

# Allithwaite CofE Primary School

Church Road, Allithwaite, Grange-Over-Sands, Cumbria, LA11 7RD

**Inspection dates** 14–15 May 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- During the inspection, pupils' behaviour in and around the school was exemplary and school records show that this is typical.
- Pupils have an extremely positive attitude toward learning because they very much value their school community, the staff and each other.
- There is an outstanding programme for promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. As a result, pupils are highly considerate and respectful towards adults and each other.
- The curriculum meets the needs of pupils very well. The opportunities to learn outdoors, play musical instruments and be involved in sport enhance pupils' learning experience.
- The headteacher is very successfully driving forward school improvement. He is extremely well supported by his staff team who have embraced many changes.
- The highly committed governing body provides an excellent balance of support and challenge. Together with senior leaders they are prioritising improvements to the quality of teaching and working hard to drive whole-school improvements.
- Children get off to a good start with their learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage and continue to make good progress during their time in the school.
- Pupils achieve well and the proportion of pupils making the expected rate of progress is higher than that found nationally.
- Teaching is good overall and some is outstanding. Pupils say their lessons are fun.
- Teachers provide good guidance and advice to help pupils with ways to improve their learning.
- Parents highly value the opportunities that staff provide to encourage family learning.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not yet enough teaching that is outstanding. Occasionally, activities in lessons do not provide the appropriate level of challenge for pupils of different abilities.
- Teachers do not always adapt their lessons quickly enough to meet pupils' needs.
- The skills in mental mathematics of a minority of pupils are insecure.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed six teachers and visited eight lessons. In addition, the inspector made a number of short visits to lessons and listened to pupils read.
- Discussions were held with school staff, groups of pupils, senior staff and subject leaders, parents, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation, including safeguarding documents, the school's procedures for gaining an accurate view of its performance, its development plans, records of pupils' attainment and progress, documents relating to attendance and behaviour, and pupils' work.
- The inspector took account of the 30 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection and an additional 15 responses received during the inspection were also taken into account. The inspector also received several letters from parents.

## Inspection team

Naomi Taylor, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well below average. The pupil premium is additional funding provided for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from services families and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The majority of pupils are from a White British heritage and all pupils speak English as their first, and for a small minority, their dual language.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- There have been changes to staffing and class structures since the previous inspection.
- There are an increasing number of pupils joining the school during Key Stage 2.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has gained awards, which include the Bronze Eco-school, Sing-up Gold and Kidsafe accreditation.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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

- Increase the proportion of teaching that is outstanding and thereby drive pupils' progress at an even faster rate, especially in mathematics, by:
  - making sure that work set for pupils, whatever their ability, is always hard enough to allow them to make as much progress as possible
  - ensuring that teachers quickly adapt their lessons when pupils find the work too easy or too hard
  - providing pupils with more opportunities across subjects to secure their ability in mental mathematics so that they solve mathematical problems at a quicker pace.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are typically below those expected for their age, particularly in number and letter recognition. For part of the week, they are taught alongside Year 1 and Year 2 pupils and they make good progress because of the clear focus on communication, language and calculation skills. The Reception-aged children benefit from the wide range of activities that they can use both in the classroom and outdoors.
- Younger children learn effectively how to link letters and the sounds that they make (phonics). Phonics is now effectively taught in small groups based on pupils' abilities. A range of additional reading activities to support identified pupils to develop their skills and enthusiasm for reading have also been introduced. In the 2013 tests, almost every pupil achieved the expected level in reading and significantly more than the national average attained the higher levels at the end of both key stages.
- Attainment in writing at the end of Years 2 and 6 is also above national levels because of increased opportunities across the curriculum to develop pupils' writing skills. However, attainment in mathematics is not as strong because, for some pupils, their ability in mental mathematics is not secure enough. The school recognises this and is beginning to tackle the issue. Topic work has increased the opportunities for pupils to develop their numeracy skills beyond mathematics lessons.
- The proportion of pupils making expected progress in English and mathematics from their individual starting point is higher than national figures. The proportion making more than expected progress in 2012 dipped, but the proportion currently making better than expected progress is now improving across all year groups in Key Stage 2.
- Most pupils, including those who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, make the same good progress because of timely and sharply focused help from teachers and teaching assistants. Those for whom English is a dual language are given extra help with their writing skills, which ensures they too make good progress. This demonstrates the school's commitment to equality of opportunity for all pupils.

### The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is good overall and some is outstanding. Staff discuss learning and share ideas to help each other develop increasingly effective practice.
- The headteacher has introduced a comprehensive progress tracking system which teachers now use effectively to plan lessons and interventions. They also skilfully question pupils to assess their understanding.
- Opportunities have increased for pupils to learn outdoors. This was seen with the Reception-aged children and Year 1 pupils who were learning how to measure fluids and record data. The teacher planned the activity exceptionally well to highly involve and motivate the pupils. They carefully used the hosepipe in the school yard to fill each jug with a litre of water. Having poured the water into wheelbarrows they then raced from one end of the playground to the other. There were screams of excitement as water was spilt and an eagerness to measure the remaining water to assess how much was left. Pupils made good progress in developing their numeracy skills.
- In an English lesson in Key Stage 2, where outstanding teaching was seen, pupils were editing their stories. As a class, they looked at a piece of work together to share their understanding of how to improve writing with better punctuation and by adding adverbs, adjectives, similes and alliteration. They then worked on their own story and made outstanding progress in editing and improving their work.
- Occasionally, activities do not fully meet the needs of all ability ranges and this was seen in a

mathematics lesson when some pupils found the work too easy and others, too hard. Teachers do not always adapt their teaching quickly enough when this is the case.

- Teachers insist on good presentation across all subjects and pupils take pride in their work. Marking is thorough and ensures pupils know how to improve their work. They are given time in lessons to correct and edit their work and this helps pupils to progress well.
- Teachers and teaching assistants who support disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding, are well trained to provide for the individual learning needs of each pupil. They relentlessly encourage pupils to do their best.

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

- From an early age, young children learn to value each other and their school community. There is an exceptional atmosphere of mutual respect throughout the school. A number of parents told the inspector that their children cannot wait to come to school and that they enjoy school because they 'feel part of it' and this is reflected in responses on Parent View. Above average attendance reflects these highly positive attitudes.
- Parents refer to the 'strong caring, sharing, loving atmosphere' where children develop into 'caring and confident young people with strong moral guidance and sense of community both locally and nationally'.
- Pupils have an extremely good attitude toward learning and behave exceptionally well both in lessons and around the school. School records and staff questionnaires indicate that this is typical.
- The older pupils enjoy taking responsibility for the younger children and act as outstanding role models. For example, the librarians give freely of their time to help children with their reading and during lunch, pupils sit as 'families' in the hall to encourage conversation and sharing experiences across year groups. The buddy system is particularly effective in helping younger and new pupils settle into school.
- Pupils feel safe and learn how to keep themselves safe, including when they are online, and almost all parents agree that their children are well cared for at school. Pupils' experiences are increased through an impressive range of trips (including visits to Edinburgh and London), after-school activities and outdoor 'Forest School' opportunities.
- Staff provide opportunities for family learning through open afternoons, when pupils can discuss their work with their parents. In addition, family learning projects linked to topic work are highly valued by parents and their children, as are parent sessions to develop their skills in helping their children develop numeracy and literacy skills.
- The school council is keen to raise money for those less fortunate than themselves, both in this country and overseas. The school sponsors a child in Ethiopia and annually raises £1000 for a school in India.

### **The leadership and management** are outstanding

- The headteacher is an exceptionally strong leader who has a very clear view of the direction that he wants the school to take. He has very accurately identified the school's strengths and areas for further improvement and has developed a highly committed and extremely hardworking staff team. School leaders have clearly demonstrated the skills and determination to improve the school further.
- The local authority effectively provides guidance for the school with light-touch support.
- Senior leaders check on the quality of teaching regularly and pupils' progress is now closely tracked to make sure that salary increases are awarded only when teachers help pupils to learn well. Teachers' professional development is closely linked to school priorities.
- The new curriculum meets the needs of pupils extremely well because it is developed specifically

for Allithwaite Primary School and utilises the whole of the school environment and community, which the pupils really enjoy. The school does focus on literacy and numeracy development but is also extremely keen to provide additional experiences.

- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exceptional and supports pupils to make an excellent contribution to the positive atmosphere in school. Pupils are aware of different religions and cultures and this is enhanced by, for example, their link with schools in Manchester and India.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors have a very accurate understanding of the quality of teaching and the strengths and priorities of the school. This is because they are kept extremely well informed by the headteacher, they are regular visitors and volunteers at the school and they canvass the views of parents. Governors regularly attend training to develop their expertise, which ensures they have a very thorough understanding of the school's performance data, so that they can continue to challenge and support the school exceptionally well. The governing body make sure that those pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding continue to be very effectively supported. Statutory duties, including financial and safeguarding requirements, are fulfilled. Governors understand the link between the quality of teaching and pupils' progress and make sure that teachers' progression through the pay scale is linked to how effective they are in the classroom.

## 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>	112282
<b>Local authority</b>	Cumbria
<b>Inspection number</b>	412501

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	96
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Diane Fenton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Brian Jones
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	21 February 2008
<b>Telephone number</b>	01539 532144
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