

Petteril Bank School

Burnett Road, Carlisle, Cumbria CA1 3BX

Inspection dates

14–15 July 2016

Overall effectiveness

Good

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- School leaders are determined to ensure that pupils' progress is strong. They are taking effective action to this end so that outcomes for pupils rapidly become good.
- The quality of teaching has improved substantially and is now good. Senior leaders keep a close check on the how good teaching is by regularly monitoring teachers' work.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons is good. Pupils generally show positive attitudes to learning.
- Children in the early years are happy and confident. They make good progress from their different starting points.
- Pupils feel safe in school. They are aware of risks that they may come across, including on the internet, and know how to manage them.
- Governors have an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They are rigorous at holding leaders to account for school performance.
- The vast majority of parents are very positive about the education their children receive. They say that their children feel happy and safe and that teachers are always available if there are any concerns.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not all year groups are making consistently strong progress.
- Most-able pupils are not always given work in English that challenges them to work at greater depth.
- Some pupils do not present their work neatly.
- The school's marking and feedback policy is not yet fully applied across the school.
- Senior leaders do not evaluate the impact of the actions they take sharply enough.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Secure more rapid progress for pupils, especially at key stage 2.
- Ensure that senior leaders gauge the work of the school more sharply by evaluating the impact of actions they take at regular intervals.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - developing pupils' handwriting and presentation to show pride in their work
 - ensuring that all pupils know how to improve their work as a result of effective feedback, in line with the school's marking policy
 - consistently providing the most able pupils with work in English that challenges them and allows them to grapple with more difficult ideas.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- School leaders have an accurate overall picture of the quality of education they are providing. They are focused very sharply on the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection and are utterly determined to ensure that pupils' progress strengthens. They are taking effective action to this end and are in a good position to continue their work.
- Leaders manage the performance of teachers effectively and, as a result, have produced improvements in the quality of teaching and have secured more rapid progress for pupils. Teachers receive targets that link to pupils' progress and are based on the requirements of the school's development plan. Effective training is provided for teachers, which supports them in achieving their targets.
- Senior leaders keep a close check on the how good teaching is by regularly monitoring teachers' work. They do this through formal observations of lessons and through half-termly meetings, where teachers are held to account for their pupils' progress. Appropriate actions are discussed with teachers after each formal visit, recorded and then followed up in subsequent reviews. Teaching in English and mathematics in particular has improved markedly as a result of this strong and systematic leadership.
- Decisive leadership has led to a strong improvement in attendance. This is now at least broadly in line with the most recently published national averages for all groups.
- The vast majority of parents who spoke to the inspector or responded to the online survey 'Parent View' were very positive about the education their children receive. They greatly appreciate the support that is provided for children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. They say their children feel happy and safe, and parents enjoy sharing in the homework activities that are provided. They feel that teachers work hard for their children and are always available if there are any concerns. One parent described the school as a 'family unit'.
- Reading has improved since the last inspection and leaders have taken effective action to raise its profile. Pupils' reading records are kept up to date and contain comments that indicate how well pupils are reading. Pupils say they enjoy reading and talk positively about the ways that teachers support them in class.
- Subject leaders for English and mathematics have an accurate view of current standards in each subject and have identified areas for further development. Their work contributes well to the generally good and improving progress in these subjects. Leaders in other subjects have an equally good grasp of strengths and areas for development. They are taking action to strengthen teachers' subject knowledge, such as commissioning an external consultant to support the teaching of science.
- The special educational needs coordinator manages the provision well for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils are identified quickly and extra support is put in place, which is regularly reviewed to check it is working. As a result, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities generally make good progress.
- School leaders provide a broad and balanced curriculum. Pupils often apply English and mathematical skills to other subjects, and this consolidates their learning. Pupils are gaining knowledge, skills and understanding in science and other subjects that match their stage of development. For example, in science, pupils in key stage 2 can devise their own diagrams to explain how the eye sees objects; and, in history, they can interpret a primary historical source to support their writing in English.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is strong. School leaders organise a variety of activities that support the work done in religious education. For instance, pupils are given responsibilities as part of the school's recently acquired 'eco-school' status. They enjoy interesting opportunities, such as a recent visit by a Zulu workshop, and find out about different faiths, such as Hinduism. They also have the opportunity to serve the community by performing at a local care home as part of the school choir and by raising money to support local flood victims.
- The school promotes British values well; these values are displayed and discussed. Pupils talk knowledgeably about democracy and comment knowledgeably on recent political developments. In conversations with the inspector, they showed that they understand the importance of mutual respect and tolerance. They also appreciate the link between the rule of law and establishing class rules at the start of each year.
- The extra money provided by the government for primary physical education and sport has been used well to support pupils' involvement in sport and to build up the confidence and skills of teaching staff. Pupils take part in an increasing number of activities, including gymnastics, rounders, netball, football and cross-country running, some of which are competitive.

- School leaders use the money provided by the government to support effectively pupils who are disadvantaged. These pupils are making good progress from their starting points, and gaps between them and other pupils are closing.
- The local authority and the local alliance of system leaders have provided effective support to the school, which has contributed to its overall improvement. This support has included arranging for a specialist leader in education to support the teaching of English.
- Some documentation that senior leaders produce to summarise the quality of the education the school provides lacks precise evaluation. The self-evaluation summary contains description of actions but does not explain clearly how the actions result in the judgements made.
- The school's marking and feedback policy is not applied with complete consistency across the school and consequently some opportunities are missed for pupils to improve their work.
- There are some omissions from the school's website. The headteacher has plans in place to address this matter.
- **The governance of the school**
 - A review of governance was held after the previous inspection and has resulted in improvements in the skills of the governing body.
 - Governors have an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They report their findings to the governing body, and senior leaders develop next steps based on these.
 - Governors hold leaders stringently to account. Minutes from meetings indicate that governors demand convincing responses to questions around issues such as improving pupils' progress and improving attendance.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. There are appropriate systems in place for reporting concerns. Staff report issues promptly and leaders follow them up appropriately. Training for staff is up to date and takes place at least yearly.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment **is good**

- The quality of teaching has improved substantially since the previous inspection. This is because senior leaders now monitor the work of teachers effectively and provide regular training based on the needs they identify. Typically, pupils now make strong progress in their knowledge, skills and understanding in English and mathematics.
- Pupils are, in the vast majority of cases, attentive in class and are productive with their work. All teachers have high expectations of behaviour and they plan lessons well so that, overall, pupils are absorbed in their learning. They mainly show good attitudes to work. In a minority of cases, pupils can lose concentration and break into unrelated conversations with other pupils, but staff intervene effectively when this happens.
- Typically, the most able pupils are given specific activities that stretch them well. In mathematics, for example, teachers asked them to use their knowledge of litres and millilitres to work out capacities using unmarked scales of different intervals. There is, however, some inconsistency. In some English work, for instance, the most able pupils are not given opportunities to work at greater depth.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. They use it to question pupils effectively in order to encourage them to think more deeply. In mathematics, for example, the most able pupils solved a reasoning problem in which they had to use a collection of clues to arrange sections of a chocolate box. The teacher asked them how they know the shape of the box. Pupils explained their thinking clearly, making reference to the relevant clue.
- Teachers use the school's marking and feedback policy mainly to good effect to support pupils in improving their work. Where it is followed effectively, teachers' written feedback allows pupils to review their work and either correct it or develop it, so that they gain a more secure understanding. The policy has, however, been used inconsistently, which means that some pupils are unclear about their next steps.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds are supported well. Current pupils make good progress from their starting points. In Year 2, for example, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities move from basic number formation in mathematics to answering questions about multiplication and division at the appropriate age level.
- In other subjects, good teaching has secured good progress. Pupils use their English and mathematical skills across the curriculum well. They write well-structured scientific reports, including conclusions based

on the evidence they have gathered. They are also beginning to use mathematical skills, for example, in history, where a bar chart was used to show comparative numbers of aeroplanes shot down during the Battle of Britain.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils report that they feel safe in school. They are aware of risks that they may come across, such as the need to take care in places like the playground to avoid injury, and the hazards associated with the internet. They know what to do if they see inappropriate material when they are using a computer. School leaders provide internet safety days to keep pupils focused on the need to take care.
- In conversations with the inspector, pupils said that bullying in all its forms is rare. They understand what racist or homophobic language is, and said that they cannot recall hearing any. They know that they must report any incident to a member of staff, who will deal with the issue effectively.
- Leaders plan activities and initiatives that develop pupils' confidence and self-awareness to good effect. These include the annual visit of the 'Life bus', which contributes to pupils' understanding of how to keep healthy, and a scheme that the school has commissioned to develop pupils' aspirations.
- Leaders have taken effective action to improve attendance for all groups, bringing it back in line with or better than the most recently published national figures overall. Parents and leaders also report that the number of pupils in school is increasing and that more parents are choosing to move their children to the school mid-year than before.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- At breaktimes and lunchtimes, pupils' conduct is good. They play safely in the playground and they know the rules that apply to moving about the building, although one or two younger children sometimes forget and break into a run. The vast majority comply with teachers' expectations around lining up and returning to class in an orderly way, with only occasional small losses of learning time owing to inappropriate chatter.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons is good. Pupils generally show positive attitudes to learning, although there is some variation in the quality of presentation and the degree of pride that pupils take in their work. Teachers have effective strategies for managing behaviour and, on the infrequent and brief occasions when pupils show behaviour lapses, they are rapidly brought back to their task.
- Exclusions from school for poor behaviour are rare. School leaders manage pupils' return to school following exclusion well so that incidents do not recur. If they need to liaise with the local pupil referral unit, they do so effectively and with the safeguarding of the pupil as a priority.

Outcomes for pupils require improvement

- Compared with other schools, the number of pupils in each year group is small or fluctuates markedly. In both 2013 and 2015, there were 12 pupils in Year 6, while in 2014 there were 23. This makes meaningful comparison with national averages difficult. Nevertheless, while historical attainment at the end of key stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics has been broadly in line with national averages, by the end of key stage 2, albeit with some improvement between 2014 and 2015, standards have been below national averages. Consequently, leaders are highly focused on strengthening teaching; this has led to pupils making more rapid progress than before, although some inconsistency remains.
- A sure sign of the improvement brought about by leaders is evident in the progress made by Year 6 pupils in 2016 in reading, in writing and in mathematics. While provisional standards are below national averages, given their starting points, these pupils have made significant gains in what they know, can do and understand. Throughout the rest of the school, pupils are typically making much better progress from their starting points in English and in mathematics than previously. Their work now shows more rapid development of knowledge, skills and understanding.
- Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. A high proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities and leaders identify them promptly and provide effective support for them.

- In 2016, two thirds of Year 1 pupils reached the expected standard in the phonics (letters and the sounds they make) screening check. While this proportion was lower than that achieved in 2015, these figures represent good progress from pupils' starting points. In other subjects, including reading, writing and mathematics, pupils' progress is good in this year group.
- Pupils' attainment at the end of key stage 1 in 2015 was broadly in line with national averages. Pupils in Year 2 in 2016 made good progress from their starting points.
- The majority of most-able pupils make good progress and teachers provide them with targeted activities to challenge them to work at greater depth, especially in mathematics. This does not happen as consistently in English, however, which means that pupils sometimes do not have the opportunity to work at greater depth in this subject.
- Pupils' reading skills have improved since the last inspection. Pupils can successfully use their knowledge of phonics to tackle unfamiliar words. For example, a Year 1 pupil was able to sound out the word 'brittle' correctly. Pupils enjoy reading and they are given a wide range of different types of books. Readers who are more confident read with fluency and understanding and can make inferences from what they have read.
- In subjects other than English and mathematics, pupils make good progress. There are plenty of opportunities for pupils to use their writing skills and sometimes their mathematical skills. They develop their knowledge, skills and understanding well, writing reports about festivals, such as Diwali, in religious education and applying their map-reading skills by looking at Ordnance Survey maps and answering questions about them.

Early years provision

is good

- Leadership of the early years is sharply focused on constantly improving standards. The energetic early years leader has organised the part-time Nursery and the Reception classes so that children experience a bright and stimulating environment that helps them to develop their key skills well. The outdoor learning area provides opportunities for children to apply their learning in different contexts, for example by allowing them to explore and climb, thereby developing their understanding of risk.
- Children begin their time in the early years with skills and abilities that are below those that are typical for their age. By the time they leave Reception, just over six out of 10 children have a good level of development. While this figure is slightly below the most recent national average, it has been increasing year on year and represents good progress from children's starting points.
- Leaders have taken effective action towards closing the gaps in attainment between boys and girls and between children from disadvantaged backgrounds and others. Both boys and disadvantaged pupils are making improved progress as a result. Boys, for example, show great enthusiasm to take part in a literacy activity in response to a 'superhero' theme. As part of this, boys and girls are excited to wear 'superhero' capes while they are working and show good levels of concentration.
- Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are swiftly identified and are given effective support. As a result, they make good progress from their starting points.
- Children are given opportunities to use their knowledge of letters and the sounds they make to read words in different contexts. In one activity in Reception, for example, the teacher placed sheets of paper on the floor, each with a different instruction written on it. A child was asked to read the first word of the first instruction – 'put' – by sounding it and did so correctly. At the same time, children showed they could solve problems because they recognised that the numbers on the instructions indicated the correct order in which to read them.
- Adults ask effective questions to encourage children to make good use of their reasoning and their communication skills. Children can, for example, explain what they think will happen if baking soda and vinegar are mixed together. Their spiritual development is supported well, as they are very excited by the tasks they are given and show good attitudes to their learning.
- In the Nursery class, children are encouraged to write letters effectively, using different tools including pens and chalk. The teacher and teaching assistant praise children's grasp of letters and help them to make links with sounds, for instance by singing rhymes.
- The school has a positive relationship with parents. Communication is strong and parents report that staff always make themselves available if there are any concerns, which are managed effectively.
- Safeguarding is effective. Children are happy and confident and show that they feel safe. Staff are well trained and know the procedures for reporting concerns. The early years leader is also the deputy designated safeguarding lead for the school and has a secure overview of her role and responsibilities.

School details

Unique reference number	112220
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection Number	10012185

This inspection 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	149
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Anthony Phillips
Headteacher	Jose Hodgkins
Telephone number	01228 631650
Website	www.petbankschool.co.uk
Email address	head@petbank.cumbria.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	1 October 2014

Information about this school

- Petteril Bank School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The percentages of pupils from minority ethnic groups and who speak English as an additional language are well below the national averages.
- The proportion of pupils who receive support in school for their special educational needs and/or disabilities is nearly twice the national average. The percentage of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is also nearly twice the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported through pupil premium funding is over twice the national average. The pupil premium is extra money from the government to support pupils identified as being from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of key stage 2.
- The school does not meet requirements on providing details of the curriculum for the academic year and the effectiveness of provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities on its website, but has plans to address this.
- There is a children's centre and community café on the school site. These were not part of the inspection.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector carried out observations of learning in several lessons. Two of these were joint observations with the headteacher.
- A range of documentation was scrutinised, including the school's self-evaluation summary, action plans for school improvement, records of the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning, minutes of meetings of the governing body, behaviour logs and records connected with the safeguarding of children.
- The inspector had discussions with various people, including members of staff, governors, representatives from the local authority and the local alliance of system leaders, representatives from the local pupil referral unit, parents and pupils.
- The inspector looked at pupils' work in a range of subjects. He also examined the work of children in the early years.
- The inspector also evaluated 11 responses received through 'Parent View' (Ofsted's online survey). No other survey responses were received.

Inspection team

Mark Quinn, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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