupils follow advice when it is given.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in all classes taught by teachers and in activities taken by teaching assistants. Two part-lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspector met with a group of pupils and observed and spoke to pupils during lessons and at lunchtime. She also listened to pupils reading.
- Meetings were held with staff, senior leaders and managers and members of the governing body and informal meetings with parents took place as they dropped their children off at school. A representative from the local authority spoke to the inspector on the telephone.
- A range of documents were considered by the inspector, including the school's analysis of how well it is doing, the school development plan, information about pupil progress, checks on the quality of teaching, minutes of governing body meetings, and records relating to attendance and safeguarding. The inspector also examined work in pupils' books.
- A summary of the results of a parental questionnaire recently distributed by the school, together with 34 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) were considered. The inspector also took account of 10 responses to a staff questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Louise Murphy, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This school is much smaller than most primary schools, though the number of pupils on roll has increased considerably since the previous inspection.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium (additional funding for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority) is well below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average.
- Most pupils are from a White British heritage and currently there are no pupils at the very early stages of learning to speak English as an additional language.
- The school provides part-time places for three and four year old children in the Nursery.
- The headteacher is a National Leader of Education and is currently the executive headteacher at Grayrigg C of E Primary School.
- Since the previous inspection there has been a substantial increase in the numbers of pupils starting the school at times other than the expected. Three new members of staff have been appointed and the school now uses the school house as a classroom and library.

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

- Improve teaching and increase pupils' progress even more by:
  - ensuring that work for all pupils, especially the most able, challenges them to reach even higher standards
  - providing good advice to pupils when marking work and then check that pupils are using the guidance to help improve their work.
- Improve the leadership and management roles of staff, other than the senior leaders, by reviewing their responsibilities and developing their skills so that they become more accountable for raising standards in their areas of responsibility.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher knows every pupil at the school very well and is highly ambitious for each one of them. She deservedly has the full confidence and support of staff and governors and demonstrates her expertise, skill and determination by continuing to lead school improvement. For example, by addressing the area for improvement identified at the previous inspection and improving attainment and achievement following the dip in standards in mathematics at the end of 2013.
- Teaching and learning are checked thoroughly and training provided to support the development of individual members of staff and also to fit with school priorities. As this is a small school all staff have some management responsibilities of subjects or different aspects of the school. While this is highly effective in the early years, it is not always as successful in other areas. Some leaders do not yet have the skills to ensure they are always fully accountable for raising standards in their areas of responsibility and as a result the headteacher shoulders much responsibility.
- Effective systems to track pupils' progress ensure pupils receive help if they start to fall behind. Any weaker aspects are resolved and the dip in mathematics in 2013 was promptly addressed. Care is taken to promote good achievement for all, including the very small numbers of pupils eligible for support through pupil premium. The funding for these pupils is spent well to meet their needs. This confirms the school's commitment to making sure that there is no discrimination and that all pupils have equal opportunities to succeed.
- Pupils really enjoy their learning; the curriculum provided is of good quality and takes account of pupils' needs and interests. There is a wide range of after school activities and visits and visitors to further enrich the subjects on offer. For example, older pupils have very recently returned from an exciting trip to London. They are inspired to improve their own line drawing skills after their visit to an art gallery.
- The school prepares pupils very well for life in modern British society. For example, excellent attention is given to promoting spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Older pupils regularly plan and deliver collective worship for younger pupils. All pupils have contributed toward compiling the 'school values' and are able to call upon these values to help them manage their own behaviour to an exceptionally high standard. Pupils learn to speak Spanish and visitors from other countries regularly come into school to share their experiences.
- The primary sports funding has been used well to increase opportunities for sport and physical development. Specialist coaches work with staff and older pupils who are now able to lead sporting activities. New equipment and a new sports field have been acquired so that pupils have the space and resources to continue to develop their skills.
- School leaders including governors make sure that staff and pupils are kept safe and statutory requirements including safeguarding are met.
- The local authority provides very light touch support for this good school.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governors are highly committed to and supportive of the school. They know the school well including the quality of teaching, because they receive detailed information from the headteacher, visit the school as often as possible and question what they do not understand. Data is analysed and comparisons made with the national test results. Governors know the requirements relating to the management of teachers' performance and make sure that salary increases are linked to how effective staff are. Recently there have been some changes to membership of the governing body. However, there are governors who are able to analyse pupil progress data and there are a range of training opportunities planned to ensure all governors are fully up to date.

### The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

#### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. This is because of the high quality relationships between all adults and pupils. Pupils have an incredibly positive attitude toward learning; they say that they really enjoy their school work because teachers make it exciting.
- Pupils are polite and very considerate toward each other both in class and around the school. Older pupils really appreciate the opportunities that they get to help younger friends. Class 3 read with Class 1 children every week and Class 4 pupils work with staff to check safety and happiness levels in the playground. What is more, the youngest children regularly show older pupils around the wooded area that they work in

each week. This encourages the younger pupils to take pride in all of the new and exciting things that they are doing and promotes an exemplary attitude toward learning from a very early age.

- Pupils are confident that their opinions count and make a difference at Grasmere school and they feel exceptionally proud of this. Pupils requested that more picnic benches be placed in the grounds and these are now in place. Pupils are currently planning a new 'secret garden' which will provide a place for peaceful reflection.

### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and all parents that responded to the on-line questionnaire agreed that their children are safe and well cared for.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of different types of bullying, including cyber bullying. Pupils who spoke with the inspector claimed that there was no bullying at Grasmere and school records confirm this.
- Health and safety is always high on the school agenda and is taught explicitly through one of the topic themes. This has enabled pupils to make an informed contribution toward developing the health and safety protocols for the school. For example, pupils have written the school and home internet safety policy. Their mature understanding of risk to themselves resulted in pupils requesting survival training. Some pupils are now equipped to construct shelters and identify poisonous berries. Next steps include learning how to swim in the open water as lakes are prevalent in the area.
- Since the previous inspection the rate of attendance has increased to above national levels. This reflects how much the pupils enjoy being at school and the excellent way in which the school works together with parents.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Work seen in pupils' books, displays around the school and the school's own information regarding pupils' progress confirms that teaching is good over time in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Staff respect that every pupil is unique and take care to make sure that individual learning and pastoral needs are very well met. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together which results in an excellent level of support especially for the least able pupils and those who are new to the school.
- Teachers use questions skilfully to assess pupils' learning throughout the lesson. Pupils discuss their ideas and learn from each other. Staff make sure that there is a good range of resources available to pupils so that they can help themselves and each other when they are a little unclear about what to do next.
- Teachers usually have high expectations of what they want pupils to achieve. However, the work set is not always at the correct level and especially for the most able pupils is not always as hard as it could be for them to make faster progress.
- Teachers mark work regularly, they praise pupils for work which is well done and sometimes provide good advice on how it could be improved still further. However, teachers do not always check that pupils do their corrections or follow advice when it is given so that pupils can always learn from their mistakes.
- Following a dip in standards in mathematics in 2013, staff rightly recognised that teaching in mathematics needed to improve. Training has had a positive impact on the quality of teaching which is now more effective. As a result, pupils' mathematical skills develop well as their knowledge and understanding of mathematical terms mature. For example, pupils in Class 3 showed a secure understanding of mathematical vocabulary associated with 3D shape. They were then able to use this knowledge to sort the shapes into different categories depending on similarities and differences.
- Reading and writing are taught effectively and staff provide a range of opportunities to practise these skills in other topics. For example, older pupils have to use their reading skills to undertake research to find businesses that will help develop their understanding of a current topic, they then write to establishments to request a visit. Last year some pupils visited a pottery and others a chocolate making shop to get firsthand experience of how materials can change their form. This really inspired pupils to produce some excellent writing and develop a good understanding of their science theme.

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children get off to an excellent start in the early years and since 2012 pupils have reached standards in reading, writing and mathematics that are slightly above average by the end of Year 2. Results from the

2014 end of Key Stage 1 tests show that attainment has improved even more this year with more pupils reaching the higher Level 3.

- Since 2012 attainment at the end of Year 6 has been variable and dipped considerably in mathematics in 2013. The influx of a high number of newcomers to the school in Key Stage 2 and the small size of the cohorts means that analysis of national data has limited purpose as one pupil can represent a high percentage of the total. However, close checking of individual progress from their starting points in this school shows good progress overall. The school now has focussed strategies in place to support pupils who are new to the school and overall attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is broadly average and the recent dip in mathematics has been eradicated.
- By the end of Key Stage 2 in 2014 all pupils made the progress expected of them in writing and mathematics and the majority made the progress expected of them in reading. Half of the pupils made better than expected progress in all three subjects. This demonstrates an improvement in achievement compared to 2013 particularly in mathematics, good progress overall and excellent progress for some pupils.
- In the Year 1 national phonics screening check (how well pupils match letters and the sounds that they make) pupils consistently do very well and in 2014 all pupils met the required standard. Pupils are encouraged to read regularly and older pupils who read to the inspector were all able to discuss enthusiastically their favourite authors and books. One pupil commented that she was very happy with the way she had been taught to read words confidently. She went on to explain that this meant that when reading in public she is able to concentrate on making her reading interesting for her audience.
- There are additional activities in place to support the most able pupils, for example, a reading club for talented readers. Moreover, older pupils likely to attain at the highest Level 6 in mathematics are regularly taught at the local high school. Overall the most able pupils make good progress although at times tasks are not always hard enough to help them make faster progress.
- Lower ability pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make excellent progress. This is because their additional learning needs are identified early and their needs are fully met by high quality one-to-one and small group sessions delivered by skilled teaching assistants.
- There are very few disadvantaged pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding at the school. As a result it is not possible to comment on any gaps in their performance relative to other pupils in their class or similar pupils nationally.

### The early years provision

**is outstanding**

- Children thrive in the early years; they settle quickly and are soon happy, secure and ready to learn. Over the last three years children have made rapid progress from their individual starting points which vary widely year on year, showing consistently outstanding achievement. By the end of their reception year the majority of children reach a good level of development and are well prepared for the work that they will meet in Year 1.
- As a result of outstanding leadership, excellent teaching and thoughtfully planned activities, children get really involved in their learning. For example, the class teacher unexpectedly received a telephone call from the witch that the class had been reading about. The children were completely awe struck as they listened with open mouths to what the witch wanted from them. One child excitedly ran off to find a pen and paper to write down the message, so that everyone could remember what the witch required. Children then went off to explore their surroundings, they searched quickly and thoroughly to find all of the items the witch needed from them.
- The home visits made by staff prior to children starting Nursery ensure that the strong and effective staff team get to know children and their parents well. Early assessment identifies the needs of the children and staff plan for their particular needs and interests. This helps children, including the most able and those with additional needs, make the best possible start to their learning. Adults skilfully question children to encourage them to think carefully and share their ideas. This also helps staff to assess what each child needs to do next to move forward with their learning.
- Parents are invited to a range of well-attended events that help them to support their children's learning, including workshops on how to teach reading and number. Parents receive a pack that provides information on how to help develop their child's learning. The packs are unique and designed to meet the different learning needs of each child.
- Children's well-being and safety are given high priority, children are very well cared for and excellent behaviour is encouraged at all times. The very well resourced indoor and outdoor classrooms, support children's learning and progress very effectively.

## 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>	112319
<b>Local authority</b>	Cumbria
<b>Inspection number</b>	449291

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>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	78
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Michael McGregor
<b>Headteacher</b>	Johanna Goode
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	28 June 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01539 435313
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