

Dean Barwick School

Witherslack, Grange-Over-Sands, Cumbria, LA11 6RS

Inspection dates 2–3 May 2013

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.

- Achievement is good because pupils make good progress from their diverse starting points.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage provides a good start to children's learning.
- Teaching is good and there are some examples of outstanding teaching.
- Teachers usually plan well for the different needs of pupils. This successfully enables them to learn without adult support.
- Pupils behave impeccably; they are polite and respectful to adults and each other. They enjoy their lessons, like their teachers and feel safe in school and in the extensive outdoor learning environment.
- The curriculum is a strong feature of the school and provides a wide range of stimulating and exciting experiences for pupils.
- The school contributes very well towards pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The headteacher is ambitious for the school. She is well supported by a committed governing body. Together they are maintaining the good quality of teaching and working to improve pupils' progress still further.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not yet enough outstanding teaching in the school and there is a small proportion that requires improvement.
- Pupils at Key Stage 1 are not always given the chance to produce high-quality writing in other subjects.
- Resources provided for younger pupils do not always help them to organise and present their own work.
- There are too few opportunities to share the outstanding teaching practice that does exist across the school.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed six lessons, visited a session delivered by a teaching assistant and listened to pupils reading.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, two parents, members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and school staff. A telephone conversation also took place with a parent.
- The inspector took account of 12 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) as well as responses to pupils' and parental questionnaires distributed by the school. She also considered six staff questionnaires, letters and emails from parents.
- The inspector looked at a range of documents, including the school's analysis of how well it is doing, the school development plan, information about pupils' progress, checks on the quality of teaching, minutes of governing body meetings and records relating to attendance and safeguarding. The inspector also examined work in pupils' books.

Inspection team

Louise Murphy, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Dean Barwick School is much smaller than most primary schools.
- There were no pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium in 2012. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium in 2013 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 that are looked after by the local authority.)
- All pupils are from a White British Heritage and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is above average. The proportion of pupils who are supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school does not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Dean Barwick School provides flexi-school provision for pupils educated at the school for a minimum of one half-day each week. For the rest of the week, the children are educated at home.
- A higher-than-average proportion of pupils joins and leaves the school other than at the usual points of admission and transfer.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching and accelerate pupils' progress in writing, especially at Key Stage 1 by:
 - sharing the outstanding teaching practices that exist in the school
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to develop writing skills in other subjects
 - making sure that resources provided to support writing help pupils to set things out and explain their ideas.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- An extremely variable but small number of children enter the Nursery class each year and, as a result, their attainment on entry and the standards they reach at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage fluctuate considerably. However, children consistently join the school with skills below those typically expected for their age in communication, language and literacy.
- Children get off to a flying start in the Nursery class and, from their varied starting points, make particularly good progress in number, social, physical and creative development. This is because of the good teaching and stimulating experiences that they enjoy both in the classroom and outdoors. Despite this good progress, pupils enter Key Stage 1 with communication, language and literacy skills below expected levels. Staff provide well-focused reading interventions to address this but there are too few opportunities to develop writing skills in a range of other subjects.
- Assessment and test results for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 tend to vary because they are dependent on the attainment of very small groups of pupils. These small cohorts often include pupils who have started the school at times other than expected and who have not benefitted, therefore, from the good start provided by the Nursery class.
- At the end of Key Stage 2, in the 2012 national tests, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was below average overall. However, the majority of pupils completing the tests who had attended the school since Key Stage 1 made excellent progress and attained at above national levels. The proportion of pupils making expected progress in English and mathematics was recorded as below the national average because of inaccurate Key Stage 1 data. However, the proportions of pupils making more than expected progress compared well with national figures.
- In 2012, there were no pupils known to be eligible for free school meals taking end of key stage tests. Pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding this year are too few to make any comparisons with other pupils in the school in terms of their relative attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. This is as a result of the early identification of their needs and well-focused support that is skilfully provided by well-trained teaching assistants.
- Pupils who attend school on a part-time basis as part of the flexi-school programme, do not always access literacy or numeracy teaching. However, the school provides the additional social and outdoors experiences that parents want. The highly personalised support provided confirm the school's commitment to equality of opportunity for all.

The quality of teaching is good

- In the best lessons, teaching is very well planned and organised. Teachers use assessment information effectively to make sure that the needs of pupils of different ages and abilities are addressed. Learning takes place at a good pace and keeps pupils fully focused on their tasks.
- Teachers provide interesting and practical activities, both in the classroom and outdoors, that involve and interest pupils so that they are all eager to learn. For example, the Reception and Key Stage 1 class designed and built egg-protection devices. They then tested them to find which materials most efficiently protected the eggs. Teachers also planned for the pupils to visit a forest environment to find the best place to build a nest. Pupils were extremely enthusiastic about these activities and some excellent ideas were generated and discussed.
- Younger pupils are taught well how to match letters and the sounds that they make. All pupils read regularly either to an adult, independently or in small groups. Staff quickly identify any pupil requiring additional help with their reading and provide effective support packages to

accelerate reading development. Older pupils who read to the inspector were all passionate about reading and felt that it helped them with other areas of learning, such as improving their writing.

- Mathematics is taught well. In the Key Stage 2 class during the inspection, pupils were working on a range of activities that developed their problem-solving skills. All groups knew that they would have to explain their thinking to other members of the class and respond to questions from pupils and staff. One group presented their technique for estimating how many beads a container could hold. They used a range of mathematical skills very well to prove that they had come up with a very efficient estimation method.
- Some aspects of teaching writing at Key Stage 1 have improved since the last inspection. Teachers ensure that there are excellent examples of pupils' work displayed around the classroom as reference models. Moreover, pupils were provided with an exciting practical experience to support a piece of instructional writing during this inspection. However, they then went on to use a worksheet for their writing which did not help pupils to decide for themselves how to organise and present their work. As a result, very little writing was produced. Furthermore, teachers provide too few opportunities for pupils to practise writing at length in other subjects.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly. Teachers also speak to every pupil individually to talk through progress and offer guidance on how to make a piece of work even better. Pupils value these discussions and are confident that these discussions with teachers help them with their learning.
- Teachers and teaching assistants who support disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and the very few pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding provide well for the individual learning needs of each pupil.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' attitudes to learning are exemplary. They behave with the utmost courtesy and respect to adults and each other. Pupils are confident that adults are always on hand to help if they have a problem. Alternatively, on the rare occasion that an issue does come up, Key Stage 2 pupils will sit in a circle and independently sort any issues for themselves.
- Pupils' excellent conduct in lessons contributes very well to their learning. They concentrate and apply themselves extremely well; they share their ideas and help each other because they all want to do the best that they can. Pupils know what to do when they complete a piece of work and require very little direction in organising themselves in the classroom.
- The school's commitment to 20% of learning taking place outside the classroom means that pupils spend a great deal of time involved in outdoor activities in the local environment. Pupils are highly aware of their boundaries and remain within them because they know that the adults trust them to do so. They are acutely 'risk-aware' and this helps them to feel safe and keep safe both in school and in the outdoors.
- Pupils can explain different forms of bullying and the difference between bullying and 'falling out'. A very small minority of parents feel that bullying is not well dealt with by the school. However, pupils are adamant that their school is free from bullying because in their small school they 'are all one big family'.
- Pupils from the Reception class to Year 6 are able to contribute their opinions and ideas as they are all members of the school council. Recent money-raising efforts have helped them buy equipment for school and to make charitable donations both nationally and internationally.
- Parents' comments and questionnaire responses demonstrate that they unreservedly value the level of care and safety provided by the school for their children.
- Pupils' punctuality is excellent and attendance has increased so that it is now above average, which reflects pupils' enjoyment of school.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has a very clear view of the direction that she wants the school to take. She is well supported by a committed staff, parents, pupils and governors who all value what the school provides and its position in the community. She has identified the school's strengths and areas for development and has the skill and determination to improve the school further.
- Together with members of the governing body, the headteacher checks on the quality of teaching regularly. Moreover, pupils' progress is closely tracked to make sure that salary increases are awarded only when teachers help pupils to learn well. The headteacher recognises that there are examples of outstanding teaching across the school. However, her weekly four-day teaching commitment currently limits the extent to which this excellent practice can be shared.
- The curriculum meets the needs of pupils very well because it is developed specifically for the school. It utilises the whole-school environment, the nearby forest land and the local museum. The school is extremely keen to provide additional outdoor experiences for pupils and welcomes the flexi-school pupils to join such activities. For example, pupils are currently working together to build a 'bug hotel' to provide an inviting habitat for the local insect population.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is extremely well developed and supports pupils to make a valuable contribution to the positive ethos of the school. Pupils know of different religions and cultures through the curriculum and their close links with a school in Calcutta.
- The local authority has provided effective support to the school to enable the development of the Early Years Foundation Stage outdoor environment and Key Stage 1 mathematics teaching.
- Statutory duties, including financial and safeguarding requirements, are fulfilled.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors know the strengths and priorities of the school, including the quality of teaching. This is because they are kept well informed by the headteacher and visit the school regularly. Governors have recently arranged training to help them better understand school performance data, so that they can challenge and support the school even more effectively. They have agreed to increase spending on support staff to make sure that any pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding can be effectively supported when necessary. 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 their 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	112343
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	411703

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	40
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Graham Honeybone
Headteacher	Linda Graves
Date of previous school inspection	2 March 2010
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