

South Walney Infant and Nursery School

Amphitrite Street, Walney, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria LA14 3BZ

Inspection dates

17–18 July 2018

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| 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 | Good |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders and governors have established a clear vision that makes South Walney Infant and Nursery School a 'safe, welcoming and happy place' for children to learn.
- Pupils conduct themselves well around school and in lessons. Teachers set clear expectations for pupils' behaviour and apply these consistently.
- The curriculum that leaders and governors provide makes good use of the opportunities that exist in the local area and environment. Pupils learn about their local community while developing skills across a range of subjects.
- Leaders and teachers monitor pupils' progress rigorously. They take effective action if they see that pupils are at risk of falling behind.
- Teachers plan lessons that routinely meet the needs of almost all pupils. Sometimes, the most able pupils do not make the progress that they could in mathematics because the work that they are given is not challenging enough.
- Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. However, they know that they need to ask more challenging questions about particular groups of pupils so that they can help leaders to improve outcomes even further.
- Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, achieve well. The improvements to outcomes in 2017 have largely been maintained in 2018 because leaders have established a strong focus on the progress of all pupils across the school.
- Pupils develop their phonics skills well because the quality of teaching is good. The majority of current Year 1 pupils reached the expected standard in the phonics screening check in 2018.
- Support for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, and for disadvantaged pupils, is highly effective. They make good progress towards their individual targets. Some attain similar standards to other pupils nationally and in school.
- Children in the early years make good progress from their various starting points. The proportion of children reaching a good level of development has increased in 2018. Teachers have worked successfully to improve the early reading and writing skills of boys so that more are ready for Year 1.
- Procedures for keeping pupils safe from harm are effective. Pupils say that they feel safe in school and parents and carers agree with this view. Staff are trained to be vigilant and know how to report concerns about pupils' welfare.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Leaders and governors should ensure that:
 - the most able pupils are challenged consistently to enable them to reach the highest standards in mathematics
 - governors continue to refine their skills in holding leaders to account so that outcomes for all pupils improve even further.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders and governors at South Walney Infant and Nursery School have established a strong ethos that focuses on making the school a 'safe, welcoming and happy place where everyone is valued and respected'. They are deeply committed to enabling children and pupils to develop as learners and as young citizens within their own community and in the wider world.
- Leaders use a range of information to arrive at an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. This helps them to develop clear development plans that they share with staff so that everyone works together to improve the school. As a result, teachers and support staff speak confidently about the priorities for their work.
- The headteacher has inspired and motivated staff to recognise their own leadership potential. Staff have undertaken training and worked alongside leaders from other schools to develop their experience and skills. Senior and subject leaders now take more responsibility for school improvement, so leadership capacity has increased.
- The work that subject leaders do in school, and with colleagues in other schools, has helped them to develop a better overview of standards in their subjects. They provide important training and advice which are improving teachers' subject knowledge. For example, support from subject leaders has enabled teachers to increase their understanding of how to use digital technology in lessons.
- Leaders make sure that teachers have opportunities to share good practice with each other and to give each other feedback. Teachers and staff value this process highly and say that it has enabled them to improve.
- Leaders, including subject leaders, carry out a range of activities to monitor the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the curriculum. They check the work in pupils' books and provide clear feedback and guidance to teachers and support staff so that they can improve their teaching. As a result, the quality of teaching across the school is good.
- Leaders have established effective systems for measuring the progress that pupils and groups of pupils make from their individual starting points, especially in English and mathematics. This enables them to hold teachers to account and to make sure that they take action where pupils are at risk of falling behind.
- Leaders engage in regular activities to test out the accuracy of assessments so that they can be sure that pupils are making enough progress over time. Almost all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, make at least the progress that is expected of them and many make progress that is better.
- Leaders and governors are well aware of the many opportunities and challenges that the school's location presents. They are ambitious for pupils to do well in school and in their future lives. Governors and leaders have therefore established strong links with local industry in order to provide pupils with a broad range of experiences that will capture their interest in science, technology and mathematics. For example, scientists visit the school and engage pupils in scientific activities and experiments. Pupils who spoke to inspectors literally gasped with excitement when they were asked to talk

about their learning in science.

- The curriculum that leaders have established draws upon the community, as well as the wider environment, so that learning across a wide range of subjects is meaningful and relevant. For example, pupils compiled and wrote information for families about low-cost activities using the local environment, organised it alphabetically and published it as a book for local families to raise funds for the school.
- Leaders make effective use of the pupil premium funding to improve the outcomes of disadvantaged pupils. They have made changes to the way in which they set out their plans to use the extra funding. This provides governors with more precise information about how the money is used.
- Leaders and governors make sure that pupils develop spiritually, morally, socially and culturally. They promote fundamental British values well across the school. They have established close links with the local church and promote pupils' awareness of other faiths through activities such as a visit to a Buddhist temple. Pupils develop empathy through participation in charitable initiatives, and they learn about the importance of treating others with fairness and respect.
- Leaders and governors have made good use of the physical education (PE) and sport premium to expand and develop the activities that pupils undertake. Professional coaches have also worked with teachers to improve their PE subject knowledge. Pupils now participate more frequently in activity clubs, such as football, dance, yoga and multi-skills.

Governance of the school

- Governors are fully involved in the development of the school's ethos and have played a significant part in establishing the strong links that exist between the school and the local community.
- Governors speak with passion about their drive to improve pupils' experiences of science, technology and mathematics in order to prepare pupils well for the economic and employment opportunities of the region.
- School leaders provide governors with accurate and detailed information about the outcomes of pupils, including specific groups of pupils such as those who are disadvantaged or those who are the most able. As a result, governors have a clear understanding of the school's priorities for improvement. However, they recognise that sometimes the questions that they ask about different groups of pupils do not provide leaders with enough challenge to help the school to improve even further.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Governors have made improvements to the security of the school site, and pupils say that they feel safe at school.
- Governors and leaders have established a very strong culture of safeguarding in the school. There are robust systems for checking and recording the suitability of staff and volunteers who work with children. Governors and leaders have established clear practices for protecting pupils from extremism and radicalisation and for keeping pupils

safe from harm.

- Staff are vigilant and understand how to report any concerns that they may have about the welfare of pupils. Systems for working with a range of children's services are effective in making sure that children get the support that they need. The actions leaders take are timely and appropriate.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Pupils throughout the school benefit from teaching that is consistently good. Teachers set clear expectations for pupils' behaviour. As a result, pupils settle quickly to work and develop good attitudes to learning.
- Teachers use their good subject knowledge to plan carefully for the different learning needs of pupils. They make sure that they build on what pupils already know and can do. They deepen pupils' understanding by helping them to apply their knowledge to new situations, for example when learning how the endings or 'suffixes' of groups of words change from singular to plural. This helps pupils to feel confident when they are learning something new and they make progress as a result.
- Teachers provide work for almost all pupils that is challenging and helps them to make good progress, especially in English and mathematics. Pupils told inspectors that teachers 'are trying to make us learn better by making it a bit harder'. On occasions, however, the work that the most able pupils receive does not challenge them enough in mathematics, especially in problem-solving and reasoning.
- Teachers help pupils to become keen learners by building on their interests and motivating them to find out more. For example, in Year 2, pupils who had been enjoying pirate stories were keen to learn how to write more persuasive letters to the captain so that they could apply for a 'job' on his pirate ship.
- Leaders and teachers make sure that pupils have opportunities to practise their reading, writing and mathematical skills in wider curriculum subjects, such as science, history and geography. For example, pupils typically write about the life cycle of frogs after observing them in the school pond. This helps pupils to develop and apply their knowledge and skills across the curriculum.
- Teachers provide feedback to pupils in line with the school's policies. Pupils know what this feedback means. They told inspectors that it helps them to correct their mistakes and to improve their work.
- The vast majority of parents are firmly of the view that the school provides the right amount of homework for their children. Parents value the information that they receive about the progress that their children make and the curriculum that the school provides.
- Teachers take opportunities to promote equality of opportunity and to develop pupils' awareness of diversity. Pupils learn about celebrations and festivals from other cultures. They learn to understand differences and similarities between families, for example when they learn about weddings.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils feel secure and confident in class because teachers and support staff have established clear routines and expectations for pupils to follow. Pupils settle quickly to work and have positive attitudes to their learning.
- Pupils listen respectfully to teachers and respond quickly to instructions. They chat animatedly to each other about the work that they are doing and learn to listen to what each other has to say.
- Leaders and teachers know children and their families well. This helps them to make sure that important information is shared in order to help pupils learn well. Parents say that they value the support that they and their children receive from school, for example when children have suffered ill health or have SEN and/or disabilities.
- Pupils take part in a range of activities that enable them to develop an understanding of citizenship. They are proud to be 'eco warriors' and learn the importance of conserving energy and water. They take part in clearing their local beach of litter. Pupils learn to be compassionate through activities as diverse as taking part in charity work and rescuing wildlife.
- Pupils take on roles and responsibilities in school that help them to support other pupils and to prepare them for the next stage in their education. For example, some pupils use their technology skills to become 'digital leaders' who support their peers with their technology learning in class. Leaders work with neighbouring junior schools to make sure that these pupils can continue their responsibilities when they move into key stage 2.
- Pupils know how to make healthy choices at lunchtimes. They write their own descriptions of what constitutes a 'healthy lunch'. They are enthusiastic about the activities that leaders provide to promote their physical and mental health, such as gymnastics, dance and yoga.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Classrooms are orderly places in which pupils can learn effectively because teachers have high expectations and apply rules consistently. Pupils from the school council explained to inspectors how this has a positive impact on behaviour in school.
- Incidents of bullying are rare. However, pupils understand what bullying is and know that, if it does occur, their teachers will make sure that it stops.
- Pupils conduct themselves well around school, walking quietly as they move between rooms and the indoor and outdoor areas. They are respectful to visitors and are keen to talk about what they are learning and why they enjoy school.
- Attendance at school is generally strong, although recent illnesses have had an impact on the overall attendance of current pupils. Leaders have established clear procedures for monitoring absences and work hard with the local authority to ensure that pupils develop good attendance habits. Information from the school's systems for monitoring

attendance shows that, in the few instances where absence has been more persistent, it is improving.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Following the disappointing outcomes in 2016, leaders took swift action to put things right again. They made improvements to the way in which pupils' progress is assessed and monitored, and to the quality of teaching in mathematics and phonics. As a result, outcomes in 2017 were much better.
- In the key stage 1 national tests in 2017, more pupils achieved the expected standard than the national average. This was also the case for achievement of the higher standard – known as 'greater depth' – in reading and writing. Pupils' achievement of the expected standard in mathematics in 2017 was similar to that of other pupils nationally, and slightly lower at greater depth.
- The proportion reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check in 2017 was also close to the national average.
- Information from the school's systems for monitoring and tracking pupils' progress shows that the current Year 2 cohort have made strong progress from their individual starting points.
- The number of pupils in the current Year 2 cohort is unusually small for the school. This means that the outcomes for any one pupil have a bigger impact on the overall picture. However, the proportions of pupils currently in Year 2 who attained the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics in the 2018 key stage 1 national assessments and tests were still broadly similar to, or very slightly lower than, those in 2017. The proportion who reached greater depth was slightly higher in each subject.
- The proportion of current pupils reaching the expected standard in the phonics screening check in Year 1 in 2018 has remained stable and is similar to that in 2017.
- Disadvantaged pupils benefit from the good teaching and support that they receive. Information from the school's assessments shows that they make strong progress from their various individual starting points. Some make even better progress than other pupils nationally and in school. Leaders ensure that, where disadvantaged pupils need additional help, they receive substantial support.
- The support for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is very effective. They make good progress towards their individual targets and some attain standards in line with other pupils in school.

Early years provision

Good

- Leaders use a range of information to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's early years provision. They have an accurate view of its strengths and comparative weaknesses.
- Leaders have established rigorous procedures for monitoring and tracking children's progress from the time that they start school. Leaders and teachers check their

assessments regularly with other schools and with the local authority and, as a result, they know that these are accurate.

- Most children start at the school's Nursery with skills that are below those typical for their age. They make generally strong progress in the Nursery and Reception classes because the quality of teaching and learning is good.
- An increasing proportion of children start school in the Reception class having attended other nurseries first. Leaders and teachers have established good relationships with other providers so that they can share important information that enables children to make a strong start at South Walney.
- Teachers have put in place a range of initiatives to ease children's transition from home to school. Parents value these initiatives and say that they make a difference to how quickly their children settle in.
- Leaders and teachers work effectively with other professionals, such as speech and language therapists, to make sure that children who need extra help access support as quickly as possible. As a result, children who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes learn in a bright, well-organised and stimulating environment that offers them plenty of opportunities to learn indoors and outdoors. They learn to keep themselves safe, for example when playing on larger equipment outside. Children learn about difference and diversity through their activities and through the resources that their teachers provide.
- Children manage their own behaviour well because teachers have established clear rules and routines that are appropriate for the children's ages and stages of development. Procedures for keeping children safe from harm are strong, and the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the early years foundation stage are met.
- Leaders noticed that fewer boys than usual reached a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year in 2017. They took swift action to address the issue. For example, they introduced a strong focus on stories that were likely to appeal to boys. They improved the quality of the teaching of phonics and provided workshops for parents to explain how children learn to read. These changes have had a positive impact. More boys achieved a good level of development in 2018 and attainment overall has increased for both boys and girls.
- Parents value the information that teachers give them about their children's progress. Parents contribute to the initial and ongoing assessments that teachers make, for example by telling them how well children are practising their storytelling skills at home. Feedback from parents shows that they welcome the workshops that teachers provide because they help them to understand more about how best to support their children's learning.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 112212 |
| Local authority | Cumbria |
| Inspection number | 10042475 |

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

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| Type of school | Infant |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 7 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 164 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Rev Andrew Batchelor |
| Headteacher | Nancy McKinnell |
| Telephone number | 01229 471 457 |
| Website | www.southwalney-inf.cumbria.sch.uk |
| Email address | head@southwalney-inf.cumbria.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 4 th March 2014 |

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized infant and nursery school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is well above average.
- Fewer pupils than average have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in classes in each year group, including the Nursery. Some of these observations were carried out jointly with school leaders.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work across the range of subjects.
- Inspectors listened to some pupils reading.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around the school, at breaks and at lunchtime.
- Discussions were held with senior leaders, governors, subject leaders, support staff and pupils. The lead inspector also spoke to a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents, including the school's plans for improvement, behaviour logs, attendance records and minutes of governing body meetings.
- Inspectors took into account the 50 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. They also took account of the 13 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Mavis Smith, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Sue Dymond

Ofsted 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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