

Ireby CofE School

Ireby, Wigton, Cumbria, CA7 1DS

Inspection dates

2–3 December 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Children settle well into school routines when they join Ireby. They achieve well throughout their time in early years because of good teaching and activities which are planned to capture their imagination.
- By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils consistently reach standards in reading, writing and mathematics that are well above the national average. This represents outstanding progress.
- Pupils make good progress overall in Key Stage 2. The proportions reaching the higher levels are increasing each year.
- Teaching is good overall and some is outstanding. Teachers and teaching assistants ensure that tasks meet the learning needs of all pupils. The marking of pupils' work is of a high quality and helps pupils to learn from their mistakes.
- The teaching of reading is particularly strong. Pupils develop a love of books and this helps them with their learning across different subjects. They are well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Whether in lessons or during their break times, they show a great deal of respect towards each other and the adults around them.
- Pupils say they feel very safe in school. They also learn to take care in their local community and in unfamiliar surroundings.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development outstandingly well. They engage in sports and music, both in school and beyond. Pupils are highly competent in using new technologies.
- The school is led and managed exceptionally well by the multi-skilled headteacher. She has created a strong staff team who share her vision for pupils to broaden their horizons and reach their full potential.
- Leaders and managers at all levels, including the governing body, have secured improvements in the achievement of all groups of pupils and in the quality of teaching. The school continues to improve.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Occasionally, there are missed opportunities in early years for pupils to build on their learning from taught sessions when they are given a free choice of activities.
- Mistakes are made with spellings because some pupils lack accuracy when pronouncing certain words.
- There are inconsistencies in how well pupils respond to teachers' marking in order to learn from their mistakes.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in lessons taught by teachers and sessions led by teaching assistants. She also listened to pupils read.
- Discussions were held with school staff, groups of pupils, the headteacher, governors 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 own performance, development plans, records of pupils' standards and progress, documents relating to attendance and behaviour, and pupils' work in their books.
- There were 15 parental responses to the online e-questionnaire (Parent View) which were taken into account. The seven responses to the staff questionnaire were also reviewed. In addition, the inspector considered a letter received from a parent and spoke informally to parents at the start and end of the school days.

Inspection team

Naomi Taylor, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Ireby is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, those supported by the pupil premium, is much lower than that found nationally. The pupil premium is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- All pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is lower than that found nationally.
- All pupils are taught in mixed-age classes.
- The early years provision is part time in nursery and full time in the Reception class.
- Since the previous inspection, the headteacher has returned from maternity leave. She has created new posts and appointed several new staff.
- The headteacher and other teachers provide support for other schools in the local area.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has received the Artsmark Silver award, Healthy Schools status, the School Games Bronze award and the Inclusion Charter Mark.
- The school has child care provision on site which is subject to separate inspection. It receives a separate report which is available on the Ofsted website.
- In this very small school the government's current floor standards do not apply.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and learning so that more pupils make outstanding progress, particularly in Key Stage 2, in order to raise pupils' achievement further by:
 - ensuring that pupils pronounce words accurately in order to improve their spellings across all subjects
 - giving pupils time to respond to teachers' marking and learn from their mistakes.
- Providing children in early years with enough opportunities to consolidate what they have learnt from taught sessions when they are given a free choice of activities.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- Ireby is led exceptionally well by the headteacher. She has created a culture in which pupils and staff alike flourish and is determined that the school will be the best it can. The headteacher is adept at leading the relentless drive to achieve this. The governing body and staff are highly supportive of her and share the same vision.
- Since returning from maternity leave, the headteacher has eradicated any teaching which was less than good. Together with her staff team and governing body, everyone regularly reflects on their practice and how to improve teaching, so that they can provide the best learning experiences for pupils.
- The work that the school does is checked very carefully by the headteacher, governors and staff. Since the headteacher's return, highly effective actions have been put in place to improve standards, such as restructuring staffing, appropriate staff training and peer support programmes. Teachers, who are also middle leaders, are not complacent and have a very clear view of what needs to be done to improve teaching and learning still further. They clearly have the expertise and resolve to achieve their aim, as is evident from their successes so far.
- The exciting subjects on offer include many real-life experiences, such as residential visits to local outdoor centres, York and Liverpool. Staff and governors give freely of their own time to support such trips, because they know how well these experiences broaden pupils' horizons and raise their aspirations. Topic work demonstrates the school's excellent commitment to helping pupils understand life in modern Britain.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is promoted extremely well. They have a good understanding of British values and learn about faiths which differ from their own. During the trip to Liverpool, for example, pupils visited the Anglican and Catholic cathedrals as well as a Jewish synagogue, which helped them to develop a greater understanding of the ways in which people of different faiths choose to lead their lives. All the junior pupils learn to play a brass instrument and many play other musical instruments. Raising funds to buy a school minibus has increased opportunities for learning beyond school.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively. It is directed towards supporting the very few disadvantaged pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, so that they make the same good progress as their classmates do. This confirms the school's commitment to making sure that there is no discrimination at the school, good relations are fostered, and that all pupils enjoy the same opportunities to succeed.
- The primary school sport funding is used very successfully. There are now more after-school sporting activities on offer as well as a specialist coach working with pupils and staff to improve their skills. This has led to more success by Ireby pupils in sports competitions. Increased levels of participation in different sports by all pupils, including younger pupils, can now be seen both at school and with local clubs.
- All required checks on adults are undertaken and meticulously recorded. Staff are very well trained in child protection. The school takes its safeguarding responsibilities very seriously and child protection arrangements meet requirements fully.
- The local authority provides a light touch support for the school but supported the governors in appointing a temporary headteacher in preparation for the planned absence of the headteacher.
- The headteacher has been instrumental in establishing the development of a network of local schools. Together with her teachers, she takes an active, leading role in this partnership and firmly believes that the work of the partnership brings advantages to the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have an excellent understanding of data and how standards of pupils' attainment and achievement compare with other schools nationally. This is because they receive regular, accurate and comprehensive reports on pupils' progress and on the quality of teaching.
 - The headteacher and teachers with responsibilities are rigorously held to account for all aspects of the school's work. Governors make sure that the performance of teachers is closely checked, underperformance is tackled effectively and that teachers' pay is linked to how effective they are.
 - Governors are led well by the Chair and vice-chair of governors. There are regular reviews of their own effectiveness in supporting and challenging all aspects of school life. A detailed information pack has been produced for those considering joining the governing body. Those who have taken up their roles relatively recently are supported well.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- There is an exceptional atmosphere of mutual respect throughout the school. This is reflected equally well in all of the responses to the staff questionnaire, in the views of all parents who met the inspector and all of the views expressed on Parent View. One parent who moved their children here from another school referred to the school as 'like a little family' and this was a term used by several parents, governors, staff and pupils.
- All the parents who talked with the inspector are extremely happy with all aspects of school life, although one parent raised a question about whether or not pupils get enough time to mix and chat when they have lunch together. Following a successful bid by the headteacher to convert an outside building to a canteen, almost all children enjoy a wholesome and healthy cooked lunch together. The inspector experienced at first hand how pupils of different ages sit together with adults, develop excellent manners at the table and enjoy chatting together.
- Pupils behave exceptionally well both in lessons and around the school. This leads to extremely good attitudes to learning and sensitive care for each other. Pupils are excellent ambassadors for the school when on trips or visits, as seen by compliments that the school receives.
- For a very small minority of pupils who struggled initially in learning to use appropriate behaviour, the highly skilled staff are consistent in their application of rewards and sanctions. This has led very successfully to improving the behaviour of these pupils within short timescales. Incident logs show that incidents of poor behaviour are scarce.
- The school council is proactive in raising money for charities. It recently organised a coffee morning and invited members of the local community to attend.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- Pupils say they feel extremely safe in school and they have very positive relationships with each other and the adults around them. They thoroughly understand different forms of bullying, although they say it just does not happen at this school. Pupils are very clear that everyone is different and everyone deserves respect.
- The importance of e-safety, both when at school and at home, is high on pupils' agenda. Parents are also very well informed of the potential dangers and how to keep their children safe.
- All parents who responded to Parent View believe the school keeps their children safe.
- Pupils develop an excellent understanding of how to stay safe in unfamiliar surroundings. For example, they assess potential risks before embarking on residential trips to outdoor education centres and visits to cities such as Liverpool and York.
- The local authority assessment of health and safety in the summer of 2014 indicated that all policies are working very well. Nevertheless, the headteacher and chair of the governing body were still planning to undertake a health and safety assessment the day after the inspection, demonstrating that there is no complacency in this school.
- Attendance is much higher than the national average and reflects the success of the school's strategies to improve attendance since the previous inspection. Punctuality is excellent.

The quality of teaching is good

- Pupils make good progress overall, because the quality of teaching across a wide range of subjects is at least good across the school and is outstanding in Key Stage 1. This is confirmed by evidence collected during the inspection, work seen in pupils' books and through the checks made by the headteacher and visiting headteachers.
- The staff team work very well together. They have regular discussions about what they can do to improve the impact of their teaching on pupils' learning. Teachers share their expertise with each other whenever possible.
- Classrooms are calm and well organised. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and encourage pupils to listen carefully to instructions and to each other. This helps pupils to get on well with their work.
- Support in class, one-to-one and in small groups, is planned well by the teachers and teaching assistants

for the learning of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs. This ensures that they make the same good progress as their classmates do.

- Phonics (matching letters to the sounds that they make) is taught exceptionally well. In early years and Key Stage 1, not a minute was wasted as pupils went about learning new sounds. The younger pupils who read to the inspector demonstrated how well they blend the sounds of letters to work out unfamiliar words. Rapid progress is made by pupils and reflects how well pupils achieve in the Year 1 phonics screening check.
- In Years 3 and 4, pupils enthusiastically read a poem which they then analysed together. Individually, pupils highlighted words which they had not come across before and they then embarked on using dictionaries and tablet computers to work out unfamiliar words. This helped them considerably to develop their independence in expanding their vocabulary for use when writing their own poem. Pupils experience writing in many different genres, as seen with Years 5 and 6 when they were writing a letter as if they were a horse in World War I.
- There is a whole-school approach to teaching mathematics. In Years 1 and 2, pupils used their individual tower of 10 cubes to work out $x+x=10$. They concentrated hard on their work and were fascinated when they were then shown that patterns can be formed. This spurred them on and their progress was rapid. Meanwhile, others in the class worked on $9+x+x=20$ and again, there was amazement at the different combinations as pupils discussed their findings.
- The headteacher has established high quality marking across the school, although pupils do not always edit and correct their work in order to learn from their mistakes, particularly in Key Stage 2.
- Much work is done to improve pupils' spellings but, occasionally, pupils are not accurate in their pronunciation of certain words and this leads to errors in spellings across subjects.

The achievement of pupils is good

- All pupils usually attain the expected level in the Year 1 phonics screening check. This is because teachers and teaching assistants are highly skilled in the teaching of phonics. The very few pupils who struggle to read are given very effective support and this leads to rapid improvements. Pupils develop a love of books from an early age. Most older pupils read with fluency and great expression, and comments were made about why they enjoy reading so much including 'It's like going on an adventure...you get lost in the story and can become one of the characters.'
- Standards reached at the end of Key Stage 1 are consistently high as a direct result of the high quality of teaching that the children experience. Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is much higher than the national average, because pupils make outstanding progress.
- Those pupils who attend Ireby for all four years of Key Stage 2 invariably make good progress. Published data can be deceiving, because the numbers of pupils in each year group are usually in single figures and this skews percentages. Those who join part way through the Key Stage are, more often than not, at a lower level than would be expected for their age. Nevertheless, they too make good progress during their time at school.
- In 2014, all pupils who attended school during Years 5 and 6 reached at least the expected level in reading, writing, mathematics and grammar, punctuation and spelling tests. Half of this cohort reached the higher levels in these subjects. This is a reflection of the improvements in the quality of teaching in Years 5 and 6, compared to when these pupils were in Years 3 and 4. All pupils made at least expected progress and the proportion making better-than-expected progress was similar to the national average.
- Since her return to Ireby, the headteacher has successfully eradicated weaker teaching in lower Key Stage 2 and inspection evidence now shows an improving picture across every year group in relation to pupils' progress. Although progress in Year 3 is improving, it is not as strong as in other year groups.
- Those who have special educational needs make good progress. This is because their additional needs are identified early and are met fully by high quality support in one-to-one and small-group sessions. Strong links with external agencies also support both academic and personal needs of individual pupils.
- The headteacher and members of the governing body ensure that the pupil premium funding is used effectively. It is directed towards supporting the very few disadvantaged pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, so that they make progress which is as equally as good as that of their classmates. The number of disadvantaged pupils in each year group is too small to compare meaningfully the standards they reach and their rates of progress with non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.
- The most-able pupils make good progress. Additional small-group tuition has been introduced recently and this is raising pupils' aspirations and speeding up their progress.

The early years provision is good

- The school makes excellent arrangements to introduce children and their parents into the early years setting. Very effective partnerships are built with parents during home visits and the opportunities made available for parents to meet with staff. Parents and staff complete a diary which the children take home each evening and have daily opportunities to speak with staff. As a result, children settle in quickly and are soon happy, secure and ready to learn.
- Good leadership and management of the early years make sure that the effective staff team keeps children safe and secure, helps them to understand routines and enjoy school. They are keen to learn and behave exceptionally well. Good teaching and care, together with carefully planned activities that are interesting and fun, keep children engaged and support learning extremely well.
- Activities inside and outdoors motivate children so that they want to learn. For example, after learning the names of different shapes and talking about their different properties, Reception children eagerly painted the parts of shapes and printed them on to paper, which encouraged them also to count the different surfaces. Meanwhile, the Nursery children went outdoors and enjoyed discovering the different shapes in the sand. However, there were missed opportunities to use more of the outdoor area in which shapes could have been hidden. Children do not always have enough opportunities to consolidate new learning when they are given a free choice of activities.
- Children make good progress across the Nursery and Reception classes. The majority of children completing their Reception year in 2014 reached a good level of development. Any child who did not quite reach a good level of development was very near to doing so. This confirms that children achieve well from their individual starting points and are well prepared for the work that they will meet in Year 1.
- Robust assessment procedures are in place to ensure that all groups of children achieve equally well, including those children in receipt of additional funding, children with special educational needs and the most-able.
- The 'Learning Journals' give a detailed account of the good progress of individual children. Staff and parents use these to record achievements made, both in school and at home. This helps adults to plan activities which are of interest to children and which challenge them to meet new goals.

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	112251
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	448419

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	48
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Adrian Hyde
Headteacher	Alison Dickinson
Date of previous school inspection	3 February 2010
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Fax number	01697 371367
Email address	office@ireby.cumbria.sch.uk

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