

Braithwaite CofE VA Primary School

Braithwaite, Keswick, Cumbria, CA12 5TD

Inspection dates

17–18 March 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
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

- From their starting points, pupils do not make good progress nor achieve well, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- Work in some pupils' books is sometimes untidy and poorly laid out because teachers' expectations are not always high enough and pupils do not have consistently good attitudes to learning.
- Teaching requires improvement because work set is not always challenging enough for all pupils, particularly the most able. Teachers' marking does not give pupils consistently clear pointers about how to improve their work.
- Children in the early years have insufficient opportunities, both inside and outside the classroom, to fully develop their skills.
- Leaders and managers do not always monitor the quality of teaching and pupils' work closely enough to ensure pupils attain the highest standards of which they are capable.
- Governors have not yet fully developed their expertise in monitoring the school's work. They do not always hold senior leaders to account to ensure pupils make good progress.

The school has the following strengths

- Following a period of staff change and a dip in test results, pupils' progress, although not yet good, is now beginning to accelerate. The school has the capacity to improve further.
- The school gives very good personal support to pupils who are vulnerable and those who are disabled or have special educational needs.
- Safeguarding is good. Pupils, rightly, say they feel safe at school and parents agree that their children are well cared for.
- Pupils develop a good awareness of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues. They have a clear understanding of values such as tolerance and respect and are effectively prepared for their lives as future citizens of modern Britain.
- The broad curriculum enables pupils to take part in a wealth of trips, visits and extra activities which add greatly to their enjoyment of learning.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons being taught to full classes and smaller groups of pupils of all ages and in a range of subjects including mathematics and English. The headteacher and the inspector made several shorter joint visits to classrooms. The inspector listened to pupils read.
- 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.
- The 33 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, were considered as well as those from the school's own parental survey and from school staff.

Inspection team

Ann Ashdown, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is much smaller than an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is average.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and so eligible for support through the pupil premium is well below that found nationally. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils eligible for free school meals and those in the care of the local authority.
- Most pupils are White British.
- Children in the early years are of Nursery and Reception age and are taught in a mixed-age class. Reception children attend school full time. Nursery children attend up to two full days and three half days each week.
- 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.
- The deputy headteacher is currently seconded to another school.
- The school is considering converting to academy status in the near future.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and pupils' achievement, particularly in mathematics and writing, by:
 - ensuring pupils, particularly the most able, are moved on to more challenging work as soon as they are ready
 - having high expectations of pupils' attitudes to learning and insisting on high-quality layout and presentation of work in pupils' books
 - further improving phonics (letters and the sounds they make) teaching so that it has a greater impact on improving children's writing
 - using marking and feedback more effectively so that pupils understand exactly how to improve their work.
- Increase the effectiveness of the provision for children in the early years by:
 - improving the layout of the classroom and the resources in it to give children richly stimulating areas in which to develop all their basic skills
 - improving the quality of the outdoor learning area so children have better opportunities to develop all their skills, including those in literacy and mathematics.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - all senior and middle leaders have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and closely monitor the quality of teaching and pupils' work in their areas of responsibility in order to bring about improvements
 - governors develop their expertise in monitoring the school's work in order to hold senior leaders to account to ensure pupils make good progress.

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

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Leaders and managers have not enabled good teaching and good behaviour to flourish. This is because expectations of what pupils can achieve and of their attitudes to learning have not always been high enough. During a difficult period of staff change, they have not monitored the quality of teaching and the standard of work in pupils' books closely enough to ensure that all pupils achieve well.
 - The school is now improving, and has the capacity to improve further, because clear priorities for development have been identified and staff have been well deployed. The school has also benefited from good support from the local authority which has, for example, given advice on developing provision in the early years. Work with partner schools has allowed staff to begin to share expertise, particularly in developing new methods of assessing pupils' progress, and observe good practice.
 - The very small amount of pupil premium funding to support disadvantaged pupils is used wisely to meet their specific individual needs. It is spent on small-group, one-to-one tuition and resources which enable them to make progress that is at least similar to, and sometimes better than, their peers'.
 - Although the most able pupils are not always fully challenged, in most respects the school promotes equality of opportunity well so no pupils are excluded from any aspect of school life. Pupils have a good awareness of the differences between themselves and those from other faiths and cultures, and they understand the importance of tolerance and respect. Good relations are successfully fostered and discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. Pupils are therefore well prepared for life in modern Britain.
 - Some middle leaders, particularly those who are new or returning to their posts, do not monitor the work of their areas of responsibility closely and thus bring about improvements so that pupils achieve well. In science, good leadership has enabled pupils to enjoy learning and develop good skills and understanding.
 - The curriculum does not allow pupils to develop sufficiently good skills in mathematics and writing. However, it does have much strength. It deepens pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding through meaningful assemblies, work in lessons and activities outside the classroom. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the wide range of trips, visits, clubs and activities they enjoy. These range from walks up the Newlands Valley to moving memorial services and from exciting residential experiences to days where they gain a deeper understanding of the Vikings.
 - Safeguarding arrangements are effective and meet requirements. Staff are well trained and fully aware of child protection and risk assessment procedures.
 - Funding for primary sport and physical education has been spent well and promotes pupils' healthy lifestyles. Expert coaching has allowed pupils to take part in new sports such as rock climbing; pupils now have increased opportunities to participate in competitions and perform to the highest level of which they are capable.
- **The governance of the school:**
- Governors are highly supportive of the school and committed to promoting its success. However, they have yet to fully develop their expertise in monitoring the quality of teaching and the school's performance data so that they can ask more challenging questions of senior leaders. Finances are well managed. Governors ensure that the school's policies and procedures for safeguarding pupils are good. Performance management is effective, and governors are kept informed about how good teaching is rewarded and weaknesses are tackled.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. In lessons, some pupils do not have consistently good attitudes to learning and they do not always take pride in completing their work and presenting it neatly.
- Most pupils behave well as they move around the school and are polite and friendly to staff and visitors. They are particularly polite in the dining hall where older pupils benefit from serving lunches and eating with younger children. Pupils usually play happily together in the playground.
- Pupils come to school well equipped and ready to learn. They attend regularly and arrive on time. Most pupils take pride in wearing their uniform correctly but some older pupils are not as neatly dressed.
- School records show that incidents of challenging behaviour and any rare incidents of bullying are carefully recorded and dealt with appropriately.

- Older pupils enjoy taking responsibility by looking after younger pupils on school visits and listening to them read.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Records show that staff are carefully checked for their suitability to work with children. Visitors are also carefully checked as they enter the school building and can be identified by the badges they wear.
- Pupils say how safe they feel in school and the vast majority of parents, rightly, are very complimentary about the way in which the school looks after their children. Parents are particularly fulsome in their praise for the personal support the school gives to children with specific needs, for example those who have experienced bereavement. This aspect of the school's work is clearly a strength.
- Pupils are knowledgeable about how to keep themselves safe and have a sensible attitude to taking risks. The school ensures they know about possible dangers from, for example, fire, drugs and strangers. Pupils are clear about how to keep themselves safe when using computers and mobile phones.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because it is not consistently good across the school nor is it enabling pupils to make good progress, particularly in literacy and mathematics. Work in pupils' books shows that teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve in both quality and quantity of work and in its presentation are not consistently high enough.
- Pupils are not always moved on quickly enough to new work that challenges their thinking and deepens their understanding. In mathematics, some pupils, particularly the most able, complete repeated examples of calculations they can do when they are ready to take on more complex problems. When work does not engage their interest, some pupils drift off task and teachers have to spend precious learning time managing the class.
- In literacy, teachers' questioning, while often good, does not always challenge pupils to think deeply and give extended answers. Work in books shows that teachers' marking of literacy work is sometimes overgenerous in giving praise and does not give pupils clear advice about what could be improved.
- In reading, pupils make better progress because they are encouraged to read widely. Several older pupils spoke confidently and knowledgeably about books they liked and clearly enjoy reading for pleasure.
- Within the school, there are examples of pupils making faster progress because they are given interesting tasks. Some younger pupils made good progress in devising imaginative opening lines such as 'a lily pad' or 'a black hole' for their poems which began, 'My bed is like -----'. Very clear teacher explanations ensured pupils understood the importance of spelling the word 'preying' correctly so that the bird which was swooping down was not mistakenly saying its prayers.
- Pupils' social and moral development is often promoted well. Pupils in Year 5 and 6, for example, developed good team-working skills as they cooperated with each other to devise strategies for solving problems connected with shapes.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive constructive individual support in lessons and when taught in small groups. Although expectations of what they can attain are not always high enough, this support enables them to access most of the same activities as their classmates and builds their confidence as learners.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' progress requires improvement because not enough pupils make good progress from their starting points, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- Children enter the early years with skills which are broadly in line with those typical for their age. Results in assessments at the end of Year 2 and in tests at the end of Year 6 have been significantly below average for the last two years. In this small school, results do fluctuate because year groups of pupils are small and these low results are partly due to the nature of individual cohorts of pupils.
- The school's own tracking data correctly indicate that current pupils' progress is now beginning to accelerate. However, work in pupils' books and learning seen in lessons confirms that pupils' progress is not yet good.
- Results in the phonics check in Year 1 were above average. The school's improved strategies for teaching phonics closely matched to the needs of small groups of pupils are helping to develop pupils' reading skills

but it is too early to see their full impact on improving pupils' writing.

- The numbers of disadvantaged pupils are far too small for their results to be reliably reported on in detail. The very small number of current pupils who are disadvantaged are making similar and on occasions better progress than their peers because of the good personal support they receive.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive very good personal support which meets their needs, and enables them to become more confident learners and make progress. However, expectations of the quality and quantity of work they can produce and the standard of its presentation are sometimes not high enough.
- The most able pupils do not always receive sufficiently challenging work to allow them to attain the highest standards. However, the school has recognised this and they now receive targeted support, which is beginning to accelerate their progress.

The early years provision

requires improvement

- Most children enter the early years with skills which are broadly typical for their age. The school's good links with parents and with another local nursery help children to settle quickly into their new surroundings.
- In assessments in 2014, the proportion of children reaching the expected level of development was below average; in previous years, it had been higher. Children's progress and achievement require further improvement to ensure a greater proportion consistently reach a good level of development and are fully equipped with the skills needed to succeed in Year 1.
- Children respond well to the teaching they receive. Improved teaching in phonics is helping them to make better progress in reading but it has not had its full impact on developing their writing skills.
- The layout and organisation of resources in both the classroom and the outdoor learning areas do not maximise children's opportunities to develop their skills. Opportunities to develop their mathematical and literacy skills outdoors are very limited. Indoors, the area available for creative work is very small and literacy and numeracy areas do not stimulate children's interest.
- The majority of children behave well. They quickly learn to follow simple instructions, to share and take turns. A few require frequent reminders about how to behave well and listen carefully. Children are kept safe by well-trained staff who ensure their individual needs are met.
- Leadership and management of the early years provision require improvement. Leaders and managers have been too slow in bringing about improvements suggested at the previous inspection. However, they have now taken advice and observed good practice in other early years settings. They are aware of the improvements that are needed and have the capacity to bring these about.

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	112334
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	456171

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	82
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Vivash
Headteacher	Joanne Laker
Date of previous school inspection	3 November 2011
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