

Cambridge Primary School

Cambridge Street, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria, LA13 9RP

Inspection dates 3–4 March 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Senior leaders have not maintained the quality of teaching seen at the previous inspection. As a result, by the time pupils leave school at the end of Year 6 they do not achieve consistently well, particularly in mathematics.
- Leaders, including governors, are sometimes too generous in their evaluation of some aspects of the school’s work, especially teaching.
- Too many pupils are not secure in their basic and mental mathematical skills.
- There are not enough opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to use and improve their understanding of mathematics.
- Pupils do not make consistently good progress in all classes and subjects because the quality of teaching is not consistently good.
- Teachers do not always give work that builds on what pupils already know and can do.
- The quality of marking is variable and teachers do not always make sure that pupils check, correct and improve their work so that they can learn from their mistakes.
- Provision in the early years requires improvement. Adult-led activities do not always challenge children well enough and activities that children are able to choose for themselves are not always clearly linked to learning.
- Some middle leaders are not having an impact upon raising standards at the school.
- There are not enough opportunities for teachers to see outstanding practice in other schools.

The school has the following strengths

- Behaviour is good in class and around school, including in the early years. Pupils enjoy learning and like their teachers.
- Pupils feel safe and secure. Pupils are looked after well in this happy and caring school. This is reflected in their improving attendance.
- Pupils with special educational needs are extremely well supported by skilled staff.
- Leaders’ determination to improve reading and writing has been successful in most respects. When pupils leave school they are competent readers and writers.
- Pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is developed well through the school’s lively curriculum. Staff go to great lengths to broaden pupils’ horizons by taking them on trips and residential visits.
- A new system to check on pupils’ progress is helping leaders pinpoint where further improvements are needed so that they are in a position to move the school forward.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes taught by teachers, two of which were joint observations with the headteacher and co-headteacher. Inspectors also observed activities taken by teaching assistants.
- Inspectors met with a group of pupils and observed and spoke to pupils during breakfast club, lessons, play times and at lunchtime. They also listened to pupils reading.
- Meetings were held with staff, senior leaders and managers, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- A range of documents were considered by inspectors, including the school’s analysis of how well it is doing and the school development plan. They scrutinised information about pupils’ progress, checks on the quality of teaching, minutes of governing body meetings, and records relating to attendance and safeguarding. Inspectors also examined work in pupils’ books.
- There were not enough responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) to generate a report. Inspectors talked informally to parents at the start as they brought their children to school.
- Inspectors also considered 18 responses from staff to the inspection questionnaire.

Inspection team

Naomi Taylor, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Sheila Mawer

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is slightly smaller than most primary schools.
- 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 above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs is much higher than the national level.
- The overwhelming majority of pupils are of White British heritage and speak English as their first language.
- The school provides full-time places for children in Reception and part-time places for children in Nursery.
- The school provides a breakfast club.
- The school has Healthy Schools status, the Eco School award and the Inclusion Chartermark.
- There have been staff absences since the previous inspections owing to maternity leaves.
- Sharing the same site, but not inspected during this inspection, are: Hopscotch Pre-school, Abbotsmead Community Development Centre (adult learning education) and a base for the South Cumbria Dyslexia Association.
- The school does not meet the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and learning so that they are at least good in order that pupils, including those who are the most able and those who are disadvantaged, make consistently good progress, especially in mathematics by ensuring that:
 - work is well-matched to pupils' different abilities
 - pupils know how to improve their work and are regularly given time to respond to teachers' marking so that they can learn from their mistakes
 - there are enough opportunities across subjects for pupils to practise using their mathematical skills
 - pupils are secure in their ability in mental mathematics so that they can solve problems more accurately and swiftly.
- Ensure activities in the early years are planned to challenge children and build on previous learning, and that the teaching of phonics (letters and sounds they make) in the early years and Key Stage 1 is at least good, leading to good progress in phonics.
- Improve the impact of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring governors and senior leaders accurately evaluate the quality of teaching and all aspects of the school's work
 - developing the skills of middle leaders so that they are able to contribute fully to raising standards in their area of responsibility
 - increasing the opportunities for teachers to see outstanding practice in other schools.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The work of the headteacher and other school leaders has not been fully effective in ensuring that the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement have been maintained since the previous inspection. As a result, leadership and management require improvement.
- Teachers' performance is checked by senior leaders, who make sure that staff attend training that matches the school's priorities and the developmental needs of individuals. This has resulted in improvements in reading and writing across Key Stages 1 and 2. However, some middle leaders are still developing their skills, for example in judging the effectiveness of teaching. As a result, the quality of teaching in mathematics and the provision for children in the early years has not been consistently good enough to have a positive impact on standards.
- Senior leaders and governors are accurate in their evaluation of pupils' achievement and behaviour and safety. However, their view of the quality of teaching, early years provision and leadership and management at all levels is too generous. As a result they have not taken action quickly enough to improve these areas. The school development plan identifies useful priorities and objectives. The targets set are linked to pupils' progress but are not always measurable and so they are not providing enough information for school leaders to evaluate accurately the impact of their actions.
- This is an inclusive school that fosters good relations within the school and the local community. The school successfully tackles discrimination with regard to pupils' personal development. However, it has not yet ensured that disadvantaged pupils succeed as well as others and the most able pupils are not yet achieving their full potential.
- Leaders ensure that there is a good level of support for pupils who have additional needs and pupil premium money is generally wisely spent to support eligible pupils so that in most classes the progress of disadvantaged pupils improves as they move up through the school. However, there is still work to do to raise the achievement of all pupils, including the most able, to at least good and ensure that the disadvantaged pupils always achieve as well as their peers.
- The subjects on offer provide opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of fundamental British values. Older pupils understand that Britain is a democratic society because 'people vote for the government'. All pupils learn about tolerance and respect for different cultures and religions. Their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is given good attention and prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- The curriculum is rich with opportunities to broaden pupils' horizons and raise their aspirations. Years 3, 4 and 5 are challenged, both physically and mentally, when they participate in activities during their visit to a residential outdoor centre. The annual Year 6 trip to London provides a real contrast of experience for pupils compared to their home town and gives them an insight into city life. Without the commitment and dedication of the whole staff team, pupils' lives would not be so enriched. Opportunities to learn instruments and to sing in the choir lead to pupils' enjoyment and to their contributing to the lives of others in their local community through regular performances.
- The primary school sport funding is spent effectively. Specialist coaches work with pupils and staff to help develop their sporting and dance skills. The school offers a variety of after-school sporting activities and pupils are involved in a range of inter-school competitions. As a result, more pupils are participating in sporting activities and are developing increasingly healthy lifestyles.
- Recently, the local authority recognised the need for a higher level of support for the school. For example, local authority officers organised a visit for early years staff to see another early years setting. However, such opportunities for teachers to see outstanding practice in other schools are not yet regularly planned. The local authority is committed to developing an increased level of support.
- Safeguarding arrangements are good and meet statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are highly committed to the school and extremely proud of its place at the heart of the local community. They bring a range of expertise to the school and ask questions to help them know about various aspects of school life. However, their view on the quality of teaching is too generous because they have not focused strongly enough on the progress that pupils make in each class. They recognise that they need to re-assess the level of challenge that they provide as standards have not been maintained since the previous inspection. They monitor financial spending well and understand the need to check the progress of disadvantaged pupils compared to the non-disadvantaged in the school and the non-disadvantaged nationally. Governors know about the arrangements for checking on teachers' performance. They understand that any underperformance must be tackled and that rewards for good

teaching must be linked to pupils' progress. They attend training that helps them carry out their duties including understanding pupil performance data.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils behave well in class and around the school, and they say that they like their teachers and enjoy learning. Pupils are respectful and polite to each other and to the adults around them.
- Pupils value the opportunity to take on additional responsibilities. For example, eco-councillors make sure that the school site is litter-free. Members of the school 'parliament' are engaged in making sure that all pupils can suggest ideas on how to make school an even better place. Older pupils train as play leaders to encourage playing sports and games during lunchtimes.
- Pupils know how they are expected to behave. For those who find it difficult to make the right choices, the school works very effectively to provide bespoke support. All parents who spoke to the inspectors believe that behaviour is generally well managed. However, a very small minority of parents and pupils feel there are occasionally inconsistencies in how incidents are dealt with. The recent introduction of a behaviour log is planned to make rewards and sanctions more transparent than previously and this will assist everyone's understanding of expectations and consequences.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils feel safe in school because they know that the adults in school have a genuine interest in their care and well-being. They are well informed about how to stay safe when using their bicycles on the road and when using different forms of technology.
- Pupils know exactly what bullying is and can explain different forms, including racism and homophobia. Pupils are confident that bullying is rare in school, but if it does take place, staff deal with it quickly and effectively.
- When pupils embark on trips, there is very clear guidance and understanding of how to keep themselves safe beyond the school environment.
- Attendance is always high on the agenda and the excellent partnership that the school maintains with parents has resulted in improved rates of attendance which are now similar to national levels. The breakfast club provides a good start to the day and helps pupils to be on time for school. While the school continues to focus on improving punctuality this remains an issue for a small minority and this hinders these pupils' progress with learning because they miss the start of lessons.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Information on pupils' progress, observations of teaching and work in pupils' books indicate that the quality of teaching is uneven across the school. It is not consistently good over time, especially in mathematics. This prevents some pupils from making good progress.
- School leaders recognised that the quality of teachers' marking needed to improve. They introduced a new marking policy providing guidance to pupils on how to make their work better. However, some teachers do not adhere to this. There is a lack of consistency in making sure that pupils act upon advice and correct their work to help them to learn from their mistakes.
- Teachers collect a wealth of information regarding pupils' progress and question pupils skilfully to assess their level of understanding. A new tracking system to gather this information has recently been introduced but it is not fully established. As a result, some teachers do not use information well enough to plan suitable work and therefore activities are sometimes too hard or too easy to challenge all pupils effectively.
- There has been a recent drive to improve the quality of learning and teaching in mathematics. Practical resources and computer packages have been purchased to help pupils fill any gaps in their learning of mathematical skills. These actions have not been in place long enough to have a sustained and positive impact on standards. Too many pupils remain insecure in their mental mathematical skills because there are not enough opportunities across the curriculum to practise using them.
- The teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) is variable leading to lower than average

numbers of pupils reaching expected standards in word recognition in the national Year 1 screening check. Some staff are insecure in their abilities and training is not effective enough to have addressed this.

- There is a range of books available for pupils to choose from but plans to develop the library are at an early stage. Pupils know that, as well as reading in school every day, they are expected to read at home to practise and develop their skills and they respond well to this. Staff encourage pupils to think about the books that they have read to help them to develop their writing style. They are competent readers by the time they leave school.
- The successful drive to improve writing has led to increased opportunities for pupils to visit places beyond school. This inspires pupils to write about their first-hand experiences. For example, during the inspection, pupils analysed a range of leaflets promoting tourist attractions before embarking on their trip to Grizedale Forest. Because of their interest and excitement at the plans for this trip, pupils were keen to write at length and produced good quality work in preparation for the visit.
- There are good relationships between adults and pupils. Adults regularly and appropriately use praise and encouragement which motivate pupils. As a result, most pupils take pride in their work, although presentation is not always of a high enough quality.
- Pupils with special educational needs are well supported. The highly enthusiastic teaching assistants provide an exciting variety of practical activities to support pupils when they work together in small groups or on a one-to-one basis. This is because they know that this is how some pupils learn best.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Progress made by pupils from their individual starting points is not always good enough across the school, particularly in mathematics. As a result, achievement requires improvement.
- Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 has improved in reading and writing. In 2014, pupils' attainment in mathematics was significantly below national expectations. However, the current cohort shows an improving picture.
- The school's information on pupils' progress and inspectors' observations show that in reading, writing and mathematics achievement is uneven between Year 1 and Year 6. There are pockets of good progress but these are inconsistent between subjects and classes. Overall, most pupils make expected progress in reading and writing but this is not the case in mathematics. The proportion of pupils making better than expected progress in reading and writing is improving but too few pupils consistently make better than expected progress in mathematics.
- The lower than average results in the Year 1 national screening check on phonics reflect the weaknesses in children's progress in phonics in early years. Pupils read regularly and those in Key Stage 1 asked to find their favourite book in order to write a review do so enthusiastically. The older pupils are able to talk about their favourite books and authors and how staff encourage them to read.
- The school identified the need to improve the teaching of mathematics. This has led to the local authority planning a full review. Intensive support has already started but it is too early to judge any impact.
- The most able pupils are provided with a range of additional activities to help them to achieve at the higher levels. The school has recently invested in an on-line mathematics package, for instance, that pupils can use at home to develop their skills. There are sets of books available which appeal to talented readers and encourage them to want to read even more. However, proportionally fewer pupils attain at the higher Levels 3 and 5 than do so nationally.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because they get the support they need. Any additional need is identified early, the school works well with other agencies when necessary and a good level of support is put in place and often delivered by skilled teaching assistants.
- At the end of Year 6 in 2014, the disadvantaged pupils eligible for the pupil premium were approximately four terms behind their classmates in writing, two terms behind in mathematics and one term behind in reading. When compared to other pupils nationally, the disadvantaged pupils attained at one year behind in writing, four terms behind in mathematics and two terms behind in reading. Disadvantaged pupils at the school do not achieve as well as similar pupils nationally, particularly in mathematics. However, leaders are committed to providing good support for these pupils and the picture is improving. When children start school in the early years, gaps in capabilities between disadvantaged and other children are wide. In most classes, staff are now successfully narrowing the gaps between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and their peers as they move up through the school, especially in reading and writing.

The early years provision**requires improvement**

- From individual starting points which are often significantly lower than those typically found, most children make the progress expected of them. However, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year is lower than that seen nationally. Not all children are well prepared for their learning in Year 1.
- Parents are welcome to meet with early years staff at the start of the school day so that parents can keep staff up to date with their children's personal circumstance, interests and achievements. This regular sharing of information helps staff to develop learning tasks that interest the children. For example, all of the children are keen to get involved in learning and talking about their pets. During the inspection, children from the Reception class visited a local pet shop and this added interest and enjoyment to their learning.
- The quality of leadership and that of teaching requires improvement. Although staff regularly record or assess the progress that children are making, this information is not always used to plan activities. While some tasks help children make good progress, teaching does not always reliably help children to achieve the next steps in their learning. For example, activities set by adults do not always challenge children at the correct level and tasks that children can choose for themselves sometimes lack any meaningful link to learning.
- The speed at which children are learning new letters and the sounds that they make is not rapid enough. As a result, children do not make consistently good progress in reading and writing.
- The school recognises that changes are needed and is working with the local authority to improve the provision in the early years. For example, there has been a recent visit to other early years settings to share ideas and practice. However, these improvements are at an early stage.
- Throughout the early years, children mostly behave well; they respond quickly to instructions and show kindness and consideration towards others. Staff working with children who have special educational needs are sensitive to those needs and support the children well. The safeguarding arrangements linked to the early years help to make sure that the children are safe and well looked after.

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	134117
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	456179

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	216
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Kent
Headteacher	Linda Dean, Jenny Lavery (Co-headteachers)
Date of previous school inspection	13 March 2012
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