

Hawkshead Esthwaite Primary School

Main Street, Hawkshead, Ambleside, LA22 0NT

Inspection dates 1–2 July 2014

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		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils and their families greatly value the highly personalised attention the very caring staff provide.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage provides an extremely stimulating environment in which children can develop a love for learning.
- By the time they leave Year 6, most pupils usually attain above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Most pupils make good progress throughout their time at this school. Pupils with special educational needs progress at least as well as their peers.
- The classrooms and outdoor areas contribute well to pupils' learning. Opportunities outside the school also considerably enhance pupils' learning and development.
- The quality of teaching is good and at times outstanding. Activities are very well planned to excite and enthuse pupils.
- The school is exceptionally well led by the dedicated headteacher. All staff share her vision of bringing out the best in pupils' personal and academic development.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exceptional. They have a highly developed understanding of global issues and how they can make a positive impact on their local environment and beyond.
- All staff, including the governing body, work extremely well as a team. Their successful actions have a positive impact on improving the quality of teaching and pupils' achievements. This is an improving school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils do not always progress as rapidly in writing as they do in reading and mathematics. Some pupils' written work contains too many errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Pupils do not consistently respond to teachers' marking in order to learn from their mistakes.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching in eight lessons. In addition, the inspector made a number of short visits to lessons and listened to pupils read.
- Discussions were held with school staff; groups of pupils; the headteacher; governors; parents 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 23 parental responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) which the inspectors took into account alongside the responses to the school's own parental survey. Twelve responses to the inspection questionnaire for staff were also taken into account.

Inspection team

Naomi Taylor, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Hawkshead is much smaller than the average sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium is much lower than that found nationally. This is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs supported at school action is higher than that found nationally.
- The proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.
- All pupils are White British.
- Pupils are taught in mixed-age classes.
- Since the previous inspection, there has been an increase in the number of pupils joining the school during Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Hawkshead holds the Green Eco Flag Ambassador Award, Silver Geography Mark and Silver Learning Outside the Classroom Award.
- The school is a Centre for Excellence/Hub school for The Global learning Programme. The headteacher has gained the Global Teacher's Award and leads training for 17 schools.
- The school has achieved Full International Mark.
- 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 further in order to raise pupils' attainment and achievement, particularly in writing in Key Stage 1, by:
 - embedding the school's recent focus on spelling, punctuation and grammar and encouraging pupils to check the accuracy of their written work across all subjects
 - ensuring pupils respond to teachers' marking and learn from their errors.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children settle extremely well into school life as a result of exceptionally strong links between families, nurseries and school staff. Most children start school in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge typical for their age, although their skills are sometimes lower than this, especially in reading and writing. The Early Years Foundation Stage prepares children very well for learning in Key Stage 1 and this was the view shared by parents who spoke with the inspector.
- In the Year 1 reading screening check, most pupils achieve the expected level. This is because teachers and teaching assistants are competent in the teaching of phonics (matching letters to the sounds that they make). Those pupils who struggle to read are given effective support, leading in most cases to rapid improvements. Key Stage 2 pupils enjoy reading a wide range of books which are meticulously recorded in their reading logs. As a result, the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in reading by the time they leave school is higher than average.
- Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1 and standards in mathematics and reading are usually above average by the end of Year 2. In the last couple of years, standards in writing have been slightly lower than average, which nevertheless reflects good progress given these pupils' starting points in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- By the time pupils leave Year 6, attainment in mathematics, reading and writing is above average. In 2013, the proportions reaching the higher levels in reading and writing were well above the national average and above average in mathematics. This is as a result of consistently good and better teaching. Current data and pupils' work show that across all year groups most pupils are making good progress.
- When pupils join the school during Key Stages 1 and 2, overall they usually do so with standards lower than those expected for their age, but they make good progress from their starting points.
- Progress in writing has not been as consistently rapid as in other subjects in Key Stage 1. The school has recognised this and introduced strategies to improve spelling, punctuation and grammar across the school. As a result, progress in writing is accelerating.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress, and some do better because their different needs are quickly identified. Excellent support from teachers, teaching assistants and external agencies helps each of them to make good progress in reaching their challenging targets.
- The school provides good support for the very few pupils who are supported by the pupil premium funding, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, so that they make equally good or better progress and attain as well as their peers, in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The most able pupils are effectively challenged to aim high. Those pupils with exceptional talents are provided for well by the school so that they make the same good progress as other groups.

The quality of teaching is good

- Good or better teaching is the norm at this school. From an early age, pupils develop a desire to find out things for themselves.
- Classrooms are organised well and the content and timing of activities are planned effectively. Learning outdoors and a raft of trips and visitors to the school, capture the imagination of pupils. Pupils are clear about what they are going to learn and know what is expected of them. As a result, they are eager to learn.
- An example of pupils' thirst for learning was evident when Years 3 and 4 pupils went to the local parish churchyard with National Trust Rangers to study maps of the village dated 1963 and 1983. As they looked down over the village, they were fascinated to note the differences between what the different maps showed and talked animatedly about the changes that have

taken place over the years. Pupils made good progress in developing their knowledge in both geography and history, and this was then used to stimulate their writing and bring learning to life.

- Since September, there has been a change in the approach to teaching phonics. The younger pupils have lots of fun sounding out letters and then blending them to make words. Those who read to the inspector demonstrated their ability to work out unfamiliar words. Most pupils enjoy reading and the older pupils talked enthusiastically about their favourite authors.
- There has also been a recent change in the teaching of spelling, punctuation and grammar which is already accelerating pupils' progress. However, pupils do not have well-developed skills in checking their own work before it is marked.
- Pupils' work is regularly marked and useful comments are provided to help them improve their work. Occasionally, pupils do not always correct their mistakes in order to improve their work.
- A whole-school approach to teaching mathematics is in place and there are many opportunities to make the learning relevant and useful to pupils. For example, Years 5 and 6 pupils used their problem-solving skills to work out the time they would need to allow for a day out, having been given train times, giving time to eat a picnic and then take a bicycle ride. They selected the relevant information from the text and made good progress in applying their basic numeracy skills to solve this problem.
- Effective teamwork by teachers and skilled teaching assistants ensures a high level of support for all groups of pupils, including disabled pupils, those with serious health issues and those who have special educational needs, who make good progress as a result.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. All the parents who spoke with the inspector shared this view and as did almost all who responded to Parent View. Records also show that this is the case.
- Several parents who have moved into the area talked about how privileged their children are to attend this school, which they say has a real 'family feel' to it. Many choose to travel so that their children can attend this school.
- Its deservedly growing reputation has seen an increase in the number of pupils on roll and those joining at different times during Key Stages 1 and 2. Pupils are clearly happy to come to school and particularly enjoy the opportunities for learning outdoors. This is reflected in their well above average attendance.
- At break times, the older pupils act as excellent role models to the younger children as they distribute play equipment in an extremely orderly fashion. They take it in turns to care for the hens on Fletcher's Field, adjacent to the school, and sell the eggs.
- 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 understand different forms of bullying and, for example, the importance of e-safety. While a very small minority of parents raised a concern on Parent View about how effectively the school deals with bullying, scrutiny of records, procedures and conversations with staff, parents and pupils, led to the conclusion that concerns were seemingly unfounded, although pupils occasionally fall out.
- When pupils go on trips and residential visits, the staff encourage pupils to analyse the potential risks and how to keep themselves safe. Pupils talked animatedly about trips to London, Edinburgh and York, which clearly broaden their horizons.
- The primary school sport funding is used to broaden sporting opportunities for pupils, while developing the expertise of staff using specialist coaches. This has, for example, led to the introduction of cricket, ghyll scrambling, multi-skills and dance offered to pupils. As a result, more pupils are taking part in a wider range of sporting activities to help them stay healthy and promote their well-being.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- Staff, parents and governors highly value the passion and drive shown by the headteacher. She has established an extremely talented and dedicated staff team who put pupils and their families at the heart of all they do. Middle leadership roles are shared amongst several part-time staff who drive change and monitor impact in their areas of responsibility. As a result, most pupils make at least good progress during their time at Hawkshead and there is clear evidence that the proportion making outstanding progress is increasing.
- Regular lesson observations, impromptu visits to classrooms and analysis of pupils' work are used to very effectively check on the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. Staff are not content with teaching which is less than good. This is a key factor in why the quality of teaching is now consistently good and improving.
- Tailored staff training is in place to rapidly drive whole-school improvement. The progress of pupils is closely monitored and extra support is swiftly put into place when necessary.
- Staff work exceptionally well in partnership with external agencies to meet the needs of pupils whose current circumstances make them vulnerable. A highly personalised curriculum is in place for the small number of pupils who are disabled or who have severe learning difficulties leading, in some cases, to some outstanding progress in their personal development.
- The local authority provides effective guidance to the school with light-touch support, because there is a clear recognition of the skills of the staff team and their ability to develop their own school and to support other schools. The school is leading the development of a global curriculum across 17 schools to enhance pupils understanding of global issues and responsibilities.
- The curriculum now provides a wide range of interesting and stimulating activities, and pupils particularly enjoy topic work, art, music, sport, opportunities to learn a foreign language and trips across and beyond Cumbria. Forest School activities have led to the development of an allotment where pupils grow their own vegetables. All of this has had a significant impact on nurturing pupils' love for learning.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exceptional. Pupils make an excellent contribution to the village community. There are active links with schools overseas and displays in school show how this is promoting meaningful discussions with pupils in Ghana and France about, for example, the importance of re-cycling.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors bring with them a wide range of skills. Those governors who spoke with inspectors have an extremely accurate view of the strengths of the school and are clear about actions in place to ensure ongoing improvements. New initiatives are closely monitored by governors and they have a good understanding of data showing pupils' achievement and how this compares with other schools nationally. This enables them to challenge the headteacher very effectively. They check the progress of pupils supported by pupil premium funding to make sure that spending has a good impact on improving their achievement. The finance committee and headteacher ensure good value for money in all that the school does, including the use of the primary sports funding. Governors have an accurate overview of the quality of teaching and how it is directly linked to staff salaries. They undertake statutory duties, making sure safeguarding meets requirements so that pupils and staff are extremely safe.

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	112195
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	439559

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	67
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrew Dodd
Headteacher	Joyce Hallam
Date of previous school inspection	5 June 2009
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