

Inspection of a good school: Lorton School

High Lorton, Cockermouth, Cumbria CA13 9UL

Inspection dates:

4 February 2020

Outcome

Lorton School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are very proud of their school. Those that we spoke to said that they enjoy coming to school. Pupils benefit from the geographical setting of the school. For example, pupils relish being able to climb Skiddaw and walk the hills of Coniston.

Pupils enjoy being with their friends and get on with each other. Pupils behave well so that all can get on with learning. Pupils said that bullying did not happen. There have been rare incidents of name-calling. They said that adults deal with it so that it is not repeated.

Pupils feel safe in school. Pupils learn how to stay safe online. They know about the dangers of playing games online and posting messages on social media.

Pupils rise to leaders' high expectations. They try hard and are proud of their efforts. Their work is of a high quality because they take care to present it neatly. Pupils enjoy earning points for their good work and behaviour.

Older pupils take on a wide range of responsibilities. They help the younger pupils at playtimes by handing out equipment and organising games. Other pupils help set up the hall at lunchtime while others work together in the eco club.

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

Leaders have planned the curriculum to meet the needs and interests of pupils. It is broad and rich. It deepens pupils' knowledge and skills. Schemes of work are logically planned so that pupils know and remember more of previous learning. For example, there is a clear focus on the development of mathematical and scientific vocabulary. Pupils apply their reasoning and problem-solving skills efficiently. They apply what they remember about number to new learning about inverse operations. Pupils told us about

scientific research they carried out around Buttermere. They enjoyed using this local environment to find out more about habitats.

Pupils visit places of worship to learn about different faiths. They go on trips to major cities to deepen their understanding of life in modern Britain. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well. Pupils who leave Lorton school are ready for the next stage of their education.

Pupils have many opportunities to develop their skills beyond the academic. They engage in regular fundraising and charity work. Leaders encourage a culture of openness. Pupils discuss issues such as equality and freedom of speech. Parents and carers who we spoke to are overwhelmingly supportive of the school ethos.

Staff are proud to work at Lorton because leaders look after their well-being. They recently received mental health training. Staff meet with teachers from their partner schools to share good practice. Leaders engage in professional dialogue with other staff members. They check the quality of pupils' work regularly. However, in a couple of subjects, teachers' subject knowledge is not as strong as it could be. This is because staff have not attended recent training to improve their subject knowledge.

Leaders have ensured that pupils are immersed in a culture that inspires a love of reading. Older pupils read to the younger pupils each day. Children start to learn phonics as soon as they join Reception. Staff work with parents so that they know how to support their children at home. Teachers make sure that children and pupils take home books which match the sounds that they learn in class. They also take home a range of books and games to help them practise. Phonics sessions are fun. Children in the early years and pupils in key stage 1 take part enthusiastically. Those who struggle receive tailored support to help them catch up quickly. Older pupils are knowledgeable about a range of authors. They discuss their reading habits confidently.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make careful checks on the suitability of adults who work in school. They have ensured that staff receive regular safeguarding training. Staff are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities. They know how to spot signs of neglect and abuse. They know who to speak to and how to record their concerns. School leaders work with a range of partner agencies. These include national charities who come to school to speak to the staff and pupils. Leaders know the needs of the families. They provide support in a timely manner to vulnerable pupils and their families.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Subject leaders have many opportunities to meet with teachers and subject leaders from other schools. This enables them to share good practice. Opportunities for

subject-specific training are not well developed. Engaging in regular training opportunities would help staff to lead the curriculum with higher levels of expertise so that they can support teachers to teach their subjects better.

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 first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Lorton School, to be good in February 2013.

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	143781
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	10122043
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	57
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair governing body	Darren Ward
Headteacher	Olivia Harrison
Website	www.lorton.cumbria.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	21–22 February 2013

Information about this school

- In March 2017 the school converted to an academy. The school joined the Good Shepherd Multi-Academy Trust.

Information about this inspection

- During the inspection we met with the headteacher and subject leaders. We met with three members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. We met with the chief executive officer of the trust. We met with the school improvement officer.
- We spoke with staff about their workload and well-being.
- We spoke to parents and considered the 43 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. We considered the six responses to the staff survey and the 34 free-text comments.
- We listened to pupils read.
- We observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at playtimes.
- We scrutinised the school's approach to safeguarding. We examined the single central safeguarding record. We spoke to staff about their knowledge of safeguarding procedures in school.

- We considered the school's approach to the teaching of reading, phonics, mathematics and science. We spoke with subject leaders and visited lessons. We spoke with teachers and pupils. We scrutinised examples of pupils' work. We listened to pupils read.

Inspection team

John Donald, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Gary Bevin

Ofsted Inspector

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