

Appleby Primary School

Station Road, Appleby-in-Westmorland, Cumbria, CA16 6TX

Inspection dates 21–22 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- From their starting points, not enough pupils make consistently good progress in their writing and mathematical skills and knowledge by the end of Year 6.
- Teachers do not always use information about pupils' progress to help provide the pupils with activities that will enable them to move forward in their learning.
- Expectations of what pupils can achieve are not high enough and so pupils only make adequate rather than good progress.
- The quality of teaching is inconsistent throughout Years 1 to 5.
- More-able pupils do not always attain the standards of which they are capable because the level of work is not consistently or sufficiently challenging.
- While performance management is systematic, leaders do not always focus on the progress of pupils when they check teachers' performance in the classroom.
- While governors are working hard to support the school, they do not challenge leaders sufficiently well to ensure high quality teaching across the school so that pupils do as well as they should.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher is determined to bring about change; the senior leadership team is committed to build further on improvements secured so far.
- The school provides a wide range of enrichment activities that motivate and are appreciated by the pupils.
- Some teaching is of good quality and assessment systems are now more robust.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress because information about what they know and can do is used well by teachers in planning what is on offer in lessons for all children.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and they feel safe. They enjoy school and this is reflected in their good attendance.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 16 lessons. In addition, they observed the teaching of small groups of pupils receiving extra support for English and mathematics.
- Inspectors spoke to groups of pupils and to parents as they brought their children to school in the morning. They took account of 24 responses from parents to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) survey.
- Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body, a governor, staff members and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a number of documents, including those relating to child protection and safety, the school’s monitoring of teaching and school improvement.
- Inspectors heard four groups of pupils read and checked the school’s assessments of pupils’ progress in reading. They also looked at the school’s tracking system showing pupils’ progress in mathematics and English.

Inspection team

Andrew Morley, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Julie Webster	Additional Inspector
Sheila Mawer	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Appleby Primary is larger than the average sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium, which in this school provides additional government funding for children in the care of the local authority and for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, is below the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs who are supported through school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are all average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is lower than the national average, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language. The vast majority of pupils are White British.
- The school has gained the Inclusion Mark and Healthy School status.
- The school has a Strategic Resource Unit which supports pupils with additional needs. There are currently seven pupils in the unit.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning to that of the best so that it is consistently good or better across the school by:
 - providing more-able pupils with the right amount of challenge
 - ensuring teachers spend less time giving instructions to the whole class and making sure pupils have sufficient time to complete their work
 - ensuring work is specifically planned and matched to the needs of all pupils so that they make maximum progress in lessons
 - providing opportunities for pupils to be involved in tasks independently and take more responsibility for their own learning and progress.
- Raise standards and accelerate pupils' progress in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 to at least good in writing and mathematics by :
 - increasing the number of pupils who achieve the higher levels in the end of year assessments
 - providing greater challenge to pupils capable of completing harder work in all classes so that they achieve their full potential
 - ensuring that pupils are making consistent progress in all classes and all key stages.
- Increase the impact that all leaders have on pupils' standards and progress by:
 - using self-evaluation more sharply and sharing best practice in teaching in order to target specific actions for improvement
 - ensuring progress data are shared with all staff and used to set tasks that are matched to pupils' abilities
 - ensuring an external review of the governing body is made so that governors have a wider knowledge of strengths and weaknesses of the school to enable them to challenge the leadership more effectively.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' overall achievement requires improvement. As pupils move up through the school, the progress they make varies. Progress in writing and mathematics requires improvement. The targets that pupils are expected to achieve are not ambitious enough to ensure more pupils make good progress, particularly the more able pupils.
- Children join the Reception classes with skills and abilities that are typical for their age. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and an increasing number are reaching above the standard expected for the start of Year 1.
- In 2012, pupils' attainment and progress made by the end of Year 2 were average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Overall progress from Year 1 to Year 6 is variable across year groups because of differences in the quality of teaching and pupils do not always build continuously on their skills as they move up from class to class.
- By the end of Year 6, most pupils make the progress expected of them in reading, but progress in writing and mathematics, particularly for more-able pupils is inconsistent.
- Achievement in subjects other than English and mathematics is variable from class to class. There were some good examples where pupils had the opportunity to connect their learning across subjects but opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills in a range of subjects were inconsistent.
- Pupils' progress in reading is better than in writing and mathematics. Most pupils have a good knowledge of the sounds that letters make (phonics) and know how to 'break words down' when they are unsure about new vocabulary. At Key Stage 1, pupils make good use of phonics to help them read unfamiliar words. At Key Stage 2, pupils are enthusiastic readers and most read widely.
- Pupils who receive additional funding through the pupil premium make the same progress as other pupils in the school who do not receive that funding, from their starting points both through additional support and opportunities to enhance their experiences. In 2012, they did equally as well as other pupils in English and mathematics tests at Key Stage 2.
- The progress of disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs, including the eight children in the Strategic Resource Unit, are increasingly making good progress because of the well-targeted support they receive. The small number of pupils from minority ethnic groups and pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress, particularly in English.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The overall quality of teaching requires improvement. There are examples of good teaching with aspects that are outstanding within the school, but this has yet to be shared with other staff. This means that the quality of teaching is not yet consistent across the school. As a consequence, pupils' progress is uneven.
- Good or better teaching features good subject knowledge and questioning, effective use of assessment information to challenge all pupils and lessons that move along at a lively pace. Year 6 pupils were totally involved in a collaborative activity to develop a reasoned argument about the Appleby Fair. The lesson moved at a good pace and pupils helped each other to develop their thinking and produced good work.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children developed some useful language skills as they learnt about how to cooperate in a series of activities. The teacher and the teaching assistant were very skilled in guiding and prompting the children in their learning.
- In weaker lessons, teachers set the same work for the whole class and do not match work at the

right level for individual pupils; this was particularly the case in mathematics. Too often, the work set, particularly for the more able, lacked challenge. Expectations of what pupils can achieve are sometimes not high enough, especially in mathematics. Work was sometimes too easy and did not always take them forward in their learning. Pupils have too few chances to think for themselves, come up with their own ideas or learn to work things out for themselves.

- Too much time is spent giving the pupils instructions about what they will be doing at the start of lessons, which results in less time for pupils to work on their own. This limits the progress pupils make and hinders their ability to practise and improve their work.
- Expectations of what pupils can achieve are not consistently high. Staff do not always use assessment information and pupils' prior learning sufficiently well to match activities to pupils' abilities, ensuring they are all challenged.
- Sometimes lessons lack pace and pupils do not always have enough time to complete tasks or work independently, which slows the rate of progress.
- Teaching assistants are well trained and are usually deployed to where they are most needed. This contributes to the effective teaching of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs because they benefit from support in and out of class.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Appleby Primary is a very caring school. Pupils show a high level of respect, care and involvement with other pupils and staff. Pupils behave with courtesy to adults and other pupils. They have a well-developed sense of right and wrong.
- At lunchtimes, pupils are well mannered and sensibly chat at the dining tables or help to clear away. At playtimes, they behave well and line up in an orderly fashion to come back into school.
- Pupils are eager to take on responsibility at playtime and lunchtime when, for example, older pupils look after younger ones. Older pupils understand their responsibility to model good behaviour and safe practice. They show great maturity in ensuring younger pupils are looked after on the playground and around school. Pupils enjoy playtimes, which are very happy and secure for all.
- Pupils enjoy school and all groups of pupils say that they feel safe in school because of the good care and attention they are given by their teachers and other adults. As one young pupil said, 'We get to do lots of nice things and our teachers are very kind.'
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in their good attendance and pupils being consistently punctual. The attendance of pupils attending the Strategic Resource Unit is similarly good.
- Disruption to lessons is rare and pupils are keen to learn. When given the opportunity to work in pairs or small groups they do so sensibly and with enthusiasm. They listen attentively to others and respect each other's views.
- Pupils are unanimous in their rejection of bullying in any form. They say that the school teaches them about what forms bullying can take and the dangers of each.
- Parents are supportive of the school. The great majority of parents who completed the online questionnaire expressed the view that their children believe they are safe and well cared for in school.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- While the school has an accurate understanding of its performance, evaluation of information is not used sharply enough to set targets for improvement. For example, there is insufficient emphasis on the need to accelerate pupils' achievement and how improvements in teaching can bring this about.

- Subject leaders consistently check on the quality of teaching and the progress pupils are making in lessons, but, at the moment, this is not having an impact on ensuring consistently good teaching and learning. The school has available good and outstanding practice which has the potential to support improvements in the classroom.
- The school has developed a good system to track the progress of pupils. At the moment, this is not used consistently by teachers to help them in the planning of work for individual pupils.
- Staff speak positively about systems to check their performance in the classroom and the emphasis senior leaders place on improving teaching. They are equally as positive about the opportunities they have for professional development. At the moment, the link between teachers' performance and their progress along the pay scale is not sharp enough.
- This being said, school leaders are working hard to improve achievement and strive to ensure equality of opportunity for all pupils. They develop and foster good relations between pupils of all abilities and from all cultures. There is zero tolerance of any form of discrimination. Safeguarding and child protection arrangements are fully in place, regularly reviewed and meet statutory requirements.
- Leaders are greatly committed to provide the pupils with a rich school experience. The school provides significant enrichment in the curriculum and a wide range of extra activities. Residential visits, visits to museums and galleries and frequent visitors to the school are greatly appreciated by the pupils. Pupils are eagerly anticipating the residential visit to Paris and Robin Wood and are very appreciative of the whole range of extra-curricular activities. They spoke with pride about representing their school in the cricket and other teams.
- The school has good links with a range of partners, including Appleby Grammar and Warcop Primary School. The school is very active in the local community, often taking the lead on community events.
- The local authority works closely with the school and is confident that the current leadership team can achieve the improvements required.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are regular visitors to the school. They ensure that systems to check on the performance of teachers takes place and targets are linked to increases in salary but recognise that these are not currently sharp enough. Governors make sure that funding, including the pupil premium, is used well to benefit the pupils who are entitled to it. They ensure that safeguarding requirements are met. The governors take part in any additional training that will help them carry out their duties. However, they are less well informed about the quality of teaching and the progress that all groups of pupils are making. They do not hold school leaders to account sufficiently. Inspectors recommend that there should be an external review of the governing body.

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	112408
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	412168

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	284
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Baxter
Headteacher	Rachel Pearson
Date of previous school inspection	29 June 2010
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