

Arlecdon Primary School

Arlecdon Road, Arlecdon, Frizington CA26 3XA

Inspection dates	27–28 April 2016
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- This is a rapidly improving school. The headteacher's strong leadership has been behind the marked improvements made over time since the school was placed into special measures at the inspection in 2013.
- Under her leadership, the school has become a welcoming, caring and inclusive school. Every child is recognised as a unique individual and given every chance to succeed.
- Leaders are sharply focused on raising pupils' attainment. Consequently, standards are rising and all groups of pupils currently in the school, including disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs or disability, are making good progress.
- The quality of teaching is now consistently good. Due to the small number of pupils in each class, teachers know each individual child very well.
- The school works collaboratively with a number of schools in the locality. This has been pivotal in securing and rapidly driving forward improvements.
- Standards of behaviour, both in the playground and classroom, are good. This is a happy school where pupils are well cared for and safe.
- Children in early years settle in quickly at school and make good progress from starting points which are typical for their age.
- The vast majority of parents are very supportive of the school. They typically comment about the 'exceptional leadership' and 'high-quality, caring teachers'.
- Governors know the school well and hold the school leaders effectively to account.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils at key stage 1 are not always given enough opportunities to write at length across the foundation subjects of the national curriculum.
- The roles of some foundation subject leaders are not well embedded.
- Best practice is not shared effectively across the school.
- There are not enough opportunities for children to develop their reading skills in the early years.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Provide more opportunities for pupils at key stage 1, particularly the most able, to write at length across the foundation subjects of the national curriculum.
- Provide more opportunities for children in early years to develop their reading skills.
- Share best practice across the school.
- Develop the role of foundation subject leaders to ensure that they have greater impact on teaching, learning and assessment.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Since taking over the school when it went into special measures in 2013, the headteacher has demonstrated a determined resolve to rapidly drive forward improvements. She is relentless in her pursuit of excellence and shows a clear determination that each individual child should achieve to the best of their ability.
- She is ably supported by a dedicated staff team who share her resolve and determination. Morale is high and staff work well together. They typically comment, 'I am very proud to work at this school' and 'There is a constant buzz around the school which makes it a true pleasure to work here.'
- The headteacher knows her school well. She has correctly identified the school's strengths, and priorities for improvement. These are clearly set out in the school development plan, which is regularly monitored and reviewed.
- The headteacher has developed effective systems, including for performance management, to ensure that the quality of teaching delivered by both teachers and teaching assistants is good. There is a strong commitment to ongoing professional development to ensure that teaching skills are kept fresh and up to date. However, there is no structured system in place to share best practice within the school.
- The middle leaders responsible for English, mathematics and science are passionate about the subjects they lead and their roles are well embedded. However, the roles of some middle leaders of the foundation subjects are not as well developed.
- The school works well with a number of schools in the local area. They challenge each other and, working collaboratively, share good practice. This has been an essential factor of the school's success. For example, working together they have developed a system for monitoring pupils' progress without levels. The headteacher has taken a lead role in this project and is currently cascading this new assessment system to other schools locally.
- The curriculum has been designed thoughtfully to meet the learning needs of all pupils. Some subjects are taught discretely and others through topics. The curriculum is enriched by trips and visitors to the school. For example, pupils take part in inter-school debates, visit local churches and go on residential trips.
- Pupil premium money has been put to good use to support disadvantaged pupils academically. This ensures that these pupils get the same chances as everyone else and they participate in all that the school has to offer.
- The same careful consideration has been given to ensure that the sports funding is spent wisely to promote pupils' good health and well-being. External providers come into the school to deliver sporting activities and pupils now take part in more competitive sports. They have also passed on their expertise to teaching staff who, as a result, confidently run after-school clubs, such as cheerleading.
- The local authority keeps a close eye on the school and provides it with effective support. Under the leadership of the headteacher, the local authority is of the opinion that the school has been 'transformed'. It has supported her with recruiting staff, improving the quality of teaching, and developing further the role of the governing body.
- British values are well embedded within the school and are aligned closely with the school's own moral values. Through assemblies, lessons and the wider curriculum, pupils are taught the values of respect, the rule of law, democracy and tolerance. As a result, pupils leave the school well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff have a good awareness of the indicators of abuse and procedures to be followed should they be concerned about a child's welfare. They also talk with some confidence about risks such as radicalisation and extremism. There is a strong culture of safety within the school and all staff have undergone relevant checks to ensure their suitability.
- Parents are quite rightly proud of the good progress that their children make. They appreciate the close-knit and nurturing family atmosphere that the school provides. They are kept well informed about their children's progress and would have no hesitation in recommending the school to others.

■ The governance of the school

Governors have a good understanding of the quality of education provided by the school. They review the school data independently of the headteacher. This ensures that they rigorously challenge any changes in the overall progress made by different groups of pupils. The governing body has a good understanding of the role of performance management. It holds the headteacher to account and sets her challenging but realistic targets. It acts as a 'critical friend', offering support and challenge in equal measure.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- The strength of the respectful relationships between adults and pupils is clearly evident and this contributes to the good learning that takes place within the school. Staff know each individual pupil's likes, dislikes and capabilities well.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge, monitor pupils' progress during lessons well and strive to make learning fun. Parents also confirm that this is the case. For example, during a phonics (the sounds that letters make) lesson, pupils took great pleasure in identifying key words and initial sounds which were printed on brightly coloured cards. Parents also told the inspector of a recent mathematics lesson where pupils had made non-alcoholic cocktails to develop their awareness of ratios.
- Pupils at key stages 1 and 2 show a real love of reading. Using their phonics knowledge, younger pupils confidently sounded out unfamiliar words while reading with the inspector. They talked avidly about their favourite characters and what they thought would happen next in the plot. Older pupils told the inspector about the wide variety of books they read and the authors they particularly like. Children read often, including at home with their parents. Pupils make good use of the school library where they choose books to read for pleasure.
- Displays around the school clearly demonstrate that pupils are keen and enthusiastic writers. Furthermore, work in pupils' books shows that key stage 2 pupils have a wide range of opportunities to write at length across the foundation subjects of the national curriculum. However, this is less evident at key stage 1, particularly for the most-able pupils.
- Staff use questioning skilfully to extend children's learning and deepen their understanding. For example, during a mathematics lesson the teacher asked younger pupils what day it was that day. She then challenged them further by asking them what day it was yesterday and what day it will be tomorrow. Skilful questioning was also evident during a key stage 2 history lesson where pupils were learning about how Skara Brae was discovered.
- Teaching assistants are a valuable resource to the school. They work closely with the class teacher and are deployed effectively on most occasions to support groups of pupils in their learning.
- Homework is appropriate to pupils' age and stage of development, and is also linked securely to the school's priorities. For example, to improve spelling skills, pupils are given online spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPAG) homework which they access through the school's website.
- Marking is of good quality and reflects the school's policy. Pupils' achievements are celebrated and guidance is also given on what they need to do to improve their work further.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils told the inspector that they feel safe and enjoy coming to school. These sentiments are reflected in the school's attendance figures which are above the national average.
- Pupils clearly understand the different forms of bullying and the distress that it can cause. They say that bullying is rare and that if it did occur staff would very soon sort it out. A small number of parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, were concerned that bullying is not dealt with effectively. Inspection evidence, however, confirms that this is not the case.

- The school values raising pupils' aspirations for their future and developing key life skills, such as working cooperatively as a team. For example, an MP is coming to the school to talk to pupils about his role in helping to run the country. Working as a team, a group of pupils recently won an award for organising an evening of fun and entertainment for their parents. Working collectively, they presented their ideas to a local supermarket chain that provided them with food for the meal free of charge. Pupils then designed the menu, cooked the food and served it to their parents. Using their talents, they put on an evening of song and comedy to keep their parents entertained. Money raised at this event was then donated to a local charity.
- As elected members of various school councils, pupils have a voice within the school and their opinions are valued. They have been instrumental in redesigning the school playground, promoting healthy eating and, on a daily basis, they are actively involved in checking the school grounds to identify any possible safety issues.
- Good procedures are in place to teach pupils about keeping themselves safe. Through a series of structured lessons, pupils learn about drug awareness, road safety, the various types of abuse and the importance of not talking to strangers.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Standards of behaviour in the playground, classroom and dinner hall are good. Very occasionally, when pupils have been sitting for a while, they can become distracted and their attention begins to wander. At break times, pupils are provided with a good range of resources which adds to their enjoyment.
- Pupils are well mannered and polite. They are keen to learn and look very smart in their school uniform. Visitors to the school are made to feel very welcome and can quickly sense the strong, caring ethos of the school.
- Staff manage behaviour well and make their expectations very clear. Pupils have a good understanding of the school's strategies for managing behaviour and state that they are fair.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Caution needs to be taken when interpreting published data due to the small number of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6. For example, in Year 6 in 2015, one pupil represented almost 10% of the group. The inspector therefore took account of the school's own information on pupils' outcomes as well as the published data.
- Children enter early years with knowledge and skills that are typical of children their age. They make good progress in their learning and are well prepared for their transition into Year 1.
- Good progress continues as pupils move through key stage 1. Published results since the last inspection show that outcomes for children had improved at the end of key stage 1, most notably in reading and mathematics. Work in pupils' books also confirms that this was the case.
- Due to a legacy of poor teaching, which has now been eradicated, standards dipped at the end of key stage 2 in 2015. The school's own information clearly demonstrates that pupils currently in the school are making good progress in all year groups at key stage 2 and are achieving well in a range of subjects.
- The number of disadvantaged pupils attending the school is low. However, the progress of this group is very closely tracked with individual targets being set for each pupil. These are regularly monitored and reviewed. As a result, these pupils perform as well as their peers, make good progress and achieve well.
- Overall, the most able pupils in the school are challenged well in many aspects of their learning. For example, they are taught in ability groups for mathematics and phonics where activities are pitched at a higher level to encourage them to think more deeply. However, on occasions, at key stage 1, the most able pupils are not challenged in some aspects of their writing. As a result, the learning for this group of pupils is sometimes not as rapid as it could be.
- Taking into consideration their very diverse needs, pupils who have special educational needs or disability make good progress in relation to their starting points. This is due to swift intervention and good partnership working with outside agencies to ensure that the individual needs of this group of pupils are addressed.

Early years provision

is good

- The early years provision is well led and managed. Baseline assessments are accurate which ensures that weaker areas of children's learning are correctly identified and addressed. For example, to develop children's writing skills, a range of opportunities are available both indoors and outside to encourage children to make marks.
- Teaching is good and, as a result, all groups of children achieve well. Staff provide tasks that children enjoy and get on with readily. For example, during the inspection, rolling out and kneading play dough provided a fun way for children to develop their physical skills.
- Children have just as much fun outdoors as they do inside. For example, they skilfully ride on wheeled toys, build models using blocks and take part in a range of creative activities using a variety of media.
- Children enjoy story time. However, they are unable to access books independently to foster their love of reading because there are no appropriate texts readily available to them.
- Adults are kind, calm and caring. Children get to know their teachers and other adults well so that they feel happy, safe and confident. Standards of behaviour are good. Children are busy, so squabbles are rare.
- Children listen to adults, follow instructions carefully and play cooperatively with each other. They show good levels of independence. These are all qualities they need for the next stage of their education.
- Positive relationships have been established with parents. Transition arrangements are effective and children receive a home visit prior to starting in Reception. Parents are kept well informed about their children's progress and make regular contributions to their learning journeys. Ideas are also given to help parents develop their children's learning at home.
- There are no breaches of the statutory welfare requirements.

School details

Unique reference number	112151
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	10012184

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	72
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mike Hargreaves
Executive Headteacher	Wendy Figes
Telephone number	01946 861409
Website	www.arlecdon.cumbria.sch.uk
Email address	head@arlecdon.cumbria.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	4–5 June 2014

Information about this school

- This is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is above the national average.
- The number of disadvantaged pupils, those eligible for support through pupil premium funding, is below average. Pupil premium funding is additional government funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, for pupils looked after by the local authority and for children of service families.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- Children in the early years attend full-time provision in Reception and on a part-time basis in Nursery.
- The school has four mixed classes. They comprise Nursery and Reception, Years 1 and 2, Years 3 and 4, and Years 5 and 6.
- The executive headteacher holds the same position at Thornhill Primary School.
- Due to the small number of pupils in each class, the school is exempt from having to meet the government's floor standards. These are the minimum standards and rates of progress in reading, writing and mathematics of pupils in key stage 2.
- There is a breakfast and after-school club on-site which is run by the governing body.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning across all classes within the school and completed two joint observations with the headteacher.
- Meetings and discussions were held with the headteacher, middle leaders, members of staff and representatives from the local authority, parents and pupils. The inspector also met with some members of the governing body.
- The inspector took account of responses to Parent View completed by parents and staff. Responses to the school's more recent questionnaire to parents were also considered.
- Observations were made of pupils' behaviour at the beginning of the day, at lunchtimes, breaktimes and when they were moving around the school. Pupils' behaviour was also observed in the classroom.
- The inspector examined a wide range of documentation including that relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance, the school's information on pupils' outcomes and reports on the quality of teaching.
- The inspector listened to pupils read from Year 2 and Year 6 and visited the breakfast club.

Inspection team

Sheila Iwaskow, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2016

