

# Cummersdale School

Cummersdale, Carlisle, Cumbria, CA2 6BD

**Inspection dates** 9–10 July 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Achievement is good and has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Achievement in mathematics and reading is strong across the school. Progress in writing is particularly strong in Key Stage 2 with some examples of outstanding writing.
- Pupils' handwriting is exemplary. It is well formed and neatly presented. Many pupils in Key Stage 2 prefer to use fountain pens.
- Good teaching has resulted in improved progress and rising attainment across the school. Well-chosen topics and powerful texts underpin learning and excite and interest pupils.
- Children make good progress in the Reception class. They benefit from a recently developed dedicated classroom and outdoor area that is bright and welcoming and provides lots of ways that children can be busy learning.
- Pupils' behaviour is most often exemplary in lessons and around the school. Pupils apply themselves diligently to learning. From an early age they settle to tasks quickly and work independently. They are very supportive of each other in lessons.
- Pupils enjoy school a great deal and feel very safe and well looked after by staff. They are proud to be part of a small school. They take on responsibilities, such as their roles on the school council, with great maturity. Many pupils spontaneously care for others when out at playtimes.
- Staff morale is good. The headteacher, staff and the governing body work well as a team to make improvements. The clear focus and strong drive for improvement have been successful in raising achievement and improving teaching.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The teaching of writing in Key Stage 1 does not get the very most out of the small number of more-able pupils.
- Leaders, including governors, are not fully effective in checking that some improvements are taking place for all pupils.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited parts of seven lessons, one of which was a joint observation with the headteacher. The lead inspector and the headteacher visited a number of lessons across the school for a short time during the first afternoon. Pupils' work was scrutinised jointly with the headteacher and a teacher.
- Meetings were held with staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative from the local authority. The inspector talked to a wide range of pupils during lunchtimes.
- Documents looked at included the school's self-evaluation, the improvement plan, information on pupils' progress and attendance and those relating to safeguarding pupils.
- Inspectors took account of 24 responses to the online survey (Parent View), a survey of parents' views carried out by the school in 2012 and one letter signed by two parents sent to the lead inspector. The inspector talked to several parents who were attending the Reception, Years 1 and 2 class's performance of Jack and the Beanstalk.
- The views of staff were taken into account through the eight questionnaires received.

## Inspection team

Gillian Salter-Smith, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Cummersdale School is much smaller than an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is below average. Pupil Premium is additional funding provided by the government to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those in local authority care and those from service families.
- The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is above the national average. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well below the national average.
- The government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress, does not apply in this school because fewer than 11 pupils took the recent end of Key Stage 2 tests.

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

- Improve the teaching of writing for the more-able pupils in Key Stage 1 in order to speed up their progress by:
  - increasing the level of challenge in the individual writing targets for the more-able pupils so that they know how to improve their writing further
  - providing more prompts and guidance on how to improve writing in the classroom so that pupils are easily reminded of how to achieve higher levels in writing
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to write longer pieces of writing.
- Increase the rigour of leaders, including governors, in checking that improvements are being made for all pupils by:
  - having more frequent and systematic checks on the success of the improvement plan
  - making sure that areas identified for improvement during checks on teaching and learning are followed up in order to be sure that improvements take place.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Attainment has improved significantly at both Key Stages 1 and 2 in all subjects since the previous inspection.
- Pupils make good progress from starting points in Reception class that are broadly typical for their age for most children. By Year 6 attainment is above average and strongest in reading and mathematics. The proportion of pupils making the expected progress and better than expected progress compares favourably with national averages in all subjects.
- In the Reception class, children develop good reading, language, communication and mathematical skills. Their good progress is supported by a classroom and outdoor area that are rich in prompts for learning letters and their sounds and using numbers. There are lots of activities to help them with their early writing, reading, counting and mathematical understanding. Adults interact well with the children and encourage the children to talk through their ideas helping to develop their language skills.
- In Key Stage 1, progress is good in mathematics and reading and for most pupils in writing. Pupils make good progress in reading because they spend plenty of time in school reading with adults and on their own. They are encouraged to read regularly at home and they develop a love of books and reading. Phonics (recognising letters and sounds) is well taught so that pupils enjoy learning letters and sounds and use this knowledge to help with their reading and spelling. The few pupils who did not pass the Year 1 phonics test in 2012 received extra support and were successful in 2013.
- The small number of the more-able Key Stage 1 pupils do not always meet their full potential in writing by the end of Year 2. There are not enough opportunities to write longer pieces of writing. They are not encouraged to improve their writing to higher levels often enough.
- In Key Stage 2 progress is good in reading, writing and mathematics for all pupils. Progress is especially strong in writing. Some outstanding writing is evident, for example, the quality of the poems written in response to reading about Ernest Shackleton and the sensitive writing emerging after reading a moving story about young people in war-torn Beirut.
- Achievement in mathematics is particularly strong across the school. Pupils are encouraged to solve problems, discuss their ideas with each other and use plenty of practical activities to help them to understand.
- The number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is very small. Half of these pupils are achieving well in comparison to other pupils. The other half is a little behind in their reading and writing, but not in mathematics. Pupil premium funding is used effectively to provide additional adult support for those who are falling behind. The school's close attention to the progress of every pupil reflects its commitment to equality of opportunity.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress. Their needs are recognised quickly and they receive well-targeted extra support, sometimes with guidance from external experts.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers create busy productive classrooms where expectations of pupils' learning and conduct are high. Expectations of handwriting and presentation are especially high across the school.
- Highly positive and supportive relationships between pupils and adults help pupils to develop into confident learners.
- Teachers plan tasks that capture pupils' interest. The use of powerful books and texts are a particularly effective stimulus for learning, reflection and improving writing. Electronic whiteboards and computers are used well to support learning across subjects.
- Teachers know pupils well and assess their progress regularly. They build on what has been

learned before and make sure that any gaps are filled, especially so in mathematics.

- They usually plan tasks that get the most out of pupils whatever their abilities. However, in Key Stage 1 the small number of more-able pupils do not have enough prompts in the classroom or guidance through their individual targets to help them to improve their writing to a higher level.
- Teachers question pupils well throughout lessons to check on learning and progress and to deepen their knowledge and understanding. This was done especially well when Key Stage 2 pupils discussed the feelings of the characters making an escape from a war-torn country. Pupils were encouraged to think deeply and empathise with the plight of others.
- Pupils know how they can improve their work because they have clear individual targets to aim for in reading, mathematics and writing. Teachers' regular marking of work gives helpful guidance on what to improve and pupils are encouraged to act on that guidance.
- Homework effectively supports the learning of basic skills such as spelling and mental mathematics and regular reading at home is encouraged. Pupils carry out some independent research at the start of topics but opportunities for pupils to carry out independent work at home are not extensive.

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

- Pupils' behaviour is typically exemplary. They are polite, well mannered and respectful of others.
- Pupils are very keen to learn. They settle down to tasks quickly and are busy and productive. They enjoy supporting each other in lessons. They are learning to use each other to help when they get stuck, for example, in mathematics.
- At playtimes, pupils play happily in the extensive outdoor areas. Older pupils enjoy playing with younger pupils. Lunchtimes are calm, orderly and sociable occasions. Pupils enjoy helping out at lunchtimes and during assemblies.
- Parents almost all appreciate the way that the school keeps their children safe and promotes excellent behaviour. Behaviour is very well managed by staff. There are several case studies that show how pupils who struggle to control their behaviour have been helped to settle down and achieve well.
- Pupils make the most of many extra activities after school, for example, cooking club and the many sporting and musical opportunities. Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils thoroughly enjoyed their exceptionally well-rehearsed production of Jack and the Beanstalk. They were very proud of their performances.
- Pupils feel very secure and safe in school. They say that bullying hardly ever happens and that it is sorted out quickly. They have every confidence in the adults and know they will get help and support if it is needed. They know about the different sorts of bullying. They know how to stay safe in many different situations, including when using modern technology.
- Attendance is above average and a reflection of how much the pupils enjoy coming to school.
- Pupils take on responsibilities well. The school council talks to the headteacher and governors about what can be improved and has been instrumental in making improvements, for example, to play equipment and toilets.

### **The leadership and management are good**

- Staff, the headteacher and governors work well as a team with a clear focus on raising achievement and improving teaching alongside maintaining the school as a highly caring and supportive place for pupils to learn. As a result of effective staff training and more-stable leadership, pupils' achievement has improved since the previous inspection in all subjects across the school.
- Self-evaluation is accurate and informed by accurate checks on pupils' progress and the quality of teaching. New systems of tracking pupils' progress are helping to analyse progress even more

closely but are not yet fully understood by all staff.

- Staff training is well-focused on the school's priorities and has led to improved teaching in all subjects. Staff benefit from the mutual sharing of best practice, particularly within the local consortium of schools. Staff performance is managed appropriately with salary progression being linked to effective performance. Checks on teaching and pupils' work are regular and identify clear and relevant areas for improvement. These are not always followed well enough to be sure that every improvement suggested is fully in place.
- The school improvement plan identifies the right priorities and is helping to drive improvements. However, checks on the success of each action are not always rigorous enough by leaders at all levels, including governors.
- The school works effectively with parents. They are well informed of how their children are making progress in school. They are highly supportive of the school and appreciate the helpfulness of the staff.
- The curriculum is well planned to support good progress in pupils' reading, writing and mathematics. Plenty of exciting visits and visitors and well chosen topics underpin learning and help to spark interest in learning. Pupils achieve well in sporting and musical activities. Science is well taught and enjoyed by pupils.
- Arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements.
- The local authority is effective in providing light touch support for this improving school.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors provide a good balance of support and challenge. They bring a good range of skills to their role and are keen to keep up to date with training, including in safeguarding and child protection. They are well organised and fulfil their statutory duties effectively. They know how well the school is performing in relation to national averages and are aware of the current priorities for pupils' achievement. They are kept well informed of the quality of teaching and check that decisions on salary progressions are merited in relation to effective teaching. They ensure that the headteacher's performance management is challenging. They keep a tight rein on the budget and know that pupil premium funding is spent effectively.

## 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>	112107
<b>Local authority</b>	Cumbria
<b>Inspection number</b>	401236

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	70
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	James Johnston
<b>Headteacher</b>	Gareth Jones
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	21 October 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01228 592087
<b>Fax number</b>	Not applicable
<b>Email address</b>	head@cummersdale.cumbria.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)  
[Store St](#)  
[Manchester](#)  
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2013

