

Bransty Primary School

Mona Road, Bransty, Whitehaven, Cumbria, CA28 6EG

Inspection dates 6–7 February 2013

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- From joining the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills below those expected for their age, pupils achieve well throughout the school. The progress made by pupils has been improving steadily over the last three years.
- Teaching is consistently good across the school and sometimes outstanding. Teachers are enthusiastic and ensure that pupils are inspired to learn through exciting lessons.
- The headteacher has been very successful in leading the changes that have resulted in improvements in teaching and pupils' achievement since the previous inspection. She is very well supported by senior leaders.
- Pupils' good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning are important features in their success.
- Pupils say they thoroughly enjoy reading all kinds of books by different authors. Letters and sounds are taught well so children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are eager to start to read as soon as they can.
- Pupils say they feel safe and are well aware of how to avoid unnecessary risks. They are happy in school and get on well with each other.
- The curriculum offers pupils a wide range of exciting experiences including clubs after school, local visits or travelling further afield and staying overnight.
- Senior leaders, staff and governors make a good team and are successfully improving the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The skills learnt by pupils in mathematics are not used regularly in other subjects.
- When pupils are working alone, adults do not always check to find out how pupils are doing and what they need to learn next.
- The outdoor areas for Nursery and Reception children have not been developed far enough to include plenty of activities for children to explore writing and mathematics.
- Work planned for pupils is not always hard enough especially for the more able.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed six teachers and visited 11 lessons which included a lesson observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, members of the leadership team, English and mathematics subject leaders, the special educational needs coordinator, pupils, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors observed pupils' work and listened to pupils read
- A range of the school's documentation was examined, including the school's analysis of how well it is doing, documents relating to monitoring and evaluation, systems for tracking pupils' progress, documents regarding safeguarding and key policies.
- The inspectors took account of responses to the school's most recent questionnaire for parents and 18 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View); 14 questionnaires completed by staff were analysed.

Inspection team

Sue Sharkey, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jim Bennetts

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Bransty Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The school has a specially resourced provision for hearing impaired pupils.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. A few pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is above average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding provided for children in local authority care, those from armed service families, and those known to be eligible for free school meals) is above average.
- The school meets the government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school offers both a breakfast and after-school club managed by the governing body.
- The Reception class teacher has joined the school since the previous inspection.
- The school has Healthy School status, Activemark, Kidsafe and the Lets's Get Cooking initiative.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching so that it is consistently outstanding in order to improve pupils' progress by:
 - making sure that pupils use their mathematical skills in other subjects more regularly
 - ensuring that in all lessons work is hard enough for pupils, particularly the more able
 - ensuring that teachers have consistently high expectations of how pupils present their work in all subjects
 - ensuring that when pupils are working alone adults still probe their thinking to extend their learning even further.
- Develop the Early Years Foundation Stage outdoor areas so that children have plenty of opportunities to practise their early writing and mathematical skills.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the Nursery with skills that are below what is expected for their age. Skills in reading, writing and mathematics have been the weakest areas over the last three years.
- Progress in reading across the school is consistently good because teachers and other adults are skilled in how they teach letters and the sounds they make. There is also extra support available specifically for pupils who find reading difficult. Pupils say they enjoy reading at home as well as at school because a love of reading is fostered right from the start in the Nursery class.
- As a result of good teaching and a wide range of activities children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress. Good and imaginative use is made of both the indoor and outdoor areas. A recent visit to a Chinese restaurant has sparked off children's imagination. At the same time as a 'young Chinese chef' in the classroom was mixing soup other children were sitting at a table sharing a menu, some of which had been written by children. Such activities help to develop children's writing skills at this early age alongside their creative and social skills.
- The outdoor areas are used frequently for a wide range of activities. Even when the weather is poor, the school provides children with outdoor clothing so they can continue to enjoy and learn outside. However there are not as many opportunities outdoors as there are indoors for children to practise their early writing or mathematical skills easily.
- Good progress continues through the rest of the school for all groups of pupils. The additional funding to support pupils who are eligible for pupil-premium funding has been well spent, for example, by providing staff to help on a one to one or small group basis. This has enabled these pupils to make similar good progress to other groups.
- Pupils registered in the specially resourced provision usually join their peers and work alongside them in lessons, sometimes in small groups. The progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs as well as those from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who are learning English as an additional language make good progress. They receive help from teachers as well as teaching assistants who are well trained and skilled in adapting work to pupils' individual needs.
- Although last years results for Year 6 pupils in mathematics were not as good as their results in English, the school were quick to put actions in place to address this. Already recent assessments indicate that national tests for Year 6 in 2013 will show a rise in achievement.
- The school has concentrated on improving writing, particularly for boys. A wide range of good quality writing is displayed along the corridors showing how successful this focus has been. Writing is woven successfully through other subjects; however, mathematics is not. As a result pupils do not get enough opportunities to use their mathematical skills in different subjects.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching over time is good and this is why pupils are making good progress. Typically, the pace of lessons is good so that pupils learn new skills and gain knowledge quickly and time is not wasted. A positive atmosphere in the school encourages pupils to learn well.
- Teachers plan well making sure that activities match the different needs of pupils. There are some occasions though when work could be harder for pupils, especially the more able.
- The school has been successful in its determination to improve the marking of pupils' work. Pupils now know how well they are doing as well as what they have to do next in order to improve their work further. This is linked well to pupils' individual targets, which are checked not only by teachers but by pupils themselves. Pupils say they like to know what they have to aim for next particularly in English and mathematics.
- Work in pupils' books is of a good quality and shows how successfully their handwriting

develops. However, the presentation of pupils' work is not always of the same quality.

- Teachers are skilled in developing pupils' understanding by asking them to talk about and share their ideas and methods with the class. A good example of this was seen in a Year 5 and 6 mathematics lesson where pupils were working with a partner or in groups solving the areas or perimeters of different shapes. They shared their thoughts, often questioning each other's thinking until they were happy with the answer.
- Teachers question pupils well and often probe to deepen their understanding. However, on occasions when pupils are not working with adults this questioning does not always happen and, as a result, the pace of their learning can be slower.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have high expectations of pupils' achievement and behaviour. Staff have good relationships with pupils; they offer lots of praise and encouragement and are successful in raising pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem. This helps pupils to be enthusiastic and willing to learn.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well in lessons as well as around the school and at break time. Pupils and parents indicate that good behaviour is what they normally see in school. Pupils say bullying is rare but it is always dealt with swiftly. They are taught about how to deal with different kinds of bullying, such as cyber-bullying or name-calling.
- Pupils get on well together. They are valued as individuals and there is no discrimination. Attendance has improved steadily and is now above average.
- All the pupils have good attitudes to learning. They return to lessons swiftly after break and quickly settle into their work. Pupils say they enjoy learning so that they are well prepared for their next stage in education.
- Pupils are keen to be involved in the running of the school. In their class pupils discuss how they can help the school improve and their ideas are put forward to the headteacher through their school council representatives. They help organise and make decisions about the school's 'Busy Bee Shop' where pupils can exchange their award stars received for their work or helping others, for small items they can use in school.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides good leadership. She has high expectations that are shared by all staff, ensuring a strong sense of teamwork. Since the previous inspection leaders have focused on the areas for improvement and have ensured that these have been achieved. As a result pupils' achievement, the curriculum and teaching have all improved.
- The local authority has worked closely with the school to help leaders develop their system to check how well pupils are doing. This has helped to make sure all groups of pupils make good progress, supporting a firm commitment to promoting equal opportunities. Regular meetings are held to look at pupils' work as well as teachers' marking. Thorough monitoring systems are now established and there is a sharp focus on observing teaching regularly.
- Leaders and managers know the school well and this leads successfully to actions that continue to bring about improvements. Accurate reviews of staff skills lead to staff performance management and training which has been effective in raising pupils' achievement. For example, specific training to improve pupils' writing has been very successful.
- The school has a good partnership with parents. Parents value the breakfast and after-school club where pupils have good opportunities to socialise and play together in a safe and caring environment at the beginning and at the end of the day.

- Staff are committed to their work. The staff questionnaire reflects strong team spirit.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is well supported through the curriculum which, since the previous inspection, provides a rich range of learning opportunities for pupils. For example, to inspire pupils to write, the school ensures that pupils encounter 'real-life experiences', usually outdoors, such as visits to the local beach. Activities outside the normal school day are organised for children from the Early Years Foundation Stage to pupils in Year 6. For example pupils can learn to knit, cook or sketch as well as develop sport or art skills.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is committed to providing high-quality support and challenge to the school. Since the previous inspection governors have improved their skills, which in turn has helped to improve the school. Governors now have a clear understanding of their tasks and responsibilities and know the school well. Arrangements for safeguarding meet government requirements ensuring pupils' safety and well-being. They visit the school regularly in order to work closely with senior leaders, staff, pupils and parents as well as to check teaching and the performance of pupils. Governors hold the headteacher to account through setting performance targets that are linked to pupil progress and if appropriate they make sure that teachers' pay is linked to their performance to help pupils achieve well. The governing body knows how the pupil premium is spent and checks to make sure that those pupils who are eligible to receive it are benefiting from it in the good progress that they make.

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	112167
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	401241

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	136
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stephen Jackson
Headteacher	Joanne Fearon
Date of previous school inspection	2 December 2009
Telephone number	01946 63590
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