

St Mary's CofE Primary School

Kendal Road, Kirby Lonsdale, Carnforth, Lancashire, LA6 2DN

Inspection dates 8–9 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
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.

- Pupils make good progress and achieve well throughout the school. As a result, their attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 is above average in English and mathematics.
- Teaching is good, with examples of outstanding practice. Good relationships and the way teachers organise their classrooms help pupils to learn well.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They are very polite, courteous and show a great deal of respect for others.
- The headteacher and senior leaders have worked effectively, as a team, to sustain and build upon the school's good performance at the previous inspection. The school has good arrangements for checking on how well it is doing and what needs to be done to improve further. The governing body is aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and is fully involved in driving improvement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Not enough teaching is outstanding.
- Pupils are not always given work that challenges them to do their best.
- Marking is not used consistently to show pupils how to improve.
- The skills of middle leaders in checking on the quality of learning through the school and taking action to bring about improvement are not fully developed.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 18 lessons or parts of lessons taught by nine teachers.
- Discussions were held with the Chair of the Governing Body, parents, staff, pupils and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at school documentation, including that relating to safeguarding, records of meetings of the governing body, assessment information and curriculum planning. Work in pupils' books and displays around the school were examined. Inspectors listened to groups of pupils read.
- Account was taken of the 34 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning and carrying out the inspection.

Inspection team

Melvyn Hemmings, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Sheila Kaye

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Mary's is a below average sized primary school.
- A below average proportion of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care, and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- It has gained a number of national awards, including the Activemark, and holds Healthy School status.

What does the school need to do to improve further

- Increase the amount of outstanding teaching by:
 - ensuring that teachers consistently provide work that challenges pupils to do their best
 - making sure that marking gives precise guidance to pupils on how to improve
 - providing teachers with individual plans that show them precisely how to improve their expertise so that it is outstanding.
- Strengthen leadership and management by fully developing the skills of subject leaders in checking the quality of pupils' learning and taking action to bring about improvement.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils achieve well from their skill levels on entering school, which is generally typical for their age. They make good progress through the school and their attainment by the end of Year 6 is above average in English and mathematics.
- Children make a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They settle in quickly and show much enjoyment in all they do. They work and play well together in pairs and small groups and are willing to make choices for themselves. Children show curiosity and are keen to learn.
- Throughout the rest of the school, pupils show interest and enthusiasm in their activities. They enjoy sharing ideas and working with others to complete tasks. Pupils work at a good pace and concentrate well for lengthy periods.
- In Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress in linking letters and sounds so that by the end of Year 2 their attainment in reading is above average. This progress is maintained in Key Stage 2 and standards in reading are above average at the end of Year 6. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher level by the time they leave school is also above average.
- Pupils speak clearly and express their ideas confidently. Their writing is imaginative, capturing and maintaining the reader's interest. Pupils' handwriting is neat and their use of grammar, punctuation and spelling is usually accurate.
- Pupils have quick mental recall skills and can use them effectively to solve number problems in real-life situations. They confidently use information and communication technology to support their learning in a variety of subjects.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make the same good progress as other pupils because of the well-targeted extra support they receive. The funding for pupils eligible for the pupil premium has been used successfully to raise their achievement, particularly in English and mathematics. It has enabled them to have individual and small group support that has narrowed the gap between their achievement and that of other pupils.
- There is no significant difference between the achievement of different groups.

The quality of teaching is good

- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, adults have a good understanding of the needs of children of this age and provide them with interesting and practical activities. There is a good balance between activities led by adults and those chosen by children. The outdoor area is used well to promote learning, such as when children were using a water tray and various containers to develop their understanding of capacity as part of their work in mathematics.
- In Key Stages 1 and 2, teachers have good subject knowledge and use questioning effectively to find out what pupils know and to extend their understanding of what they are being taught. Classrooms are managed well so that pupils are engaged in their activities and little time is lost. Teaching assistants are used well to help all pupils improve, especially disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and pupils eligible for the pupil premium.
- Although pupils' work is marked regularly it does not consistently provide them with specific guidance about how they could improve. The activities given to pupils do not always challenge them to do their best, at times being too easy for some pupils and too hard for others.
- Outstanding teaching was characterised by stimulating and imaginative activities, high engagement of pupils and their individual needs being met very effectively. This was evident in a literacy lesson for pupils in Year 2 based on the story of 'The Three Little Pigs'. The teacher enthused pupils and enabled them to make excellent progress in understanding how the different characters in the story might interact.
- Teachers develop pupils' spiritual and moral development well by encouraging them to reflect about what they have learned and by their high expectation of behaviour. Social and cultural

development is fostered effectively by the many opportunities for pupils to work together and to learn about cultures different to their own.

- Training for teachers has helped them further their expertise, especially in how they promote pupils' reading skills. Teachers show respect for pupils and other adults and this contributes well to the friendly atmosphere evident throughout the school.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' show a great deal of respect and consideration for others. They are extremely well behaved and are very polite and courteous. Their behaviour ensures that lessons run smoothly with minimum disturbance to learning.
- Pupils are fully aware of the different types of bullying, such as cyber and physical bullying, and say it is very rare. They are confident that any bullying would be dealt with promptly by staff. The views of parents, staff and pupils and a scrutiny of information kept about pupils' behaviour confirm that behaviour has been outstanding over time.
- There is an excellent understanding among pupils of how to keep themselves and others safe. This is effectively promoted through the curriculum by activities that highlight the dangers associated with the use of roads, railways and waterways. Pupils have a thorough understanding of what to do if approached by a stranger and very much agree that they feel safe in school at all times.
- Pupils' enjoyment of school is shown in their above average attendance. They arrive at school on time and are eager to get on with their work. Pupils work well with others and show respect for views that are different to their own.
- Pupils add to the life of the school very effectively by taking on a variety of responsibilities, including being a member of the school council. In so doing they give pupils a say in how the school develops, such as by being involved in the appointment of new members of staff and reviewing the school rules on behaviour.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides perceptive leadership and has high expectations of staff and pupils. Senior leaders and the governing body work well together to drive improvement and morale is high. However, subject leaders are not fully involved in checking the quality of learning throughout the school and in taking action to bring about improvement.
- The school has an accurate view of how well it is doing and what it needs to do to improve further. Senior leaders and the governing body prioritise the correct areas for development and plan carefully to set specific targets for improvement. Progress towards these targets is checked regularly to see if they are being met successfully.
- The leadership of teaching, including training and performance management, to further teachers' expertise is good. Teachers are accountable for the progress that pupils make. Challenging targets are set for each pupil and their progress towards achieving them is carefully monitored.
- Lesson observations are undertaken regularly and teachers given areas for further development. However, teachers do not always have an individual plan to show them how to take their teaching from good to outstanding.
- The promotion of equality and tackling of discrimination is good. Leaders have a clear view of the progress of different groups and are quick to intervene if necessary. This is shown by the way that funding for pupils eligible for the pupil premium has been used effectively to raise their achievement and make sure they make the same good progress as other pupils.
- The school's leaders have shown they are capable of making further improvements to the school.

- Staff are very professional and show respect and courtesy for pupils and other adults. Relationships at all levels are good and contribute positively to pupils' learning and development.
- The local authority provides light touch support for this good school.
- The curriculum is organised well to provide all pupils with effective opportunities that enhance both their academic progress and personal development. A wide range of extra-curricular activities and visits, such as to Hadrian's Wall, add interest and diversity. The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness effectively.
- The school has good links with parents that ensure they are kept informed of their children's progress.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has an accurate view of the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. It supports the school well and makes sure that safeguarding requirements are met so that pupils and staff are safe. Governors show initiative in challenging leaders about the school's performance and in planning for long term improvement. They manage the budget effectively to ensure value for money. This is evident in the way they know that pupil premium funding has been used successfully to raise pupils' achievement. The governing body takes part in regular training to maintain its effectiveness.

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	112323
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	403181

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	184
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Snow
Headteacher	Sarah Oldroyd
Date of previous school inspection	7 February 2008
Telephone number	01524 271334
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