

Crosthwaite CofE School

Crosthwaite, Kendal, Cumbria LA8 8HT

Inspection dates

22–23 March 2017

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- The headteacher leads with drive, determination and moral purpose. He is an inspiration to his pupils. He ensures that pupils learn and grow in harmony with one another.
- Leaders and governors have an accurate view of the quality of education that the school provides. They have tackled the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection with resounding success.
- Leaders have extremely high expectations of what pupils can and should achieve. They are uncompromising in their pursuit for excellence for all their pupils. The standards that pupils achieve across the school are excellent.
- By the end of key stage 1, over half of the school's pupils achieve the highest standards in reading, writing and mathematics. This is well above the national average. All pupils, including the most able, excel.
- The standards achieved by pupils by the end of key stage 2 are equally high. Pupils' progress in reading and writing is some of the best found nationally. The most able pupils make excellent progress. In mathematics, pupils' achievement is above average, however, pupils would benefit from more opportunities to develop their problem solving and reasoning skills even further.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make very good progress.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. It is expertly planned to allow pupils to deepen their knowledge, skills and understanding across the wider curriculum, including humanities, modern languages, music, art and computing.
- The quality of teaching is excellent. As a result of careful planning, pupils make rapid and sustained progress across the curriculum.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is excellent. They use this to both inspire and motivate pupils.
- Teachers plan and use questions with precision to promote excellent learning and progress. The way that teachers plan learning to meet the needs of their pupils is impressive.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are exemplary. Any disruption is extremely rare. Bullying just does not happen.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is expertly developed. Pupils who are members of the ethos team regularly plan exciting learning opportunities for other pupils across the school.
- Leadership of the early years is excellent. Children make rapid and sustained progress from their starting points.
- The quality of teaching in the early years is outstanding. Children develop their academic, social and physical skills extremely well.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Sustain the outstanding progress that pupils make right across the curriculum. Improve even further the rates of progress that pupils make in mathematics by the end of key stage 2 by developing even further pupils' problem-solving and reasoning skills.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The headteacher leads with moral purpose, drive and determination. Pupils always come first in this school. There is a culture of high expectations and aspirations.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher ensure that Crosthwaite Church of England Primary School is a harmonious school underpinned by strong Christian values. The headteacher and his staff are inspirational role models for their pupils.
- Leaders and governors know their school extremely well. They have an accurate understanding of the areas of strength and those that require further improvement. Leaders have secured rapid improvements since the previous inspection. Consequently, the school now provides an outstanding quality of education.
- Frequent monitoring of the quality of teaching ensures that it is consistently excellent. Leaders ensure that all groups of pupils receive appropriate challenge and support to excel. Staff are passionate about learning and teaching. All members of staff, including teaching assistants, are involved in observations of teaching and learning. There is constant professional dialogue about how best to improve pupils' learning. Teachers and leaders form a cohesive team who work in unison.
- Leaders' systems to track pupils' progress and attainment are robust and meticulous. This includes the tracking and assessment in all subjects, including history, geography, French, art, music, computing, physical education and religious education. Leaders ensure that every opportunity is taken to check the accuracy of teachers' assessments. In 2016, there was virtually no difference between leaders' projections of how well pupils would achieve and pupils' actual results in national tests.
- Staff are proud to work at the school and their morale is high. They believe in every child and work to ensure that each pupil shines. This 'can do' culture is infectious and permeates all aspects of pupils' learning.
- Teachers' ongoing training is well structured. Leaders ensure that the most appropriate training is afforded to teachers and teaching assistants. All training is closely linked to performance management and the school improvement priorities. Effective professional development in mathematics, for example, has resulted in significant improvement in the quality of teaching in this subject.
- Relationships across the school are very strong. Pupils value the teaching that they receive. Staff, in turn, greatly appreciate the support and guidance that they receive from leaders and governors.
- The curriculum is broad, balanced, exciting and creative. Pupils have a genuine thirst for learning and the curriculum inspires them to take their learning beyond the classroom. Outdoor education, visits, trips and extra-curricular provision all enrich pupils' experiences and enable pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding to deepen quickly. Pupils can, for example, explain the history of the slave trade or spice trade in detail and talk with confidence about different European cities. The curriculum ensures that pupils make rapid and sustained progress both academically and in their personal development. It develops the progression and mastery of skills.

- The primary physical education and sport funding is used extremely well. Pupils take part in a wide range of sporting activities, both in the school day and after school. They make very good progress in physical education and are extremely successful in local competitions.
- Leaders make highly effective use of pupil premium funding to support disadvantaged pupils' progress. Plans are rigorous and effective.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) is excellent. Leaders invest heavily to ensure that pupils have a plethora of opportunities to learn about different cultures, including through relationships with partner schools. Pupils explore values in detail and speak very highly about their SMSC development. So important is this aspect of pupils' education that one member of staff has undertaken an extensive research project to ensure that pupils receive the highest-quality teaching and learning in this area.
- The headteacher has led the way in teaching pupils about British values. He has drawn up an action plan to promote British values. This maps provision across the school. Pupils have learned about democracy through discussing and debating the Scottish Independence Referendum. They unpick the rule of law by discussing the work of UNICEF in relation to children's rights in this country and across the globe. Tolerance and mutual respect are explored through visits to a Buddhist temple, for example. This work has a profound effect on pupils' development.

Governance of the school

- Governors are extremely proud of their school. They, alongside the headteacher, have helped to create the strong ethos and vision for the school and its community. Governors are ambitious for all the pupils in their school. Only the best will do.
- Governors have held leaders to account for the quality of education that the school provides. They have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. As a result, since the previous inspection, governors, alongside senior leaders, have ensured rapid and sustained improvements in the standard that pupils achieve across the school.
- Members of the governing body are highly skilled and bring their professional expertise to their roles. Governors seek out additional opportunities to strengthen their practice through additional training opportunities.
- Governors ensure that performance management procedures are robust.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders ensure that a strong culture of safeguarding permeates all aspects of school life. Where changes need to be made to strengthen procedures and practice, these are enacted immediately. All governors are expected to sign risk assessment documents to ensure that they have considered them robustly.
- Staff are fully aware of the school's safeguarding procedures. Each staff meeting begins with a review of the school's safeguarding arrangements and staff receive an

update on training. These meetings are also an opportunity for staff to contribute to safeguarding policies and practices. Where an issue comes to light, staff use the school's referral system quickly and efficiently. All staff receive appropriate and regular ongoing training. They value this guidance.

- Appropriate computer filtering systems are in place. The headteacher frequently checks with the school's internet provider that systems are age-appropriate and that unsuitable content is blocked. The school has a very comprehensive online safety policy. The headteacher models best practice in this area.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Expectations of what pupils can and should achieve are extremely high. As a result of excellent teaching, pupils achieve exceptionally well across a wide-range of subjects.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is excellent. They use this to both inspire and motivate pupils in their learning. Right across the school there is a buzz of excitement because pupils have a thirst for learning.
- Teachers plan effectively for different groups of pupils in their classes. The most able pupils are challenged to master the concepts being studied. Those pupils who require additional help also make strong progress because they receive appropriate support.
- Teachers know their pupils exceptionally well. No learning time is wasted, due to a seamless transition between tasks and activities. Teachers use first-rate stimuli to entrench pupils in their learning and deepen pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding.
- Teaching assistants are highly skilled. They ably lead sessions with a range of pupils, including the most able. As a result, pupils make rapid gains in their learning.
- There are clear routines in lessons and pupils know exactly what is expected of them. Pupils' attitudes to learning are exemplary. Pupils clearly value the outstanding education that they receive.
- Teachers use questions to address misconceptions and check pupils' understanding. Pupils act on their teachers' insightful feedback.
- Excellent use of subject specialist teachers in science, music, art, computing and French ensures that pupils have a wide range of experiences in their learning. Pupils explore the wider curriculum in great depth.
- Leaders commit to offering pupils experiential learning at every opportunity, for example, by conducting experiments in science in the outdoor classrooms, or by visiting local places of historic interest. The thoughtful planning of experiences has deepened pupils' learning.
- At Crosthwaite Church of England Primary School, pupils also take on the role of teachers. Alongside two teachers, the pupil ethos team plans lessons for other pupils across the school. These lessons support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The lessons that pupils create are fun, relevant and stimulating. Pupils value this opportunity.
- Reading, writing and communication are taught extremely well. Teachers extend pupils' skills across the curriculum and instil pupils' love of reading. Phonics skills are taught most effectively. During the inspection, pupils showed skill in reading for

meaning and an impressive ability to understand unfamiliar words. Teachers encourage pupils to read newspapers to see how journalists write for different purposes. This helps them to structure their own writing as well as keeping abreast of local and national issues.

- The teaching of mathematics is also highly effective. However, leaders recognise that even more opportunities could be taken to develop further pupils' problem-solving and reasoning skills.
- Parents are extremely well informed about the progress that their children make. All parents are unreservedly positive about leaders' work to ensure that they are fully involved in their child's education. Every parent who responded to Parent View said that they would recommend the school.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils have abundant opportunities to assume leadership positions in the school. Pupils are elected to undertake many different roles, including the 'ethos team', school council and 'green team'. This develops their confidence and self-esteem.
- Pupils regularly write to members of parliament, the chief of police and other leaders of important groups, including local and national charities. They do this to express their views or concerns about current topics. Pupils relish receiving replies. Most recently, pupils went to Kendal Town Hall to present their thoughts on healthcare. The event was attended by their local member of parliament. Leaders' work to prepare pupils to excel in modern Britain is outstanding because pupils' understanding of British values is striking.
- As part of their outdoor education, pupils have the opportunity to experience and value the world around them. They work on the school's farm to keep bees and look after the animals. Pupils also grow their own vegetables to eat in school. Parents feel that the personal development of their children is 'amazing'.
- The quality of extra-curricular provision is first-rate. Pupils have the opportunity to excel in sports, arts, music and science. They regularly win sporting competitions. Parents comment that the range of extra-curricular provision is exciting and extends pupils' learning and wider development. High numbers of pupils attend extra-curricular activities with boundless enthusiasm.
- Bullying virtually never occurs. Pupils say that 'it just does not happen' in their school and that they would not tolerate it. Parents also confirm this view.
- Pupils are taught extremely well about how to stay safe online. They are confident and articulate on this matter. The headteacher ensures that pupils receive up-to-date information about keeping safe so that pupils can make informed choices.
- Pupils know how to stay safe in their local community. Most recently, pupils enjoyed a visit by Bay Search and Rescue. This enabled them to understand how to stay safe near the coast. Pupils are clear about the action that they should take in the event of entering sinking sand or getting into trouble in the sea.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is impeccable. During the inspection, there was no off-task behaviour. It is clear that pupils do not tolerate disruption to lessons. Learning is too much fun and too important to be disturbed.
- There have been no exclusions from school in the last six years. Since the headteacher joined the school, excellent behaviour has been the norm.
- Pupils link their learning from ethos and value afternoons to how they should behave. They know and understand the importance of responsibility, love and respect. They live by these values in their everyday actions and interactions at school. There is a strong emphasis on care; this reflects the school's Christian ethos.
- Pupils' attendance is high. Parents understand the need to get their children to school on time and as such, punctuality has improved significantly since the previous inspection. No pupils are regularly absent from school.
- Pupils wear their uniform with the pride that they show for all aspects of the school.
- Pupils value the school's reward system. They love to receive certificates, merit points, or wear the 'star jumper'. They demonstrate immense pride in their achievements.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- Outcomes for pupils have improved since the last inspection. All groups of pupils make excellent progress from their starting points. Leaders have been relentless in driving up progress and attainment.
- Current pupils make extremely strong progress across the whole curriculum. Information provided by the school shows that the vast majority of pupils make rapid and sustained progress in the reading, writing and mathematics. They also make superb progress across the wider curriculum, for example in science, humanities, art, music, French and religious education. Work seen in pupils' books confirms this achievement.
- The most able pupils are stretched and challenged to make excellent progress and to achieve well. Consequently, this group of pupils reaches levels beyond those expected for their age.
- Both boys and girls make very strong rates of progress in this school. Boys make much faster rates of progress than are seen nationally.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make very good progress in all subjects from their starting points. They are well supported by teachers because of high-quality individual plans.
- By the end of key stage 2, pupils make outstanding progress and achieve exceptionally well across the range of subjects. In reading, pupils make progress that places the school in the top 5% of schools nationally. In writing, pupils' progress is in the top 10% of schools nationally. Every pupil achieves the expected standard and just under half of the school's pupils achieve the higher standard. In mathematics, although pupils' progress is above average and attainment is excellent, leaders recognise that

pupils could make even greater rates of progress with an increased focus on problem-solving and reasoning.

- Pupils' progress in phonics is excellent. The proportion of pupils who reach the required standard in the Year 1 phonics check has been consistently above average for the last three years.
- The attainment of pupils in key stage 1 is outstanding. By the end of key stage 1, every pupil achieves the expected standard in reading, writing, mathematics and science. At least half of the school's pupils also achieve a greater depth in these subjects. This is a fantastic achievement.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- Leadership of the early years is outstanding. Leaders promote high expectations of what the children can and should achieve. They challenge children to excel every day. Careful and individualised planning ensures that children flourish.
- Children enter the early years with the knowledge, skills and understanding that are broadly typical for their age. Leaders assess children as they enter the early years so that they can plan personalised learning programmes. This ensures that no child is left behind. Children's writing skills develop at a rapid pace.
- Children make sustained, quick progress in the early years. By the end of Reception Year, the proportion of pupils who achieve a good level of development is well above average. The proportion of children who exceed a good level of development is also high; some achieve way beyond age-related expectations. This means that children are extremely well prepared for Year 1.
- Leaders' and teachers' ongoing assessment of children is accurate and robust. Parents receive helpful information about their child's progress every day.
- Children are extremely happy and behave exceptionally well. They are curious and inquisitive about the world around them. The outdoor learning environment excites children. Leaders and teachers exploit all available resources, including the school's farm and woodland, to ensure that children develop rapidly.
- Teaching in the early years is excellent. Teachers provide opportunities for children work with each other and on their own. Teachers provide lots of opportunities for children to work with number and develop their reading and writing. In Nursery, children can already sound out letters and locate them in words. They are articulate and confident.
- In Reception, children are confident with shape and number. They can easily recognise numbers up to 30 and describe the properties of three-dimensional shapes. Teachers and teaching assistants use their questions expertly to deepen children's understanding.
- Phonics teaching is highly effective. Children are curious to find words that have the same sounds. Children can quickly link new words to other words that they have learned with the same sounds. This excites them.
- Children in Reception Year can write words from a picture cue card without support. They are able to spell words correctly and sound out unfamiliar words. Their writing is joined up and highly legible.

- Parents are unreservedly positive about the quality of teaching and learning in the early years provision. Leaders and staff have forged excellent relationships with parents. This contributes to the outstanding progress that children make. Parents say that it is such an amazing school and that the children are so lucky to have such excellent teachers.
- Leaders are extremely thorough in identifying and supporting children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result, these children make excellent progress.
- Safeguarding arrangements in the early years are effective. All statutory welfare requirements are met. Clearly established routines contribute to children's ongoing safety.
- Leaders and teachers receive appropriate support from the senior staff. They value ongoing training and development opportunities. One member of the early years team is a lead practitioner across the local area.

School details

Unique reference number	112317
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	10032294

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	71
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Judi Webster
Headteacher	Matthew Jessop
Telephone number	01539 568471
Website	www.crosthwaiteprimary.net
Email address	admin@crosthwaite.cumbria.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	14–15 March 2013

Information about this school

- The school is a smaller than average primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below average. There are too few disadvantaged pupils to report on their progress and achievement.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is below the national average. The school does not receive any additional funding to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The number of pupils in each year group varies from 13 to five, so published information about pupils' achievement varies greatly and is not comparable year on year. There are too few pupils to report on whether the school met the government's

floor targets in 2016. These standards set the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning in all classes. Some observations were conducted jointly with the headteacher. The inspector also observed collective worship.
- The inspector undertook an in-depth analysis of pupils' work across key stages. In addition, the inspector looked at a wide range of pupils' work in lessons.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, the early years leader, members of the governing body, subject leaders and with teachers.
- The inspector listened to a group of pupils read.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour during lessons, to and from lessons and during break and lunchtime. The inspector met formally with a range of pupils from across the school. In addition, the inspector also spoke informally with pupils in lessons and around the school.
- A range of documentation was scrutinised by the inspector, including the school's own self-evaluation, the school improvement plan, records of ongoing teacher training, governors' minutes, performance management information and records of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. The inspector also examined attendance and behaviour records, safeguarding documentation, school policies and the school's own information about current pupils' progress and attainment.
- The inspector spoke with parents as they brought their children to school. In addition, the inspector took account of 43 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire and 42 free text responses from parents.

Inspection team

Jonathan Smart, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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