

Furness Vale Primary School

Buxton Road, Furness Vale, High Peak, SK23 7PQ

Inspection dates 30 April–1 May 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
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.

- Leaders and governors have worked effectively to improve teaching and ensure that pupils achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics. They have established high expectations in all areas of school life.
- Leaders check pupils' work and progress carefully so that any who are at risk of falling behind receive extra support and quickly catch up with the others.
- Teachers use their good understanding of what pupils can already do to set exciting topics and activities which stretch pupils of all ages and abilities. This ensures pupils make consistently good progress.
- Pupils greatly enjoy their learning. They concentrate exceptionally well in all subjects. Their outstanding behaviour and attitudes help them to make good progress and to build good relationships.
- The careful links teachers draw between different subjects enable pupils to develop their basic reading, writing and mathematics skills well.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is successfully promoted through all aspects of the curriculum. Their understanding of British values is shown in the high levels of respect and care that they show for everyone around them.
- Procedures to ensure that pupils are safe are effective. Staff implement school policies and safeguarding procedures consistently and effectively.
- Children in the Reception class make good progress in all areas of their learning because staff are well trained and plan work which is exciting and matched to children's level of ability.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the effectiveness of the school.
- Governors have undertaken a wide range of training so that they can judge the effectiveness of the school and hold leaders to account for the progress pupils make.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to develop their reading skills by researching topics in detail.
- Pupils do not attain well enough in spelling to support higher levels of writing.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited an assembly and 12 lessons, and also looked at pupils' workbooks.
- She observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, at break and lunchtimes, and around the school site. She had a formal discussion with the school council and informal discussions with other pupils.
- She took account of the 23 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and also of the six responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The inspector met with parents, the headteacher, other school leaders, a group of governors and a representative of the local authority.
- She looked at school documents, including those about pupils' achievement, behaviour and attendance, records of monitoring, school self-evaluation, plans for improvement, and information relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Lynne Bradbury, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Children attend full time in the Reception class.
- The large majority of pupils are White British, and almost all pupils speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for support from the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is in line with the national average.
- The school offers a breakfast club for all pupils.
- There have been considerable changes in staff since the last inspection.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' achievement in English to be outstanding by:
 - providing frequent opportunities for pupils to develop higher level research skills in their topic work
 - ensuring that the good progress made in phonics is developed into higher standards of spelling.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, governors and other leaders have high expectations of themselves and all staff and ensure that pupils achieve well. They have created a positive atmosphere where pupils feel safe and behave exceptionally well, and parents are valued as partners in learning. Pupils all enjoy the same good opportunities to succeed. Discrimination of any form is not tolerated.
- Leaders check pupils' progress and the quality of teaching carefully and systematically. They use the outcomes of these processes to shape the school's development plans and training programme. This has brought about rapid improvements in teaching, and good achievement for all groups of pupils in reading, writing and mathematics.
- New arrangements for assessing pupils' achievement, to reflect changes in the National Curriculum, are being developed in partnership with local schools.
- Pupils show great respect and care for others because leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development well. Pupils' work shows a good understanding of a range of religions and cultures which enables them to develop tolerance and fairness. Pupils show respect and understanding of British values and are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Subject leaders have been effective in improving pupils' achievement in their areas of responsibility. They check progress in books and assessment information regularly, observe lessons, and use their conclusions to plan appropriate development and training for staff.
- The curriculum contains a broad and exciting range of topics and subjects. This helps pupils to develop their basic reading, writing and mathematics skills. In addition, it offers opportunities to deepen their understanding through investigation and problem-solving. Clubs, sports, music, visitors and visits enrich the curriculum further and contribute to pupils' cultural development, health and well-being.
- The pupil premium funding has been used to provide those eligible to this support with one-to-one tuition and extra small group work. It also supports visits, uniform and a breakfast club. These measures have been successful in accelerating the progress of disadvantaged pupils so that gaps in achievement have closed in most classes. Leaders are committed to equal opportunities and they ensure that there is no discrimination in the school.
- The school has used the primary sports grant to provide professional coaching in cricket, hockey and football, which has been effective in developing pupils' attitudes to healthy living, as well as increasing their skills and their enjoyment of sport. The funding has also been used to provide training for school staff. Dinnertime coaching, open to and taken up by an increasing number of pupils of all ages, has added extra opportunities for sports activities in this part of the school day.
- Leaders take great care to ensure that pupils are kept safe. All staff and governors are appropriately trained. As a result, they know how to keep pupils safe, including carrying out appropriate checks before staff are appointed or visitors admitted.
- The local authority has given effective support to the school through on-going monitoring and review.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - A review of governance in September 2013, helped the governors to identify shortcomings in their expertise and to arrange essential training so that they could improve their skills. This training was effective in enabling them to understand information about pupils' progress and assess the quality of teaching for themselves. Consequently, governors now have a clear overview of the school's strengths and areas for development. They plan and fund effective improvement measures which are rigorously checked.

- Governors use the appraisal system to hold leaders to account for the progress pupils make. They make sure that targets give the greatest importance to the continuous improvement of teaching and achievement. They use the outcomes from the appraisal system to make decisions about teachers' pay and career progression. They support leaders in addressing any teaching which does not lead to at least good achievement.
- Governors make sure that additional funding, such as the pupil premium, is used to support eligible pupils, and they check the progress of these pupils to judge the effectiveness of their spending.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils and parents are overwhelmingly positive about behaviour in the school, the level of care and positive relationships. This was reflected in all aspects of the inspection.
- Pupils display outstanding attitudes to their learning and engage with great enthusiasm in all activities offered. Their behaviour, which is consistently exemplary in lessons and in the playground, makes an exceptional contribution to their progress. Pupils have responded extremely well to the school's systems for managing their behaviour. Pupils understand the rewards and sanctions set out in the behaviour policy and follow it meticulously. This has been extremely important in securing the rapid improvement in pupils' progress.
- During lessons pupils demonstrate the ability to work extremely conscientiously on their own or collaborating in group tasks. They support or challenge each other very effectively to deepen their understanding.
- School records show that incidents of poor behaviour are extremely rare and are dealt with quickly and sensitively so that pupils are keen to prove their good conduct. Those pupils who have faced particularly severe behavioural and emotional challenges have been supported exceptionally well so that they have been able to continue in school and to achieve well.
- Pupils are highly respectful of adults and other pupils, and they are extremely tolerant and supportive towards those who experience any kind of difficulty in school or hold different views. Their topic work shows that they have a good understanding and appreciation of people of different backgrounds, cultures and faiths.
- Pupils are very proud of their school and of the very special, caring atmosphere. They greatly enjoy taking on responsibilities for helping others in the playground, acting as reading buddies, and representing their classes on the school council. They raise money for a wide range of charities because they know that others have a need for their care and support.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Staff deal urgently with any problems which threaten pupils' well-being, and record any concerns carefully.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and know how to stay safe because of work in lessons and assemblies to support this. They understand the different kinds of bullying, including those concerned with mobile phones and the internet. They say that bullying is rare but that it is dealt with very quickly by staff if it happens.
- Staff build strong and trusting relationships with all pupils and, particularly, those who are vulnerable. They carry out careful assessments of the risks to pupils of school activities, including visits, and do everything possible to minimise these.
- Attendance is above average. The headteacher takes stringent measures to challenge any instances of poor attendance. The small number of pupils in the school means that absence can appear to fluctuate.

The quality of teaching is good

- Good teaching has raised pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics in all year groups since the last inspection. Teachers know what their pupils can already do and make sure that work stretches pupils of all abilities well.
- Teachers create an atmosphere which nurtures good relationships and excitement in learning. They make the purpose of tasks clear and engage all pupils in learning at all stages of the lesson.
- Teachers and teaching assistants use skilful questioning to check how well pupils are learning and then extend the challenge further or give extra support. Pupils are keen to answer and to share their learning with others.
- All staff are well trained and teach phonics (letters and the sounds they make) effectively so that pupils make rapid progress in reading and writing. Currently there are not enough opportunities for pupils to use their good reading skills in higher level research in their topic work.
- Teachers give great emphasis to teaching spelling, punctuation and grammar. They ensure that pupils have exciting and challenging tasks to apply these skills across a wide range of subjects, and this leads to pupils making good progress in their written work, however, the progress is not yet outstanding. They also teach the basic skills of calculation and number work effectively and give many opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematics skills in investigations and problem solving in their topic work.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is tracked carefully. Teachers use this information well to plan work which meets these pupils' needs and helps them to make good progress. Teaching assistants support pupils' learning effectively. They ask pupils questions to check their understanding and this helps them to adapt work to support their learning.
- Pupils understand how to improve their learning because staff mark work carefully, identifying what has been achieved and the next areas to improve. Staff also give feedback during lessons which helps pupils to learn rapidly.

The achievement of pupils is good

- There were dips in achievement in the past in various year groups because of staffing turbulence. New staff have brought stability, and leaders have established rigorous systems for improvement which have led to good attainment and rapidly improving progress for all pupils.
- Pupils' skills on entry to the school vary each year because of the small numbers in each year group. In 2014, their skills were in line with those typical for their age, except in literacy and numeracy skills where there were significant gaps. Reception pupils made good progress in 2014 and entered Year 1 well prepared for their next stage of learning.
- In the phonics screening check in Year 1 in 2014, the proportion achieving the expected standard was above average. Year 2 attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2014 was broadly in line with the average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In 2014, Year 6 pupils' attainment was well above average in reading and above average in writing, including spelling, punctuation and grammar, and mathematics. Their progress was good in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In 2014, there were too few disadvantaged pupils leaving Year 6 to report on their attainment without identifying them. However, across the school as a whole, pupils receiving the pupil premium are very well supported by good teaching and their progress in reading, writing and mathematics is as strong as that of their classmates.

- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are making good, and often outstanding progress, because their work is matched carefully to their ability and they receive a high level of effective support. Teachers track their progress carefully so that they can adjust the level of work where necessary.
- Throughout the school, the achievement of all pupils is accelerating rapidly in all subjects. Almost all pupils are making expected progress this year, with higher than national proportions on track to exceed the progress expected of them.
- The most-able pupils are making good and, sometimes outstanding progress in reading, writing and mathematics. They are developing their ability to deal with real life, problem-solving situations in mathematics particularly well.
- Pupils demonstrate a love of reading and talk enthusiastically about their favourite authors and books. Achievement in reading is good, and higher than average proportions of pupils are now achieving higher standards than those expected. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to apply and test these higher order skills in research into their topic work.
- In writing, pupils are also on track to attain higher than average standards this year. They are developing good skills in recording their results in scientific experiments, and their work in history shows their good use of subject-specific vocabulary and confident use of complex sentences structures.
- In mathematics, tracking information shows that most pupils in each class are on track to make better than expected progress. They are able to apply their mathematics skills to their study of temperatures and climates around the world, to measurements in science and to investigations.

The early years provision

is good

- Good leadership and management of the early years have been effective in raising children's achievement. Leaders check children's progress carefully so that the activities planned stretch children of all abilities. In 2014, children reached standards above those nationally and entered Year 1 well prepared for their continued learning.
- The small numbers entering the Reception class each year cause the pattern of children's skills on entry to fluctuate. This year children have skills which are broadly typical for their age, except in literacy and numeracy, and so the school has placed a great deal of emphasis on these aspects of learning. Children make good progress because they have interesting opportunities to explore mathematics and investigate how language works in reading and writing. For example, they study the rhyme of the gingerbread man through painting, creating patterns, collage and models.
- The children's 'Learning Journeys' show that in their Reception Year, children make good progress in all areas of learning because teaching is good and provides interesting and exciting activities. Children learn rapidly and develop listening, speaking and reading skills well. Teachers ask probing questions which help them to know whether to give extra support or to challenge children further.
- Children demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. They develop good relationships and respect for others, and enjoy their learning, because of the high expectations of staff and the high level of care and support. Children know how to stay safe and are taught how to measure risks.
- Parents are welcomed as partners in their children's learning and they greatly value the opportunities to share in assessment and recognising their children's progress.

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	112648
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	462018

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	86
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kate Medway
Headteacher	John Mollard
Date of previous school inspection	8 May 2013
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