

# St Bridget's CofE School

Main Street, Parton, Whitehaven, Cumbria, CA2 6NY

## Inspection dates

21–22 April 2015

<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		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Leadership and management are good. The headteacher is ably supported by other leaders and governors and together they have created a thriving and caring school.
- The governing body provides a good balance of challenge and support to leaders. Governors are working closely with the headteacher to successfully improve teaching and pupils' achievement.
- The rich and exciting ways subjects are organised and the wide range of visits and visitors to school broaden pupils' experiences greatly.
- Pupils benefit from participation in a wide range of sporting activities that promote their physical well-being and enjoyment of school.
- Pupils' behaviour both in class and around the school is exemplary and their highly positive attitudes to school support their good achievement.
- Pupils are extremely polite and friendly towards adults and one another. They feel very safe in school and know that staff will always take care of them.
- Teaching is good. Lessons are interesting, engaging and motivate pupils.
- Teachers promote positive relationships with pupils and pupils work well in lessons. Classrooms are calm and the school has developed a culture of care and respect between pupils and staff.
- Teaching assistants work closely with teachers and make a good contribution to many aspects of pupils' learning.
- Pupils throughout school make good progress and achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics. This applies to pupils from different groups, including those who have special educational needs.
- Children make a good start in the early years. As a result, they make good progress and achieve well. Children are well prepared for their future education.
- Nursery and Reception children are eager to learn and respond enthusiastically to all that is provided for them. A wide range of exciting activities ensures the children can work independently so that they can learn how to make decisions for themselves.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils do not regularly know how to improve their work nor do they always have time to respond to comments made by the teacher.
- In mathematics, teachers do not always provide pupils with work that challenges them nor are staff sufficiently trained to move pupils on quickly enough.
- The school development plan and the systems used for recording pupils' progress are not refined enough to be of greatest value to school leadership.
- The outdoor area for children in the early years does not provide the same rich experience they enjoy indoors.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed three teachers and visited several lessons, one of which was a joint observation with the headteacher.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, staff, pupils, parents and governors.
- 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 checked including systems for tracking pupils' progress, safeguarding arrangements, the school development plan and pupils' work in their books.
- The inspector took account of responses to the school's most recent questionnaire for parents alongside 19 responses from the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- The inspector analysed 23 questionnaires completed by staff.

## Inspection team

Sue Sharkey, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- St Bridget's CofE School is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is twice the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, those supported by the pupil premium, is above the national average. The pupil premium is additional government funding to support those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school has a high proportion of pupils entering and leaving the school part way through their primary education.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils are taught in four mixed-aged classes: Nursery with Reception and some Year 1 pupils; Year 1 with Year 2; Year 3 with Year 4; and Year 5 with Year 6. The number in each year group can be less than eight.
- The school offers a daily Nursery class each morning. Children in the Reception class attend full time.
- The school has achieved the International School, Bronze Eco-school and Silver Physical Education Awards.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching by:
  - making sure that when teachers mark pupils' work they regularly provide pupils with information on how to improve their work and give pupils time to respond
  - ensuring pupils are consistently challenged throughout mathematics lessons in order to raise attainment
  - developing teachers' skills so that pupils make more rapid progress in mathematics.
- Strengthen leadership and management further by:
  - sharpening the process of recording the progress of each year group through the school so that the data are readily available when needed
  - providing clear and concise plans for school development which set out precise actions and measureable bench marks for success.
- Further develop the early years outdoor area so that it provides as much challenge and wide range of activities as the indoor area.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and teachers are all committed to supporting every child in achieving well in relation to their starting points and behaving well. The governing body supports this vision effectively.
- Since the previous inspection in 2008, the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and the number of pupils entering and leaving the school during Key Stages 1 and 2 have risen. Both of these factors have had an impact on standards, which have sometimes been below average overall in recent years, whilst the small number of pupils taking the tests also affects performance data. However, school leadership is successfully ensuring good and improving achievement.
- All teachers have leadership roles. The headteacher leads English and mathematics and is ably supported by two teachers, one of whom is also the coordinator for special educational needs. Observations of English and mathematics lessons are carried out regularly, discussions are held with pupils and their books are checked by leaders in order to ensure that all groups of pupils make good progress and have equal opportunities to succeed.
- Leaders track pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics well. There is a thorough system of regular data-gathering but the cumulative information for each year group is not readily available when needed.
- As a result of the careful monitoring of teaching, the leadership and management of teaching are good. Staff attend training linked to school development. The school development plan sets out clear priorities for school improvement; however, the benchmarks for judging the success of them are not precise enough for leaders and governors to know with accuracy whether improvements have been achieved.
- The school's system for managing the performance of teachers is linked closely to pupils' achievement. Objectives to improve performance are closely linked to pupils' progress.
- The school promotes equal opportunities well. The pupil premium funding is spent effectively to ensure disadvantaged pupils make good progress and achieve well. Staff promote good relationships and discrimination is not tolerated.
- The local authority has a good relationship with the school; it provides effective support.
- The school has strong links with the local college. Pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 visit the college regularly to learn and develop their information and communication technology (ICT) skills. This link helps to improve pupils' confidence and raise their aspirations.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good in helping their self-awareness and respect for others. The strong curriculum provides an exciting range of visits and residential visits with good learning opportunities for all pupils. Pupils from Years 3 to 6 take part in residential visits often to different cities, for example, London and Edinburgh, and have visited the Eden Project in Cornwall as well as slate mining in Wales. Such activities enrich pupils' experiences of different cultures and raise their awareness of the needs of other people.
- The school actively encourages the promotion of British values. Leaders involve pupils in decision-making. For example, children are regularly encouraged to discuss and debate issues in school as well as having had the experience of being part of a local schools joint youth council.
- The primary school physical education and sports funding has been used effectively to improve the skills of teachers and to extend the sports available to all pupils by ensuring that more pupils take part in team activities and competitions. During the inspection, netball teams from Years 4, 5 and 6 competed against local schools.
- Safeguarding arrangements are effective. Procedures and policies meet requirements and pupils' welfare has a high priority.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The effectiveness of the governing body is good. Many of the governors have joined the governing body over the last two years. They have already attended training and carried out an audit to ensure that members' skills are used well in the various roles they carry out as governors. Governors are very supportive of the school and understand its strengths and weaknesses and how it can improve. They check performance data about the progress of different groups of pupils, as well as how they perform against pupils nationally. The governing body is also knowledgeable about the quality of teaching, ensuring that there are clear links between the quality of teaching and salary progression. Governors ensure that any underperformance in teaching is tackled. They manage the budget well, keeping a careful eye on the spending of pupil premium funding and the primary school sports funding to make sure that they are spent effectively to support pupils' learning.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils behave extremely well around school and in lessons. They concentrate exceptionally well in lessons, are attentive, very keen to learn and thoroughly enjoy their learning.
- The management of pupils' behaviour by staff is excellent. Should they experience any problems, pupils have great faith in the support that staff provide. The school's learning mentor makes a significant and highly effective contribution to the pupils' well-being.
- Adults show respect for pupils and this is reflected in the way pupils treat and care about one another.
- Lunchtimes are exceptionally well organised and pupils' behaviour is outstanding. Pupils make full use of the wide range of resources provided, enjoying for example skipping. Morning and afternoon breaks are enjoyed just as much. Pupils have access to both the playground and an adjacent grassed area where they can get plenty of exercise on the climbing apparatus.
- Attendance is average. The school works very closely with parents through newsletters and personal contact to make them aware of the importance of pupils' regular attendance.

**Safety**

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- Pupils say they feel very safe in school, are extremely well cared for and that all adults in school will help them if needed.
- All parents who responded to Parent View say their children are safe in school and are looked after well.
- Pupils are very clear about what bullying is and the different forms it can take. They know about potentially dangerous situations outside school including those linked to emotional, verbal and physical and cyber-bullying and how to deal with them if they occur.
- Pupils take on a number of important roles in the school and take their duties very seriously. The wide range of opportunities enables pupils to make an excellent contribution to the life of the school.

**The quality of teaching is good**

- Strengths in teaching include good relationships between staff and pupils, very good management of behaviour and good systems to teach literacy and reading skills. As a result, there is a purposeful atmosphere for learning around the school, pupils achieve well and are very attentive. They listen well and enjoy reading.
- Most parents who responded to Parent View believe that their children are taught well and they are happy with the homework they receive.
- Pupils have opportunities to talk about their ideas and these help them to learn and use new vocabulary. Pupils are happy to share ideas regularly with one another and work well in pairs and small groups. They are supportive of one another and interested in each other's views. For example, during a Year 2 mathematics lesson pupils thoroughly enjoyed learning about fractions using chocolate and sandwiches. Clear instructions were given so that pupils fully understood what they had to do and what they were learning. Pupils collaborated well, sharing ideas and thoughts when dividing squares into halves and quarters and recording this on their individual whiteboards.
- Teaching assistants are well trained and skilful in supporting teaching and learning and play a full part in the planning of work. They work closely with teachers to provide good support for pupils and make valuable contributions to pupils' learning, especially for those who have special educational needs. Extra support, often in the classroom during lessons, is available for pupils as needed. This ensures that any underachievement is identified and dealt with quickly.
- The school has put in place a wide range of methods to improve standards in mathematics but there are occasions during lessons when teachers do not challenge pupils enough and so do not move their learning forward rapidly. This is because this aspect has not been a focus of recent staff training.
- Pupils' work is marked regularly. Teachers make comments so that pupils know how well they have done and they sometimes give advice on how to improve their work. However, this system is not used regularly so that pupils know what they have to learn next nor do they always have time to respond to the comments.

**The achievement of pupils****is good**

- Given their individual starting points when joining the school, children in the early years make good progress and this continues as pupils move through Key Stages 1 and 2. Overall, all groups of pupils, including the most able pupils, make good progress and achieve well. Most parents who responded to Parent View agree that their children make good progress.
- The numbers of pupils in each year group can be small. As a result, standards at the end of Year 6 can vary considerably from year to year. Achievement in reading is a strength of the school. Standards in reading at the end of Year 6 are usually broadly average and this is because a high proportion of pupils achieve more than expected progress. For example in 2014 an above average proportion made more than expected progress and 100% made expected progress.
- Phonics (matching letters to the sounds they make) is taught well. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screen test was above average at 83% in 2013 and 75% in 2014. This means that pupils read confidently by the end of Year 2. Pupils say they enjoy reading and read at home as well as at school. They use their knowledge of sounds successfully to work out words when needed, they appreciate humour in books and recognise the need to pause where there is a full stop.
- Standards in the 2014 Year 6 national tests for writing and mathematics were below average. Given the high proportion of pupils who have special educational needs in the year group, all pupils made good progress from their starting points. Work in pupils' books and that seen during lessons indicate that pupils are currently making good progress and are working much closer to the national average in writing and mathematics.
- Pupils who are supported by the pupil premium funding make good progress. As the number of pupils in each year group is small, it is not possible to make comparisons between this group of pupils and other pupils in the school or nationally. These pupils are provided with carefully planned support.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because these pupils are well supported in class and provided with specific help in small groups or individually.
- Over the last few years, a high proportion of pupils have joined the school part way through the year in both Key Stages 1 and 2. These pupils settle in quickly. Taking into account their individual starting points these pupils like others in school make good progress.
- Over time the most able pupils achieve well. For example in the 2014 Year 2 teacher assessments, an above average proportion of pupils achieved Level 3 in reading. Although a smaller proportion of pupils achieved Level 5 in the 2014 Year 6 national tests, in 2013 50% of pupils achieved Level 5 in reading and writing and this is above average.

**The early years provision****is good**

- When children first join the early years class their knowledge and skills can vary from year to year but are generally weak and often below those typical for their age, particularly in speech and language, reading, writing and mathematics and physical development.
- Children's behaviour is good and they are eager to join in activities. Their relationships with members of staff are strong and children are very willing to participate in all activities. Adults have high expectations and children respond positively, helping them to develop good attitudes to learning, a willingness to learn and good learning habits. As result children achieve well and enter Year 1 well prepared.
- Children are confident to choose their own activities and make their own choices. They listen carefully during activities led by adults. There is a balance between activities led by adults and those chosen by children. Children learn successfully through an exciting range of activities in the classroom but this good range of activities does not extend to the outdoor area. Although the outdoor area is easily accessible for children, its size limits the range of activities on offer.
- The classroom is well organised and tidy. Adults make good use of resources, for example to stimulate discussions not only between adults and children but also among children themselves. Following a visit to the local aquarium much discussion centred on what children saw and enjoyed. Pupils thoroughly enjoyed chatting away quietly together as they fixed together the pieces of their undersea jigsaw. They listened with interest to one another and were happy to take turns.
- The early years provision is well led and managed with all adults working closely together. The learning environment is safe. Good teaching and knowing all children well have a positive impact on children's learning, contributing successfully to their good progress. Leaders work closely with parents so that they are well informed and fully involved in their 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	112296
<b>Local authority</b>	Cumbria
<b>Inspection number</b>	461582

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary Controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	98
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Joanne Percival
<b>Headteacher</b>	Elizabeth Highton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 October 2008
<b>Telephone number</b>	01946 592940
<b>Fax number</b>	Not applicable
<b>Email address</b>	admin@stbridgets-par.cumbria.sch.uk



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