

Inspection of a good school: Kirkoswald Church of England School

Kirkoswald, Penrith, Cumbria CA10 1EN

Inspection dates:

22 January 2020

Outcome

Kirkoswald Church of England School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This school plays an important role at the centre of the rural community that it serves. Pupils and staff are happy here. The headteacher's ambitions for all pupils to succeed are shared by staff and governors. Pupils are encouraged to explore, dream and discover. Their individual talents and interests are nurtured. Pupils achieve well and flourish in the caring environment that leaders have created.

Pupils told us that they feel safe in school because teachers know and understand them. They behave well. Pupils said that any bullying is rare and is sorted out by staff. Pupils play together nicely during well-supervised breaktimes.

Pupils contribute positively to the life of the school. They hold positions of responsibility, such as monitors at lunchtime and as members of committees. Members of the eco-committee lead the school's conservation work. Pupils talked proudly about a recent tree-planting project that they have been involved in.

Leaders provide opportunities that enrich the curriculum and extend pupils' learning. Pupils experience life in a busy city, they perform at the local music festival and they represent the school at sporting events. Parents and carers appreciate all that the staff do for their children.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have designed a curriculum that meets the needs and interests of pupils. It fosters pupils' enthusiasm for learning and their curiosity about the world. Pupils work hard and enjoy learning. There is little disruption to lessons.

Curriculum plans match the ambition of the national curriculum. They set out what pupils need to know and make connections across a broad range of subjects. Pupils apply their knowledge effectively to new learning. As a result, pupils know more and remember

more. Pupils achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Staff share ideas and expertise, including with colleagues in other schools. Most teachers have secure subject knowledge. This means that most teachers deliver the planned curriculum well. However, in some subjects, such as science, some teachers are less confident in their own understanding of key knowledge. Leaders are taking action to support teachers who are not secure in their knowledge of specific subjects.

Children learn phonics as soon as they start in the Reception class. They practise the sounds that they are learning in a range of activities. The books that children and pupils read match the sounds and words that they are learning. Parent workshops about phonics and early reading are well attended. Parents know how to help their children with their reading at home. Only a small number of pupils were eligible for the phonics screening check in Year 1. Nearly all met the required standard. Skilled staff support pupils who fall behind so that they catch up quickly.

Leaders promote a love of reading across the school. Pupils enjoy listening to stories. Pupils told us how inspirational they found the biography of Nelson Mandela. Pupils explained how the book 'Wonder' helped them to see life from the perspective of others. Pupils value the opportunity to read different types of books. They choose books from the well-resourced library to support their research in other subjects. Pupils are accomplished readers. They achieve well in reading.

Children in the Reception class quickly start to apply their phonics knowledge in their own writing. For example, they write lyrics to accompany the rhythms and sounds that they make with a selection of percussion instruments. By Year 2, pupils apply effectively their expanding vocabulary. In key stage 2, most pupils have a good understanding of grammar, spelling and punctuation. Many pupils use this knowledge well in their independent writing across a range of subjects. However, in some year groups, pupils have limited opportunity to apply their writing knowledge. In these year groups, pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

Pupils embrace all of the opportunities that leaders provide to enhance the curriculum further. Pupils told us about the visits to places of worship to learn about other faiths. They spoke enthusiastically about visits to museums and to the theatre. Pupils shared their ambitions for the future to be environmentalists, lawyers and teachers. They enjoy facing new challenges during outdoor learning activities and on residential trips. Pupils are proud of their school and the friendships that they make.

Governors understand the challenges and benefits faced by staff when working in a small school. Governors are mindful of staff's workload. Staff feel valued and well supported by leaders. Governors use their knowledge and skills effectively. They ensure that leaders maintain a good quality of education at the school. They are proud to be part of this thriving community.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Checks are carried out to make sure that all adults in the school are safe to be with pupils. Staff know the signs of risk to look out for because of the high-quality training that they receive. They understand the procedures to follow should they have any safeguarding concerns. Leaders ensure that vulnerable pupils and their families have the support that they need. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations, including when using the internet, and when they are around farm machinery.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some year groups, teachers do not follow the planned curriculum for writing. As a result, pupils' opportunities to apply their spelling, grammar and punctuation knowledge vary. In these year groups, pupils do not achieve as well as they could in their writing. Leaders need to ensure that teachers in all year groups apply the curriculum plans effectively to enable pupils to achieve as well as they can.
- When teachers are not secure in their subject knowledge, for example in science, this hinders pupils' understanding in these subjects. Leaders need to ensure that teachers have the knowledge that they need to deliver the detailed curriculum plans effectively to enable pupils to know more and remember more.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in February 2011.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	112253
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	10111067
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	81
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Mark Bowman
Headteacher	Greta Ellis
Website	www.kirkoswald.cumbria.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	23 March 2016

Information about this school

- The school had its most recent section 48 inspection, undertaken by the Diocese of Lancaster, in June 2015.

Information about this inspection

- During the inspection, we spoke with pupils about their work and school life. We spoke with the chair of governors, two members of the governing body, the headteacher, subject leaders and members of staff. We also had a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority.
- We considered the 22 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and the nine responses from the online staff survey. There were no responses to the pupil survey.
- We looked in detail at several subjects. These were reading, writing and science. We met with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke to teachers and spoke to pupils about their learning. We also looked at pupils' work and listened to pupils read.
- During the inspection, we reviewed a range of documentation, including curriculum plans. A range of documentation relating to safeguarding, including risk assessments were also reviewed.

Inspection team

Amanda Stringer, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Trish Merritt

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates:
<http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2020