

# Cambridge Primary School

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

## Inspection dates

16–17 May 2017

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Pupils enter school with a spring in their step and a smile on their face because they feel safe and enjoy their learning. One pupil referred to school as 'an oasis'.
- Pupils are eager to please and try their hardest in all aspects of school life. They take pride in the school and in the presentation of their work, particularly in mathematics and English.
- Attendance has improved and is broadly in line with the national average. Very few pupils are regularly absent from school.
- Strong leadership from the headteacher is setting a clear course towards rapid improvement. Weaknesses are not ignored. Concerted action to improve the early years means that more children are ready for the demands of Year 1 than in recent years.
- Teachers are well supported in their quest to improve outcomes for pupils. Clear targets for improvement, and a wide range of training opportunities, help teachers to improve their practice.
- Teachers are relentless in their drive to help pupils succeed as readers, writers and mathematicians.
- The most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, do not yet make the progress that they should.
- Books show that pupils understand the next steps in their learning. As a result, they make good progress.
- Trips are linked to the wider curriculum. They inspire pupils and provide the unique experiences that lead to improved writing.
- Most pupils now make good progress across key stage 1 from their starting points. They achieve closer to the levels expected for their age in phonics, reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers' and leaders' assessment of the quality of pupils' writing is not as reliable as in reading and mathematics.
- The outdoor play area in the early years does not reflect the high-quality provision for children indoors.
- Pupils' understanding of other cultures and religions in Britain is not secure. This means that they are not as well prepared for life in modern Britain as they might be.
- Not all middle leaders are driving improvements in teaching and learning in their subject areas.
- Governors do not routinely challenge leaders about pupils' progress as thoroughly as they might.

## Full report

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

- Further improve the quality of middle leadership so that all leaders are driving improvements to teaching and to pupils' achievement within their area of responsibility, by:
  - ensuring that assessment is rigorous and accurate in writing
  - monitoring and analysing information about pupils' progress across a wider range of subjects
  - seizing every opportunity to enhance pupils' writing across a range of subjects
  - ensuring that the most able pupils, including the most-able disadvantaged pupils, make more rapid progress.
- Ensure that the governing body provides further challenge and support by improving their understanding of the progress that all groups of pupils make across the range of subjects.
- Ensure that the outdoor provision in the early years is stimulating by providing rich opportunities for children to enhance their learning in reading, writing and number.
- Improve the pupils' knowledge of other cultures and religions, as part of their wider understanding of life in modern Britain.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The caring and astute headteacher leads this school very well. She lives up to her own high expectations and is an excellent role model for staff and pupils. She sets the tone for respectful relationships across the school and ensures that pupils have pride in their school and a love of learning. The headteacher has the confidence and trust of everyone within the school, including the parents. Consequently, pupils are happy, staff morale is high and parents are overwhelming positive about leaders' work.
- The headteacher knows the school's strengths and shortcomings well. The systems to check on the quality of teaching and the progress that pupils make are much more rigorous and effective since the time of the last inspection. Weaker teaching is tackled quickly and clear targets for improvement are helpful to all teachers in perfecting their practice. The effective management of teachers' performance is matched by a wide range of training opportunities. These training opportunities help teachers to refresh their skills and learn from each other.
- Leaders do not shy away from change when it is needed. Priorities for improvement are clearly identified. Leaders are becoming sharper at measuring the impact of their actions on teaching and on pupils' outcomes. However, this still needs further refinement.
- Leaders have taken effective action to improve children's achievement in the early years since the time of the last inspection. Added to this, leaders have swiftly and effectively tackled a dip in pupils' progress in lower key stage 2.
- The impact of some leaders in driving improvement across the school is strong. Some are leading the way, particularly in mathematics and English. The English lead, however, is still in the process of perfecting the system for assessing pupils' writing. The current system lacks clarity.
- Not all middle leaders match the best and some have only very recently been appointed. There have been recent changes in staff roles and responsibilities so some leaders are not yet able to show evidence of good progress within their subject areas. Leaders across some subjects do not seize opportunities to develop further pupils' writing skills.
- The pupil premium funding is used very well to help disadvantaged pupils to make good progress. This extra money is used to support pupils' academic needs through effective small-group teaching sessions and additional adult support in class. Leaders are alert to any barriers that may cause pupils' progress to stall. As a result, where necessary, funding is also used to support pupils' emotional and personal development so they are ready to learn. Achievement gaps are closing at the end of key stage 1 and narrowing even further by the time pupils leave Year 6. The most able disadvantaged pupils, however, can and should make even more rapid progress.
- The primary school physical education and sport funding is used equally well to provide a range of in-school and extra-curricular activities, above and beyond the typical competitive team games. Safe zones are set aside on the playground so these sports can be practised safely during playtimes and lunchtimes.

- Leaders have developed a wider curriculum. There are some interesting 'hooks' that help to engage the pupils in their learning, for example, 'Journey, Great and Ghastly Events and Extreme Weather'. Trips out and visitors to school all help to provide the 'awe and wonder' that bring the wider curriculum to life. One of the 'Hairy Bikers', a former pupil at the school, has visited with a camera crew, to bake a cheese and onion pie for the pupils. Leaders acknowledge that the next steps are to ensure that middle leaders monitor and analyse pupils' progress effectively across the full curriculum.
- The support and provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is effective and ensures that the progress they make is rapid and sustained. Leaders identified speech and language issues as a barrier to some pupils' learning. Training was put in place to deliver a specific programme to these pupils, all of whom made accelerated progress as a result. Leaders' use of additional funding to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is effective.
- Relationships with parents are overwhelmingly positive. Communication is effective and leaders and staff go the extra mile to engage parents in many ways. The Friday coffee morning is an example of this. Parents who attend are given tips on how to support their children to read and write at home.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is developed well through different subjects. Leaders have introduced philosophical questions into the curriculum to encourage interesting dialogue between pupils. This broadens pupils' thinking and sometimes leads to them conducting additional research to get to the root of a difficult issue. However, pupils' knowledge of other cultures and religions, as part of their wider understanding of life in modern Britain, is limited.
- The local authority offers effective 'light-touch' support. There is also school-to-school support across a cluster of local schools. This additional external support is driving further improvement by sharing best practice and pooling resources to maximise effectiveness and efficiency. Leaders have brokered this support to strengthen further middle leadership.

## **Governance of the school**

- Members of the governing body have been re-energised by recent changes to their structure, organisation and personnel. Governors have used these changes as an opportunity to rethink their roles and the contribution they make to school life by:
  - attending training to make sure they are up to speed with current changes
  - ensuring that the expertise of each member is used to best effect through the allocation of roles and responsibilities
  - visiting the school on a regular basis to talk with teachers, parents and pupils
  - asking the headteacher and other leaders details about their performance reports
  - helping to make decisions about teachers' pay to ensure that strong teaching is rewarded
  - keeping a close watch on the difference being made by additional government funding for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities

- staying alert to their statutory duties, including those for safeguarding, to ensure that they are fully met.
- Governors acknowledge that they would be even more effective in challenging and supporting the school's performance by improving their understanding of the progress that all groups of pupils are making across a range of subjects.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Clear systems, good record-keeping and frequent training for staff, mean that everyone is aware of their responsibility to protect pupils from harm. Staff know the procedures and have the confidence to take their concerns to leaders if they spot any potential signs of abuse or neglect. Leaders keep staff knowledgeable about issues such as child sexual exploitation.
- With a high proportion of vulnerable children in school, there is a strong culture of keeping children safe. Weekly meetings are held between the headteacher, the leader for special educational needs and/or disabilities and the learning mentor. Actions are agreed and immediately put into effect. No stone is left unturned in supporting vulnerable children and their families.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- Excellent relationships between staff and pupils foster pupils' desire to work hard and succeed.
- Adults are highly skilled in ensuring that every classroom is a calm haven in which pupils can thrive. This spills over in the school grounds, where a lot of thought has gone into the creation of peaceful eco areas where pupils can garden or read.
- Current information about pupils' progress in mathematics and reading is accurate. However, the English lead is aware that some teachers are a little over-zealous in their assessment of writing and is working hard with colleagues to ensure that it is consistently accurate for the future.
- Teachers' strong subject knowledge means they can tackle pupils' misconceptions should they arise. They routinely check for any gaps in pupils' prior learning. This ensures that pupils make good progress.
- Where teaching has been weaker in lower key stage 2, leaders have been quick to provide support so that pupils' learning is not affected.
- Most teachers have high expectations of their pupils. Teachers use resources effectively to engage and motivate pupils, especially in mathematics. Teachers are especially skilled in developing pupils' ability to tackle unfamiliar problems.
- Some teaching does not yet meet the learning needs of the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils. Leaders recognise this issue. This is because teachers do not routinely plan lessons that stretch the most able so that they make consistently rapid progress across subjects and year groups.
- Teachers teach phonics effectively. Pupils move into small phonics groups where fully trained adults enthusiastically offer a range of songs, games and writing opportunities.

As a result, pupils in Years 1 and 2 read familiar and unfamiliar words by breaking them down into different phonic sounds and blends. Phonics is also taught in Year 3, so that any gaps in pupils' knowledge can be filled. This enables them to become more fluent readers.

- Teachers are skilled in ensuring that pupils have the basic skills in writing. They provide a language-rich environment to promote the use of a wider range of vocabulary. Teachers also ensure that pupils build a good bank of knowledge and skills in spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Teaching assistants are well trained and make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. They have a good understanding of their role in and outside the classroom.
- Pupils' standard of presentation in their mathematics and writing books is impressive. They take great pride in their work and understand what their next steps are to improve their learning. However, the writing of the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, shows room for still further improvement.

## **Personal development, behaviour and welfare**

**Good**

### **Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils' social and emotional needs are particularly well met. The newly created 'Chill Zone' provides a safe haven for pupils, whatever their worries or concerns. Trained staff are on hand to support pupils, so that they feel safe, secure and ready to learn.
- Pupils are split into 'families'. They care about each other and genuinely feel as if they are part of a large family. Respect, tolerance and empathy touch every aspect of school life. They are keen to make a contribution to the school, either through their school parliament or the eco council.
- Pupils gain a good grounding in how to keep themselves safe. Their understanding of how to minimise online threats and the risk of grooming when using the internet, playing electronic games or using mobile phones is particularly strong.
- The Easter school provides pupils with the opportunity to learn and play together. The numbers that attend are a testament to its success.
- Some pupils have developed a newly found love of reading following tailored support and intervention. Many pupils say that they are regular visitors to the local library. Pupils commented that parents now buy them books as presents and that they love to read every day.

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Most pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. This is true of the very youngest children, who follow instructions and happily work with others. It is also true of the oldest pupils, who carry the mantle of being a role model with pride.
- Learning is occasionally disrupted by some inattentive behaviour. However, school

records confirm that these incidents are becoming a rarity. As one pupil stated, 'Miss is strict, but we like it like that because we understand what is expected of us.'

- Adults equip pupils with the skills they need to manage their own behaviour. Many pupils are now able to self-regulate their behaviour because they have learned to reflect upon their own actions.
- Pupils say that bullying incidents happen very occasionally. However, they know that adults deal with these incidents well. They apply the behaviour policy consistently and fairly.
- Attendance has improved and is broadly in line with the national average for all groups of pupils. Very few pupils are regularly absent from school.

### Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Pupils thoroughly enjoy their time at school. They work hard because they are keen to succeed. Their positive outlook and willingness to apply themselves to any task goes a long way to explaining their consistently good progress in recent times.
- Children's speech and language, reading, writing and number skills lag behind some other areas of development when they join the Nursery class. This means that they have a lot to catch up across the early years and during key stage 1. Leaders and teachers ensure that pupils do indeed catch up.
- Assessment information and the work in pupils' books show that almost all pupils reach at least age-related expectations by the end of Year 6. Pupils make good gains in knowledge, skills and understanding from their low starting points.
- Pupils have a secure grasp of basic skills and they understand the mechanics of writing. This accounts for their progress towards becoming young writers who produce creative, interesting and imaginative work which appeals to a reader. Pupils willingly put pen to paper as writing is often linked to a piece of drama or a text that engages them.
- Pupils' books show that almost all make good progress in writing over time, although the current assessment information suggests that the most able, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, do less well. This has led to a review of the accuracy of teachers' assessments in writing. Added to this, middle leaders do not routinely seize opportunities to develop pupils' writing right across the curriculum.
- By the end of Year 2, most disadvantaged pupils outperform their classmates in a range of subjects and they are rapidly getting closer to reaching the standards gained by other pupils nationally. There is a similar story in Year 6, where the majority of disadvantaged pupils are rapidly gaining ground in reading and mathematics.
- The most-able, including the most-able disadvantaged pupils, however, lack some opportunities to hone their skills in reading and mathematics. Teachers do not routinely provide sufficient challenge to help them to achieve their full potential.
- Most pupils across the school make good and sometimes better progress in reading. Younger children use their well-developed phonics skills effectively to tackle new work with confidence. As a result, pupils' recent attainment in the Year 1 phonics check is now average. Current information shows that standards in reading by the end of Year



2 and Year 6 are also broadly average.

- The high proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points. This is because they are well supported in lessons, and benefit from one-to-one and small-group sessions led by skilled teaching assistants. This is particularly true in reading, where the majority of pupils who received additional support for one term made two and a half terms' progress in that time.
- Pupils who have speech and language difficulties, in key stages 1 and 2, receive targeted support and as a result they all make rapid progress across the wider curriculum.
- Pupils are benefiting from a broad and balanced curriculum. They make good progress across their subjects. Pupils gain the skills and knowledge to investigate and learn about irreversible changes in science, in addition to the opportunity to learn to play the violin. They have plentiful opportunities to make progress outdoors, for example in the wooded areas within the school grounds. This area provides the perfect place for orienteering or replicating the Great Fire of London.
- Leaders are aware, however, that modern languages are not a high enough priority at the moment. They have put the further development of French on their action plan.

### Early years provision

**Good**

- When children join the Nursery class very few have the skills typically expected for their age. Many children have weak communication skills. Recently, not enough children made the expected strides in their learning to ensure that they were ready for Year 1. However, this is very much a changing picture. Teachers in Year 1 now find that the children coming from Reception are better prepared to cope with the demands of key stage 1.
- The recent improvement in the early years is due to good leadership. The leader's influence has led to a complete review of the early years environment and teaching techniques, to help adults get the most out of children. All adults in the early years have benefited from up-to-date training. They now plan activities that are stimulating and encourage children to become increasingly independent. Inspection evidence confirms that the positive changes are sustainable. The early years is a considerable strength of the school's provision.
- All welfare requirements are met in full.
- Positive relationships with parents are fostered through 'stay and play' sessions. The Friday morning, post-assembly coffee morning is also a success. Parents have the opportunity to contribute to their children's learning journeys. Information about the planned day-to-day activities is uploaded on to the school's website and shared by teachers with parents. This encourages parents to talk to their children about what they have learned during the day.
- The provision for two-year-olds, Hopscotch, is run by the governing body. Staff in this provision recognise and identify children who may have special educational needs and/or disabilities. This ensures that tailored support is already in place by the time



they enter the Nursery class.

- Children's behaviour is impressive. They chat together and support each other during independent activities. Teachers model courtesy and respect and the children follow their good example.
- There is a seamless transition between the provision for two-year-olds and the Nursery class and Reception class. This is because highly skilled teachers and teaching assistants plan together the next steps in each child's development following a review of each child's progress. Activities are well planned to ensure that children make good progress towards the early learning goals.
- The nurturing environment in the early years setting means that children are safe. They thoroughly enjoy their time in the Hopscotch provision, Nursery class and Reception class. There is an attractive outdoor play area with a 'fairy castle' in the trees. However, the more formal outdoor play area currently does not yet reflect the high-quality provision for children indoors. Leaders recognise that there are more opportunities to develop children's reading, writing and number skills outside.
- Classrooms are well organised and activities capture the children's interests and help them learn about the world around them. Teachers keep an eye on the children's basic skills, for example the children are helped to develop their finger movements so they can hold and use writing tools.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are good. Teachers use time well. They are skilled in balancing small-group focused-teaching sessions alongside opportunities for children to work with more freedom. A lovely example was a child using picture-cue cards to help plant some beans. When asked what he was doing, he said, 'I am planting magic beans which will grow as high as the school if I water them.' Similarly, another was making bread using ingredients shown on picture cards, taking pleasure in telling an inspector, 'The magic ingredient is yeast, because it makes the bread big.'

## School details

Unique reference number	134117
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	10024115

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	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	238
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Kent
Headteacher	Jenny Lavery
Telephone number	01229 827761
Website	<a href="http://www.cambridge.cumbria.sch.uk">www.cambridge.cumbria.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:admin@cambridge.cumbria.sch.uk">admin@cambridge.cumbria.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	3–4 March 2015

## Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- This is an average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is over twice the national average and growing.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is also considerably higher than the national average.
- The school meets 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.
- Since the last inspection, the previous headteacher has retired. The new headteacher

worked alongside the previous incumbent during the last inspection, before taking up her post in March 2015.

- School opens during the holidays to provide clubs for pupils.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited every classroom on several occasions to observe teaching and learning. The headteacher took part in some of these visits.
- Inspectors observed and spoke with pupils during lessons and at play and lunchtime. They met formally with three groups of pupils and heard pupils read.
- Meetings were held with staff, senior and subject leaders and members of the governing body. A telephone conversation took place with the chair of the governing body.
- A meeting was held with the local authority representative.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including arrangements for safeguarding, information about pupils' outcomes and pupils' books.
- Inspectors spoke informally with a small group of parents at the start of the school day. They also took account of the findings from the pupil and staff questionnaires as well as the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View.

## Inspection team

Maggie Parker, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Stephen Rigby

Ofsted Inspector

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