

Calthwaite CE School

Calthwaite, Penrith, Cumbria, CA11 9QT

Inspection dates 10–11 March 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
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.

- The dedicated headteacher provides a clear sense of direction for the school. All staff share his vision for pupils to reach their full potential in their academic achievement and personal development.
- Provision in the early years is good. Children develop a genuine eagerness to learn new things and are encouraged to be inquisitive. They achieve well.
- In 2014, the proportion reaching the higher level in writing by the time they left school was well above the national average. Pupils reaching the higher levels in reading and mathematics were similar to the national average.
- Pupils make good progress overall throughout their time at school and are well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- The quality of teaching is good with aspects being outstanding. Activities are well-planned and excite and inspire pupils.
- Behaviour is outstanding. Pupils settle extremely well to their work and collaboration with classmates is strong. They show respect for others during their playtimes.
- Pupils say they feel very safe at school and learn how to keep safe in other environments.
- The rich and vibrant curriculum is extremely well planned and provides pupils with stimulating experiences within and beyond the school environment.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Visitors and trips bring learning to life. Pupils enthusiastically engage in sports and music.
- All staff, including the governing body, work well as a team. Their successful actions have a positive impact on improving the quality of teaching and pupils' achievements. The school continues to improve.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils make too many errors in their spellings.
- There is not always enough time for pupils to respond to teachers' marking and learn from their mistakes.
- In the early years there are opportunities for children to learn through outdoor activities but the limited size and quality restricts opportunities for learning.
- Some middle leaders do not always check that initiatives to raise achievement in their areas of responsibility are implemented consistently across the school.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in lessons taught by teachers. Sessions led by teaching assistants were observed and the inspector also listened to pupils read.
- Discussions were held with school staff, groups of pupils, the headteacher, governors and a representative from the local authority. A discussion also took place with a local headteacher who holds the role of Peer to Peer Review partner which is organised through the Cumbria Alliance of System Leaders.
- 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 18 parental responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) which were taken into account. The 13 responses to the staff questionnaire were also reviewed. In addition, the inspector 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

- Calthwaite is a much smaller than average sized school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils 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 children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is similar to the national average.
- Almost all pupils are White British. A much smaller than average proportion is from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- Provision in the early years is full time.
- Most pupils are taught in mixed age classes.
- The headteacher joined the school in May 2012 and has appointed several new staff.
- The school holds the silver award for Food for Life, is a registered Kidsafe school and holds the Healthy Schools award.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and learning so that more is outstanding in order to raise pupils' achievement further by:
 - providing opportunities across all subjects to help pupils improve their spellings
 - always giving pupils enough time to respond to teachers' written comments in order to learn from their mistakes.
- Improve learning and progress in early years by developing the outdoor area and increasing the opportunities and space for children to explore and learn.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by developing the skills of middle leaders in ensuring initiatives to raise pupils' achievement are implemented consistently across the school.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher knows every pupil at the school very well indeed and is highly ambitious for each one of them. He deservedly has the full confidence and support of staff and governors and demonstrates his expertise, skill and determination by leading school improvement. For example, he has appointed new highly skilled teachers, raised the quality of teaching so that it is never less than good and addressed the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection.
- Teaching and learning are checked thoroughly and training is provided to support the development of individual members of staff and also to fit with school priorities. As this is a small school all staff have some management responsibilities of subjects or different aspects of the school. Some leaders do not yet have the skills to ensure they are fully accountable for raising standards in their areas of responsibility.
- Effective systems to track pupils' progress ensure pupils receive help if they start to fall behind. Care is taken to promote good achievement for all, including the very small numbers of pupils eligible for support through pupil premium. The funding for these pupils is spent well to meet their needs. This confirms the school's commitment to making sure that there is no discrimination and that all pupils have equal opportunities to succeed in this harmonious community where good relations flourish.
- Pupils really enjoy their learning because the exciting curriculum provided is of a high quality and takes account of pupils' needs and interests. There is a wide range of after school activities and visits and visitors to further enrich the subjects on offer. For example, pupils enjoy cooking and library club and they talked animatedly about the Christmas production which they performed in Penrith Playhouse, a fantastic opportunity to see a professional theatre in practice.
- The school prepares pupils very well for life in modern British society. For example, excellent attention is given to promoting spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. An Indian dancer was a recent visitor to the school and led to pupils learning Indian dance, listening to Indian stories and engaging in producing their own Rangoli artwork using intricate geometric patterns and authentic Indian spices. This added vibrant colour and texture to their artwork.
- The primary sports funding has been used well to increase opportunities for sport and physical development. Specialist coaches work with staff and older pupils who are now able to lead sporting activities at lunchtimes. New equipment has been acquired and pupils develop their skills in a wide range of sports including tag-rugby, archery and dodge-ball. Meticulous records are kept to ensure all pupils are provided with opportunities to help them to lead a healthy lifestyle.
- School leaders including governors make sure that staff and pupils are kept safe and statutory requirements including safeguarding are met.
- The local authority provides very light touch support for this good school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governors are highly committed to and supportive of the school. They know the school well including the quality of teaching, because they receive very detailed information from the headteacher, visit the school as often as possible and question what they do not understand. Data is analysed and comparisons made with the national test results. Governors know the requirements relating to the management of teachers' performance and make sure that salary increases are linked to how effective staff are. Recently there have been some changes to membership of the governing body bringing more expertise to the role. There are governors who are able to analyse pupil progress data and ensure value for money in how the budget is spent. A range of training opportunities are planned to ensure all governors are fully up to date.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- There is an extremely high level of mutual respect between all adults and pupils. Pupils have a remarkably positive attitude toward learning; they say that they really enjoy their school work because teachers make learning exciting.
- Pupils are polite and very considerate toward each other both in class and around the school. Older pupils really appreciate the opportunities that they get to help younger friends. Older pupils are reading buddies for younger children which promotes reading for pleasure and an exemplary attitude toward learning from

a very early age.

- Pupils are confident that their opinions count and make a difference at Calthwaite School and they feel exceptionally proud of this. Pupils, the headteacher and the cook decided upon implementing a 'family service' system at lunchtimes where the older pupils serve the meals at the table. This works extremely well and 'Talking Tuesdays' sees a list of questions placed on the tables to promote discussion and ensure lunchtime is a very sociable experience.
- A very small minority of pupils have social and emotional issues and the school helps them to choose appropriate behaviour in lessons and around the school. When there are occasional behavioural issues these are dealt with in a fair manner and meticulously recorded.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- Pupils say they feel extremely safe in school and all parents that responded to the on-line questionnaire agreed that their children are safe and very well cared for.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of different types of bullying, including cyber and homophobic bullying. They are very clear that everyone is unique and deserves respect. Pupils who spoke with the inspector claimed that there was no bullying at Calthwaite and school records confirm this.
- Health and safety is always high on the school agenda and is taught explicitly through one of the topic themes. Recently 'The Detective' topic saw visits from Cumbria Constabulary and Key Stage 2 pupils learnt about the work of the police who reinforced how children can help to keep themselves safe.
- Pupils told the inspector how they are very well informed about keeping safe when they go on residential trips to outdoor activity centres. These excellent opportunities have a significant impact in broadening pupils' horizons and ensure they learn about safety beyond their village community.
- One parent told the inspector that her children 'love the school because they know how well the teachers care for them.' This reflects the confidence families have in the staff and why all who responded to Parent View would recommend this school.
- Attendance is in line with national levels. This reflects how much the pupils enjoy being at school and the excellent way in which the school works together with parents.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The headteacher has been relentless in driving improvements in teaching. Consequently, teaching is good. Some aspects such as the use of questions and exciting opportunities for writing are outstanding.
- Staff respect that every pupil is unique and take care to make sure that individual learning and pastoral needs are very well met. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together which results in an excellent level of support especially for the least able pupils and those who exhibit social and emotional challenges.
- Teachers use questions skilfully to assess pupils' learning throughout lessons. Pupils discuss their ideas and learn from each other. Staff make sure that there is a good range of resources available to pupils so that they can help themselves and each other when they are a little unsure about what to do next.
- Phonics (matching letters to the sounds that they make) is well taught and this was seen in the early years and Key Stage 1. Not a minute was wasted in Reception as pupils went about learning a new sound, 'oi.' As they blended the sound with other letters they sounded out new words to broaden their vocabulary. Key Stage 1 pupils who read to the inspector and their reading buddies demonstrated how well they used this method to work out unfamiliar words. Parents are guided in how to support reading at home. All of this helps children to develop a love of books from a young age.
- The focus on developing reading across the school has had a significant impact on improving pupils' writing. The staff team is extremely inventive in choosing topics which provide a lot of scope in developing pupils' interests. For example, 'Ocean Commotion' led to Key Stage 1 visiting an aquarium and older pupils visiting a Royal National Lifeboat Institute station. These first-hand experiences were reflected in the high quality of pupils' writing.
- However, too many errors are made with spellings and there is not enough consistency in the approach to improving spellings across subjects.
- Teachers have high expectations of what they want pupils to achieve and are dedicated in ensuring they develop skills for learning which will help them both now and in the future. Pupils have a genuine interest in collaborating with each other to improve their learning.
- For example, when Year 6 pupils shared their answers to a mathematical problem one pupil exclaimed 'I'm

intrigued by that answer!' They were then encouraged by the teacher to explain their own methodology for solving the problem. There were no inhibitions in learning the quickest route to the answer and no embarrassment in sharing how errors had been made. Every pupil made great strides in their understanding and progress. The teaching of mathematics is good overall and outstanding in Key Stage 2.

- Teachers mark work regularly, they praise pupils for work which is well done and provide good advice on how it could be improved still further. However, teachers do not always check that pupils do their corrections or follow advice when it is given so that pupils can always learn from their mistakes.
- Parents and pupils told the inspector how much they enjoy the 'Calth Café Take-Away Menu' homework. They are given opportunities to investigate and explore aspects of topics that they are particularly interested in. Staff are highly skilled in developing family learning opportunities beyond school which enhance pupils' learning.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils make good progress during their time at Calthwaite and are well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- In 2014, most pupils attained the expected level in the Year 1 phonics screening check but the proportion was lower than the national average. Changes have been made to the teaching of phonics and the timetable now allows pupils to more easily and quickly move to the most appropriate group to ensure the activities meet their particular needs. The very few pupils who struggle to read are given very effective support and is leading to rapid improvements. Pupils develop a love of books from an early age. Their excitement at changing books when the mobile library arrived was evident.
- Standards are rising across the school as a direct result of improvements to the quality of teaching. Published data can be deceiving because the numbers of pupils in each year group are sometimes in single figures and this skews percentages. Almost all pupils by the end of Year 2 reached at least the expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics in 2014 demonstrating good progress given their starting points.
- In 2014, almost all pupils reached at least the expected level in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6. Attainment overall was higher than the national average and particularly strong in writing reflecting the school's drive in improving opportunities for reading more widely and writing about aspects of topics that fire the pupil's imaginations. The proportion reaching the higher levels in writing was much higher than the national average. Those reaching the higher levels in reading and mathematics were similar to the national average.
- Results from tests in spelling, punctuation and grammar were disappointing in 2014. The school has identified that spellings were a particular weakness and the timetable in Key Stage 2 now provides more opportunities for improving this area.
- Pupils who are disabled and/or have special educational needs make good progress. This is because their additional needs are identified early and are fully met through one-to-one and small-group sessions delivered by highly skilled teaching assistants. Strong links with external agencies also support both academic and personal needs of individual pupils.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively and is directed towards supporting the very few disadvantaged pupils. This ensures that they make equally good progress as their classmates. The number of disadvantaged pupils in each year group is too small to compare meaningfully the standards they reach with others nationally or in the school.
- The most able pupils make good progress. For example, there have been pupils working at levels normally associated with Key Stage 3 in reading and mathematics. One parent talked to the inspector about how much she appreciated the school recognising her child's particular talents and the opportunities created to work with older children in another class to stretch and challenge her child. Several pupils play chess to a high level and many engage in the arts and sport to a high standard as seen during the inspection in an inter-school competition.

The early years provision

is good

- Children settle well in the early years because of good links between school, home and nurseries. Their individual starting points vary from year to year in sometimes very small cohorts. Whatever their starting

points, they achieve well. By the end of their reception year the majority of children reach a good level of development and are well prepared for the work that they will meet in Year 1. In 2014, the proportion reaching a good level of development was lower than the national average. The number of pupils in this cohort were in single figures and those who did not reach a good level of development were pupils whose listening skills and attentiveness were not secure. The staff have worked extremely hard on this area and pupils currently in early years are very attentive and know the importance of collaborating with each other to maximise their learning.

- Children learn to adopt very good manners towards each other and the adults around them. They take turns to play with different equipment and automatically say please and thank you when sharing. They behave extremely well in lessons and during breaks. Children make very good progress in self-confidence, self-awareness, and health and self-care.
- As a result of good leadership, teaching and thoughtfully planned activities, children get really involved in their learning. For example, having been captivated by very skilled storytelling, the children were questioned about what they could remember. When re-calling the fillings in 'The Disgusting Sandwich' they extended their vocabulary well as they thought of the tastes and the texture of the fillings. The children were clearly thrilled at using their imaginations which encouraged lots of speaking and careful listening. They progressed well with their learning.
- The early years is well managed. The strong and effective staff team get to know children and their parents well. Early assessment identifies the likes and dislikes of the children and staff plan for their particular needs and interests well. This helps children, including the most able and those with additional needs, make a good start to their learning. Adults skilfully question children to encourage them to think carefully and share their ideas. This also helps staff to assess what each child needs to do next to move forward with their learning.
- There is a good balance of teacher-led activities and opportunities for pupils to explore and find out things for themselves. However, although the limited outdoor space is managed and used well, there are more opportunities for learning indoors than outside.
- The Home-School Journals and 'on-line' learning journals provide very informative records of a child's achievements for parents and staff. Parents are encouraged to contribute to them by sharing the milestones children achieve at home. Learning journeys build a good picture of each individual child and are well used by teachers to help them to plan activities that support children to make good progress.
- Adults keep the children safe. For example, after discussing the meaning of the word 'pledge' and deciding what pledge they could make to their mother on Mothering Sunday, they proceeded to very carefully use scissors to cut out heart shapes for their Mother's Day cards. They were very clear about how they needed to behave sensibly when using scissors to avoid cuts to themselves and others near to them.

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	112301
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	448440

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	67
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sally Hay
Headteacher	Joseph Askew
Date of previous school inspection	22 September 2009
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