

# Ashfield Infant & Nursery School

Newlands Lane, Workington, Cumbria CA14 3JG

## Inspection dates

6–7 November 2018

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

- Senior leaders set high expectations for staff and pupils. They are very well supported by middle leaders and the governing body.
- Leaders and governors are clear and precise in their strategies for improvement. They check effectively the impact of their actions and the quality of teaching. This ensures that pupils develop their skills and knowledge well across a wide range of subjects.
- Teaching staff have a thorough knowledge of pupils' previous learning. This enables them to respond skilfully to pupils' individual needs. As a result, pupils develop independence and tackle challenging work.
- Leaders focus on the impact of teaching on different groups of pupils. Consequently, all groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, make outstanding progress.
- Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities make very strong progress and are very well supported. Nurture work, including mindfulness lessons, support pupils in improving both their academic and personal skills.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent and contributes significantly to their enjoyment of school. They rarely miss a day of school, including in Nursery and Reception classes.
- Leaders and all staff are excellent role models. They engage with pupils in a manner that consistently embodies the high standards they rightly expect.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons, around the school and at lunchtimes is of the highest order.
- Leaders provide a wide range of learning opportunities that help pupils develop into very confident and well-rounded learners who thrive. They are well prepared for the next stages in their education.
- The overwhelming majority of parents and carers speak highly of the school.
- Children in the early years benefit from high-quality provision that enables them to make outstanding progress. However, the outdoor provision for Reception children is not of the same high standard as that of the Nursery.
- The broad curriculum is well planned to give pupils a wide range of experiences and broaden their horizons. Middle leaders have implemented strategies to meet the needs of the most able pupils in subjects other than English and mathematics. However, this is not fully embedded.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the quality of leadership and management by:
  - ensuring that the needs of the most able pupils are more consistently met in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, and thereby further strengthen pupils' outcomes, by:
  - continuing to improve the Reception outdoor provision so that it is of the same high quality as that of the Nursery.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Outstanding

- Leaders' aims of 'finding, in detail, the strength of each child and drawing that out to develop all children in our care' is evident in all aspects of the school. All parents who spoke to inspectors were glowing in their praise for the actions of leaders and the ethos of the school. Families acknowledged that the school offered an excellent education and that senior leaders were always approachable.
- School improvement plans are detailed, focused and include measurable outcomes. Leaders review the school's effectiveness thoroughly against these outcomes. They are accurate in their self-evaluation.
- Leaders demonstrate a clear warmth and passion for the care of the pupils as individuals. This has led to the sincere and positive relationships between adults and pupils seen throughout the inspection. Pupils trust their leaders to do the best for them and parents agree strongly that leaders care for the pupils and keep them safe.
- The school is highly inclusive. Leaders ensure effective spending of additional funding for the pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. They ensure that these pupils are very well supported as quickly as possible on joining the school. Their effective work with agencies results in outstanding provision for these pupils.
- Leaders at all levels have a clear understanding of the quality of teaching and learning through regular monitoring. They regularly review action plans to ensure that all staff fulfil their responsibilities to improve pupils' learning.
- Governors and senior leaders ensure that all staff receive the appropriate training to enable them to undertake their roles effectively. One member of staff said: 'The support we receive makes us the teachers we are. We always know how to improve ourselves and provide the best education we can for our pupils.' At all levels of leadership, the school demonstrates it has strong capacity to continue to improve even further.
- Leaders' implementation of the curriculum ensures that provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. Pupils are taught about a wide range of faiths and cultures, and this helps them to develop a high level of understanding of diversity. Pupils learn about democracy, including how this was demonstrated in the election of their school and eco-councillors. They are extremely well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Reading has been a focal point of leaders' work to raise standards. Leaders and staff promote excellent communication between home and school. Leaders also use every opportunity to promote a love of reading. These effective strategies ensure that pupils develop into confident readers.
- Leaders and governors use the pupil premium funding effectively to ensure that the achievement of disadvantaged pupils matches that of other pupils nationally. They use detailed personalised plans to provide highly effective additional teaching sessions, ensuring that no pupils fall behind.
- The primary school physical education (PE) and sport premium is spent effectively.

Specialist sports coaches help pupils to remain fit and healthy. Leaders measure the impact of the funding effectively and provide a range of sporting opportunities linked to clubs within the local community, including cricket and rugby. They use PE to improve children's motor skills in the early years.

- Leaders ensure that pupils enjoy and experience a broad range of subjects that enhance their knowledge and skills. Art and music are strong features of the school, with specialist musicians providing opportunities in ukulele and choir. Work in pupils' books shows a very high level of understanding, especially in science and geography. Leaders have planned and implemented a very structured high-quality curriculum. Middle leaders are starting to monitor their subjects to give the most able pupils stronger opportunities in subjects other than English and mathematics. However, this is still at an early stage in some subjects.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governance is highly effective. Governors are linked to subject areas and are particularly prominent in supporting and challenging leaders. They are regular visitors to the school and gather information about the school's performance from a variety of sources. They make regular visits and talk to staff and pupils. For example, they held conversations with pupils to gather their views. This has contributed to improvements, such as better outcomes for boys.
- Governors know the school well and receive regular, detailed updates. They have a very strong understanding of pupils' progress information and can identify the current priorities for school improvement. Their knowledge and awareness enable governors to challenge all leaders effectively about the performance of all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged.
- Members of the governing body clearly identify their part in school improvement, for example working with leaders and pupils on the school's vision the 'Ashfield Way', and revising the curriculum. Governors have a clear awareness of the need to be able to compare their own information about the school with a national benchmark to challenge leaders effectively.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have successfully created a safe culture in the school. They maintain careful records, and staff know what to do if they have any safeguarding concerns. Leaders ensure that staff and governors attend up-to-date training, including on the prevention of radicalisation. Effective procedures are in place when staff are appointed. Pupils feel safe, and all parents who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, were confident that their children are safe.
- Pupils are cared for well. They are confident that there is someone to talk to should they have any worries. There is a wide range of strategies, such as worry boxes and nurture lessons, to enable pupils to express any concerns they have. Leaders work closely with families and external agencies to ensure that pupils quickly get help as and when necessary.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Outstanding

- Teachers use their very strong knowledge of pupils' skills to ensure that they have work that is very well matched to their needs. Other adults are deployed strategically to work with pupils, including the most able, inside and outside the classrooms.
- Teachers have exceptional subject knowledge and this enables them to match work expertly to the needs of the pupils. All staff use questioning skilfully to develop learning and support the deepening of ideas. Teachers' clear expectations and encouragement ensure that the pupils always achieve their best.
- All staff model skills very effectively to clarify their high expectations of learning outcomes. Teachers' consistent management of behaviour is highly effective in ensuring pupils' excellent learning outcomes.
- Teachers plan specific 'learning ladders' for each lesson which clearly enable the pupils to progress quickly as they work at exactly the correct expectation for their ability. They are therefore very clear about what they are learning and what they have learned previously. Pupils in Year 2 are able to check their work against their own targets and correct their own work as necessary.
- The teaching of phonics in the early years and key stage 1 is highly effective. Teachers use their knowledge of pupils' previous learning to ensure that they are constantly developing their knowledge and skills.
- Reading texts are incorporated carefully into learning to ensure that pupils learn from a wide range of books. Pupils in key stage 1 read with interest and expression. Home-reading records show excellent communication between parents and the school. Children, including in the early years, demonstrate enjoyment and resilience when tackling more difficult texts and thoroughly enjoy the challenge. All pupils are eager to read.
- Mathematics lessons develop and reinforce pupils' basic skills, while the most able pupils' work allows them to move quickly on to more complex challenges. Teachers provide very valuable opportunities for pupils of all abilities to apply their mathematical knowledge to reason and solve problems at greater depth. Work in pupils' books demonstrates excellent progress and illustrates the high standards expected of all pupils.
- Teachers ensure that pupils regularly apply their grammar and spelling knowledge in writing. They teach lessons that clearly meet the needs of individual pupils. This ensures that pupils develop very good writing skills. For example, one Year 2 pupil wrote: 'Yesterday I went on an amazing adventure. I was walking slowly in the soft, white, peaceful snow. I walked around colossal trees.'
- Pupils make outstanding progress in English and mathematics. Leaders' excellent medium-term planning ensures that their progress in a wide range of subjects is also very strong.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

## Outstanding

## Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils are enthused by the opportunities they have to influence the school's direction and improvements in the local area. For example, pupil councillors successfully arranged for more litter bins in the local environment and improvements in the local park. Pupil 'natter jacks' regularly visit the local residential home to read to residents. This activity is also used to give pupils real-life opportunities for writing when communicating to the adults they meet during these visits.
- During the inspection, teaching staff were caring at all times and encouraged exemplary behaviour. The strong start pupils make in early years allows pupils to become collaborative and inquisitive learners.
- Pupils understand British values such as respect for law and democracy clearly, and in an age-appropriate way. Pupils value respect for each other and they can explain about other faiths knowledgeably. During the inspection it was clear that pupils care deeply for each other's happiness and well-being.
- Leaders ensure that pupils are taught how to keep safe in a wide range of situations. Pupils are able to explain how school assemblies help them to keep safe. They are clear about how to keep safe online and near roads. They also understand how to keep themselves healthy through their choices of food and the importance of exercise.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Staff model and share clear expectations of behaviour. They provide very positive and encouraging support for pupils. As a result, pupils behave very well in lessons and in all parts of the school. They move around the school extremely sensibly and calmly, constantly demonstrating self-discipline and cooperation. The way pupils collaborate together in their work and at unstructured times is a significant strength of the school.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to school. They take great pride in themselves and their school. A typical comment from parents was: 'My child always looks forward to school.' As a result, attendance is above the national average. Leaders follow up absence promptly and work closely with individual families to provide support on the rare occasions it is needed.
- Pupils are polite and welcoming. They are courteous to their peers and adults. All classrooms and areas within the school are calm and orderly and no time is wasted in lessons or when pupils are moving around the school.
- Pupils are proud of their school and their work. They take care with their work and how they present it. Staff make the environment stimulating through inspiring displays of work that the pupils use in their learning. All parts of the school are well cared for by pupils and staff alike.

**Outcomes for pupils**

**Outstanding**

- Pupils in all year groups make outstanding progress over time. In 2017, published outcomes for the expected level for Year 2 dipped in reading and mathematics, bringing them in line with the national average. This was a result of new strategies in mathematics and reading not being fully embedded. The 2018 provisional results show that attainment in these subjects was above the national figure, both at the expected standards and at greater depth.
- Leaders monitor carefully all groups of pupils to ensure that they have made outstanding progress from their different starting points. The standard of work in books verifies current assessment information showing that pupils continue to perform very strongly across a wide range of subjects. For example, in geography, pupils compared physical and human features of Workington from a range of geographical sources.
- High-quality teaching has ensured that the proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard for the Year 1 phonics check is significantly above the national average.
- The effective use of the pupil premium funding enables disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, to make outstanding progress. This funding gives disadvantaged pupils access to highly effective interventions. Leaders use current assessment information to ensure that disadvantaged pupils, including the most able, make very strong progress.
- The additional help that pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities receive in class and through additional interventions is closely tailored to their needs. Assessment information and work in books shows that pupils in this group also make outstanding progress.
- Senior leaders use assessment information to identify where a sharper focus is needed. As a result of this careful monitoring, there have been recent improvements in pupils' spelling. These strategies have addressed successfully the comparative weaknesses in some aspects of writing. Consequently, all groups of pupils either make very good or outstanding progress from their starting points in English.
- The most able pupils continue to perform very well, due to the very strong teaching that consistently meets their needs. These pupils continue to achieve at greater depth, and current assessment information shows that the most able pupils are making outstanding progress in reading, writing and mathematics. They do not achieve as much depth in subjects other than English, mathematics and science.

### Early years provision

### Outstanding

- The children in Nursery and Reception classes make outstanding progress from their starting points in early phonics, reading, writing and mathematics. Children who join the school in the Nursery year make particularly strong progress. Their outstanding start in the early years prepares them exceptionally well for Year 1.
- Most children start school in the Nursery or Reception Years with skills and abilities that are below those typical for their age. Outstanding practice in Nursery ensures that they enter Reception having improved their skills significantly.
- The vast majority of children enter early years in the Reception year. Nearly three quarters of children reach a good level of development by the time they start Year 1. This is just above the national average and represents outstanding progress from the

children's low starting points. Leaders make very good use of additional funding for children from disadvantaged families to enable them to make outstanding progress.

- In early years classes, children regularly produce pieces of written work and this enables them to develop their skills and improve standards in writing. They make outstanding progress in breaking down and blending sounds to read unfamiliar words. Teachers ensure that high levels of involvement and enjoyment contribute to children's rapid progress, for example by involving the use of actions in the learning of phonics.
- The teaching and support provided for children in the Nursery classes are of a very high quality. Teachers create exciting opportunities for the children to discover and explore their area. For example, the 'construction theme' is weaved through many areas. This ensures that adults develop links in children's learning.
- Children communicate with each other with increasing confidence, skill and enjoyment. They are confident in approaching and wanting to share their knowledge with adults. They behave extremely well and develop their communication and social skills, because staff are calm, warm and approachable. Adults show a high level of care for the children. They have received appropriate training in keeping children safe, including paediatric first-aid training.
- Teachers maintain the records of children's work and assessments in detailed learning journeys, which provide a clear account of children's progress and learning. Parents also contribute to the records. Regular observations and detailed assessment records ensure that leaders can identify clearly how children are performing. Records clearly show how leaders are assessing and developing children's progress in all areas, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Leaders in the early years have a clear understanding of the children and staff and are clear about the future direction of early years provision. In addition to home visits, teachers liaise with other early years settings to undertake moderation exercises and establish accurate assessments of children's learning and progress.
- The outdoor area is used well, particularly by Nursery children where a wide range of activities is available to excite and engage them. Adults support children's learning with precise questioning. However, the outdoor provision for Reception children is not of the same high quality as that of the Nursery or of the indoor provision.



## School details

Unique reference number	112146
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	10046393

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	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	191
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Claire Humes
Headteacher	Mrs Rachel Field
Telephone number	01900606301
Website	<a href="http://www.ashfieldinf.cumbria.sch.uk">www.ashfieldinf.cumbria.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:admin@ashfieldinf.cumbria.sch.uk">admin@ashfieldinf.cumbria.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	8–9 December 2010

## Information about this school

- The school is much larger than the average infant school.
- The on-site nursery has been part of the school since September 2016.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium funding is lower than the national average. The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is also lower than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is lower than the national average. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is also lower than the national average.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning throughout the school, sometimes with leaders.
- Inspectors and leaders reviewed a wide range of work in pupils' books. Inspectors looked at pupils' work during lessons and spoke to pupils about their learning.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders and with members of the governing body. A meeting was held with the local authority advisor. Inspectors also reviewed minutes of meetings of the governing body.
- Parents' views were considered through the 53 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and in conversations with parents at the beginning of the school day.
- Groups of pupils read to the inspectors. Inspectors also heard pupils read during visits to classrooms and talked with them about their attitudes to reading.
- Inspectors considered a wide range of documents, including those relating to school improvement and how additional funds for disadvantaged pupils are allocated. They also evaluated information relating to pupils' progress, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors reviewed safeguarding records and the central record of recruitment checks.

## Inspection team

Simon Hunter, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Stephen Rigby	Ofsted Inspector
Maggie Parker	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

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