

Yewdale School

Yewdale Road, Carlisle, Cumbria CA2 7SD

Inspection dates

10–11 July 2018

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	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The trust, headteacher and senior leaders have developed a harmonious and inclusive school, where all are encouraged to thrive and 'be the best you can be'.
- Leaders, staff and pupils are proud to be members of the Yewdale School community.
- The trust and local advisory board make a positive contribution to school improvement. They know the school well and challenge leaders to improve outcomes for pupils. They bring a wide range of skills to support the school effectively.
- Changes to staffing have strengthened leadership and teaching. Leaders place a strong emphasis on providing staff with well-planned training to improve their skills.
- As a result of improvements to teaching and learning, standards have risen, and pupils achieve well.
- Teachers plan support carefully to meet the needs of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities.
- Disadvantaged pupils currently in school are making good progress.
- Leaders make sure that staff teach pupils how to keep themselves safe.
- The leadership team has set high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Around school, pupils behave well and respect others. They are very welcoming and polite. In lessons, pupils are keen to do their best.
- Staff teach phonics well. Younger pupils read and write new words with confidence. Across the school, pupils learn to value reading and to read regularly and with understanding.
- In the early years, children make good progress from their different starting points. Staff plan engaging and interesting activities so that children can develop their early skills.
- Communication between home and school is not sufficiently developed. Parental attendance at events to support pupils' learning is low. Parents and carers would like to receive more information about school improvements.
- The proportions of pupils attaining the higher standards are rising. However, in some subjects and in some classes, the most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, do not reach the standards of which they are capable.
- Leaders have planned an engaging and exciting curriculum that captures pupils' interests. However, pupils do not have a secure understanding and knowledge of fundamental British values, diversity and equality.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of the most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, who attain the higher standards across the curriculum.
- Strengthen communication and partnerships with parents so that they:
 - know how to support their children’s learning
 - are fully informed about the work of the school.
- Develop the curriculum so that it gives pupils a more secure understanding and knowledge about:
 - fundamental British values, including democracy and the rule of law
 - diversity, including other cultures and other religions
 - people with different genders, ethnicities, sexualities or disabilities.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher has established a culture that is very firmly focused on pupils' achievement and welfare. Staff support and challenge pupils to reach their potential and realise the trust's motto to 'be the best you can be'.
- Leaders are aspirational for pupils. The skilled leadership team have enthused and engaged staff and pupils. Staff work harmoniously together and share a strong pride in the school.
- Leaders within the school and across the trust have put in place thorough systems to check the school's provision, including how pupils are progressing in their learning. Leaders monitor provision closely and carefully evaluate their findings. Their detailed knowledge of the school informs their decision-making.
- Staff feel valued by leaders. They appreciate the opportunities that leaders give them to develop their skills and knowledge. The headteacher is proactive in providing opportunities for senior and middle leaders to take on leadership roles to help the school to develop.
- Staff are given frequent opportunities to work with leaders and other colleagues from across the trust. This strengthens provision and gives staff the chance to share their expertise.
- The curriculum that leaders have planned is engaging and fun. Leaders provide a wide range of interesting learning experiences that capture pupils' attention, such as a Year 3 farm visit to enhance their science learning. There are a wide range of extra-curricular activities and trips which broaden pupils' horizons, such as residential trips in Years 4 and 6.
- Middle leaders in subjects such as history and science check pupils' learning carefully. They have a detailed knowledge of how pupils achieve and use this information to improve teaching and learning across the curriculum. Leaders have identified that in some subjects and classes the most able pupils are not challenged sufficiently to reach the higher standards.
- Leaders use the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils carefully. This contributes significantly to the strong progress that these pupils make during their time in school. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils has improved significantly due to leaders' actions.
- The coordinator for special educational needs works well to ensure that the additional support that pupils receive is precisely matched to their needs. Leaders are proactive in making sure that this group of pupils receive teaching that is of a good quality. They check the progress of these pupils very carefully and ensure that they are challenged to achieve well.
- Pupils achieve well in sport and develop new skills. This is because leaders use the physical education and sports premium funding carefully to improve teaching.
- Through the school's well-embedded learning behaviour policy, pupils take responsibility for their own actions. For example, they learn to be resilient and to not

give up when challenged in their learning. Cooperation with others is evident in the way that pupils interact in class and around school. Leaders celebrate times when pupils make the right decisions. Staff teach pupils to value their achievements and give them the skills to deal with the challenges of life.

- The curriculum does not provide pupils with a detailed understanding of British values, including democracy, the rule of law and equality of opportunity. Pupils' knowledge and experiences of different cultures, backgrounds and ethnicities are limited. Although leaders have planned a religious education curriculum that includes other religions, pupils' understanding of these requires further improvement. Pupils learn that all are valued and equal. However, pupils have limited knowledge and understanding as to how equality applies to people with different genders, ethnicities, sexualities or disabilities.
- Leaders have established a warm, friendly school and strive for close partnerships with parents, through regular events and communication. However, learning events such as phonics information sessions and online safety workshops are not well attended by parents. As a result, many parents are not fully involved in supporting their children's learning. Some parents would like to receive more information from school leaders about the work of the school.

Governance of the school

- The trust, the local advisory board and school leaders work very closely to ensure that the school continues to improve. Through their unified and uncompromising leadership, they have established an inclusive school where all pupils are valued and encouraged to thrive.
- The members of the board are dedicated, committed and knowledgeable. They have a wide range of skills and update their training very regularly. Members of the board have a very secure knowledge of the strengths of the school and areas for further development. They are keen to build on the progress made in improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and the most able.
- The members of the local advisory board provide the right balance of challenge and support for leaders. They make frequent checks to ensure that improvements to the school are realised and sustained.
- The members of the board check that leaders use additional funding effectively.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The systems in place to check that adults in school are safe to work with children are secure. These are checked regularly by leaders and the local advisory board.
- Leaders ensure that pupils' safety is a high priority and that staff are vigilant. They make sure that staff receive appropriate training to identify any signs of possible danger or potential abuse. Leaders have created a culture in which pupils feel safe and know that they have someone to talk to if they are worried. School staff nurture vulnerable pupils and work with them and their families to address areas of concern. Pupils value the support that they receive.
- The procedures for reporting any incidents or concerns are applied effectively. Staff intervene, for example, to provide families with support when pupils are frequently absent. The school works closely with parents and external agencies to make sure that

pupils are safe. Leaders ensure that pupils' attendance is carefully tracked.

- Staff give pupils plenty of opportunities to learn about keeping themselves safe. For example, pupils learn about cycling safety and road safety. Pupils are confident about how to keep themselves safe online.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Staff have high expectations for pupils' learning and frequently refer to the school's learning behaviours in lessons. Staff and pupils have a shared understanding of what successful learning looks like. Across the school, pupils are cooperative and resilient, and lessons are a hive of activity with no learning time lost.
- Teachers plan engaging hooks to learning, which capture pupils' interests and imagination. In literacy in Year 2, staff dressed up as characters from 'Jabberwocky' by Lewis Carroll to enthuse pupils about the poem. An engaging Year 1 writing project involved pupils investigating a crime scene to work out which fairy-tale character had stolen books from school.
- Teachers and teaching assistants use language precisely so that pupils develop their learning in different areas of the curriculum. Staff question pupils skilfully and ask them to explain their thinking. Teachers encourage pupils to have a go and to tackle tricky problems. As a result, pupils are confident, resilient learners and persevere in their work.
- Since the school opened, staff have been successful in raising the proportion of pupils attaining the expected level in phonics by the end of Year 1. Pupils learn to read with fluency and understanding. Across the school, staff promote pupils' love of reading. Reading areas are bright and attractive and staff give pupils plenty of opportunities to read for pleasure.
- Teachers plan writing activities which develop pupils' skills and competency. Pupils write for a range of different purposes and apply their skills in grammar, spelling and punctuation. Pupils quickly develop fluency in their handwriting and their work is well-presented and neat. Pupils develop their writing skills well across the curriculum.
- In mathematics, pupils have a good understanding of number and their written calculations are accurate. Teachers have taken steps to develop pupils' reasoning and problem-solving skills. Pupils work well together to tackle challenging work and to explain their thinking. Teachers quickly address misconceptions and make sure that pupils are secure in their knowledge. As a result of improvements in teaching mathematics, standards are rising rapidly.
- Teachers plan work very precisely for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. Staff work closely together to ensure that this group of pupils very quickly receive additional support when needed.
- Across the school and across different subject areas, staff accurately and regularly assess pupils' progress. Teachers use this information to improve their planning and teaching. For example, recent improvements in science lessons have resulted in pupils developing their understanding of scientific methods, including fair testing and prediction.

- The learning environment across the school is vibrant and engaging. Walls are adorned with pupils' intricate and attractive artwork. Staff make classroom areas exciting and fun, such as a 'camp out with a good book' role play area in Year 2, complete with tepee and camp fire. Learning displays throughout the school are used to support pupils' learning and celebrate their work.
- In some subjects and in some classes teachers do not plan work that sufficiently challenges the most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged. Consequently, these pupils do not consistently achieve the higher standards of which they are capable.
- The homework set by teachers is helpful and engaging. As part of a geography project, pupils in Year 4 had made an intricate model city as a homework project, including an airport, fire station and supermarket. Pupils spoke with enthusiasm about how this had supported their learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- Staff's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Leaders place a high priority on supporting pupils, including the most vulnerable. The recent appointment of the school's engagement and information officer has strengthened the support given to pupils with concerns or mental health issues.
- Staff are proactive in providing early support for pupils' well-being. A recently introduced system to check pupils' emotional well-being each morning is already having an impact.
- Leaders make sure that pupils lead healthy lives in school. Pupils are encouraged to attend sports clubs and increase their physical activity. Pupils enjoy a wide range of sporting opportunities including netball, football and tag rugby. They develop their skills across a range of sports. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about their recent successes in inter-school sporting competitions including football and netball. Pupil sports leaders take pride in promoting health and well-being through activities such as organising events at the school's sports day.
- Staff teach pupils to be thoughtful and considerate to others. Pupils take part in charitable fundraising events. They show respect for each other and for the environment.
- The school's curriculum has not fully developed pupils' understanding of other cultures and religions. Across subjects there are not enough examples of pupils learning about people with different genders, ethnicities sexualities or disabilities. Pupils have a limited understanding of the range of British values and how these apply to their lives.
- Pupils are given opportunities to develop their independence. Residential trips in Years 4, 5 and 6 encourage pupils to take part in team-building activities and to enjoy new experiences such as rafting and climbing. This helps to develop pupils' confidence and prepare them well for their next stage of education.
- Staff work well with secondary schools to ensure that transition for all pupils runs

smoothly. Some pupils make additional visits to their new schools, accompanied by members of staff, to allay any concerns or anxieties.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are polite and welcoming and are respectful to others.
- Pupils report that bullying does not happen. Staff teach pupils how to recognise bullying behaviour and pupils are confident that staff listen to them if they have any concerns.
- Pupils wear their smart new uniforms with pride. They are proud to attend Yewdale School. Pupils are confident and self-assured and value their time in school. In classes, pupils are keen and enthusiastic learners. They have a very clear understanding of how to be a successful learner and use this knowledge to persevere and succeed.
- Around school, pupils are calm and show consideration for others. They play well together at breaktimes and support each other in class.
- Attendance has improved and is in line with national averages. Leaders have put in place well-planned measures to improve the attendance of the small number of pupils who do not attend school regularly enough. Staff engage closely with families to make sure that effective support is in place. This has had a positive impact.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils' attainment in phonics is above the national average by the end of Year 1. Pupils quickly acquire early reading skills and use this knowledge in their writing. Staff plan additional support for those pupils working below the expected standard to make sure that they make good progress from their different starting points.
- By the end of Year 2 in 2017 pupils' attainment at expected levels was broadly in line with the national average for reading and mathematics in key stage 1, but lower for writing. The proportion of pupils working at greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics was below the national average. This year's assessment information shows that standards are improving in key stage 1. Pupils' attainment, at both expected levels and greater depth, is well above last year's national averages for reading, writing and mathematics. Work in pupils' books confirms that pupils make strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics in key stage 1. In other subjects, some of the most able pupils are not achieving the higher standards.
- By the end of Year 6 in 2017 pupils' attainment in reading and writing was in line with national averages but lower in mathematics. The 2018 provisional assessment data for the end of Year 6 shows that standards have been maintained for pupils working at expected levels in reading and writing. However, the proportion of pupils working at the higher standards has fallen. In mathematics, provisional data shows that standards are improving, and more pupils are working at expected levels and higher levels by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils' workbooks and leaders' assessment data show that in some classes the most able pupils are challenged in their work and make good progress over time. However,

there is still some variability across classes and subjects in the attainment of the most able pupils in key stage 2.

- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points. This is because staff plan work carefully to meet the needs of these pupils. Staff work closely with outside professionals such as speech therapists to help pupils overcome any barriers to learning. Leaders have taken effective actions to improve the attendance of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- In 2017, disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 did not make as good progress as other pupils nationally. Teachers give disadvantaged pupils currently in school appropriate, well-planned additional support. This contributes significantly to the good progress that this group of pupils is now making.

Early years provision

Good

- Most children join the early years with skills and knowledge that are below those typical for their age, particularly in mathematics and literacy. As a result of engaging and well-planned learning opportunities, children make good progress through the Nursery and Reception classes. The proportion of children reaching a good level of development was in line with expectations for the age group in 2017 and has risen further this year. Children leaving the early years are well prepared for the challenges of Year 1.
- Children in the early years classrooms behave well. They are cooperative and enthusiastic learners, playing happily with sustained concentration. This is because staff plan activities that hold their interest and challenge their thinking.
- Each of the early years classrooms is bright, engaging and fun for children. During the inspection children were playing happily in the travel agent role play area, writing passports. Others were making holiday lists. Through such opportunities, children develop their early reading and writing skills. Children use their phonics skills in their independent writing. Their workbooks show that children make good progress in their literacy.
- Staff teach phonics well. Children quickly develop confidence in reading and read for pleasure. Plenty of books and printed work in the indoor and outdoor areas are used to support children's learning.
- Teachers plan additional support for children who have SEN and/or disabilities in the early years. Through work with parents and other professionals, leaders make sure that this group of children get the early support that they need to make good progress in their learning.
- The early years leader works well with colleagues from other schools. For example, she attends assessment moderations to ensure that her measures of children's progress are accurate. Staff in the early years keep their skills and knowledge up to date through regular training.
- Leaders work hard to develop communication and joint working with parents, starting with home visits before children start school. Leaders recognise that some learning events and workshops are not well attended by parents. This reduces the effectiveness

of learning support that parents are able to give their children at home.

- The learning environments across the early years are safe and secure. Children collect and use equipment safely and move calmly around the classrooms. Adults supervise children well and provide a warm and nurturing environment.

School details

Unique reference number	141995
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	10046614

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	270
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees/Local Advisory Board
Chair	Debbie Francis/ Joyce Keetley
Headteacher	Robert Lakin
Telephone number	01228 830036
Website	www.yewdale.cumbria.sch.uk
Email address	admin@yewdale.cumbria.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Yewdale School is an average-sized primary school.
- The school opened in September 2015 and is part of Cumbria Education Trust.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who attend the school is in line with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is well below the national average as is the number of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is in line with the national average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning across a range of subjects and in each year group.
- Inspectors held discussions with staff, including senior leaders, subject leaders and strategic leaders within the trust. An inspector also spoke with the chair and vice-chair of the local advisory board as well as the chief executive officer of the trust.
- Inspectors met groups of pupils from key stage 2 and talked with pupils around the school. Inspectors heard pupils read from Year 2 and Year 6. They observed pupils during breaktimes and lunchtime. Inspectors also considered the 46 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for pupils.
- Inspectors checked a range of pupils' workbooks.
- Inspectors spoke to a number of parents and took account of the 44 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including written responses to Ofsted's free-text facility.
- Inspectors took into account the 17 responses to the inspection questionnaire for school staff.
- Inspectors scrutinised a variety of documentation, including the school's own self-evaluation and development plan, school policies and procedures and the school's own assessment information. They also scrutinised a range of documentation related to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Elizabeth Stevens, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Michelle Joyce	Ofsted Inspector
Paul Edmondson	Ofsted Inspector

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