

Inspection of Northside Primary School

Northside, Workington, Cumbria CA14 1BD

Inspection dates: 11–12 February 2020

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected

What is it like to attend this school?

Staff have high expectations and want every pupil to achieve well. Positive relationships between staff and pupils are evident in this calm and purposeful learning environment. Pupils take pride in what they do. They present their work neatly.

Pupils are polite and well-mannered. Those who we spoke to describe the school as a peaceful place. They said that they can get on with their learning. They listen to one another and their teachers. Pupils said they enjoy their lessons because teachers make them fun.

Pupils understand the school behaviour system. They are aware of the rewards and consequences. They like being nominated for 'Star of the week' for good work and positive behaviours. Pupils said that bullying did not happen. They said that staff are good at sorting out any silly behaviour problems quickly so that they are not repeated.

Pupils feel safe in school because the adults look after them. Visits from the police, ambulance and mountain rescue services develop pupils' safety knowledge. Pupils are savvy in their knowledge of staying safe online.

Parents and carers are very supportive of the school. Staff enjoy coming to work. They appreciate that leaders give them time to complete their work.

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

Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is broad and challenging. It develops pupils' skills and knowledge. Topics are taught in a logical order. Teachers begin every topic with a review of prior learning. This helps pupils to consolidate what they already know. For example, pupils apply what they already know about electricity to new learning.

Governors visit the school regularly. This helps them to know the school well. They have a strong oversight for the provision for all groups of pupils.

Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well in English and mathematics. Pupils who leave Year 6 are ready for the demands of key stage 3.

Reading is a high priority. Staff are well trained. They ensure that pupils read well. Pupils understand the importance of reading. Older pupils know how better reading helps them access other areas of the curriculum.

Leaders have a clear, systematic approach to the teaching of phonics. This begins in Nursery and continues into key stage 1. Teachers revisit previous sounds regularly. Many children who join the early years have a limited vocabulary. Teachers address

this through interesting games and activities that develop children's understanding of which letters make which sound, alongside new vocabulary. For example, children in Nursery and Reception talked to me about their 'weekly welly walk'. They told me about the things they found outside that began with the letter 'n'.

The books that children read match the sounds they are learning in class. They apply their skills well in combining and separating sounds. This helps them to read with increased fluency. Adults enthusiastically read exciting stories such as 'Jack and the beanstalk'. The children enjoy listening to stories such as this. They engage well and relish new learning opportunities. Those that fall behind receive small-group support to help them catch up. Strong reading routines and attitudes to learning are evident across the early years. This ensures that children who leave the early years are prepared for the challenges of Year 1.

The mathematics curriculum builds on prior learning. It makes links with other subjects. In the early years, children learn about number. They develop an understanding through well-planned activities. Older pupils apply what they know to predict the next numbers in sequences. When opportunities arise, teachers link mathematics to other subjects and real-life problems. For example, pupils engaged in a business enterprise project applied their mathematics and design and technology skills to design products. They stayed within budget and sold these products for a profit. In science, pupils measure, record and apply their mathematical skills. Exciting science experiments enable them to measure the size of craters.

Subject leaders know their subjects well. The few teachers share many subject leadership roles. However, there are a few inconsistencies in how well subjects are taught. For example, leaders have not checked if science skills are progressively taught. In design and technology, there are aspects of the curriculum that need development.

Pupils have many opportunities to develop personally. They enjoy raising money for charity. They attend the wide range of after-school clubs. They know why it is important to stay fit and healthy. Pupils enjoy their regular school trips. Opportunities to learn about different religions and cultures are not well planned.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that staff are well trained. All staff know what to do if they have concerns about any pupils in the school. There are clear procedures for recording and reporting these concerns. Leaders work with a range of external agencies to enhance their safeguarding work. This helps them provide better support to vulnerable pupils and their families.

Leaders have made rigorous checks on the suitability of adults who work in school. The school site is secure, ensuring that pupils feel safe while they are at school. The headteacher has received enhanced training to support victims of domestic violence.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Subject leadership is well developed in English. This has helped the leader to develop expertise. Leaders for other subject areas have not had these opportunities. This has led to inconsistencies in how some subjects are taught. Leaders should investigate ways to develop subject leadership skills and knowledge. Doing so would enable these leaders to support teachers to teach the curriculum with higher levels of expertise.
- Leaders have provided opportunities throughout the curriculum for pupils to develop personally. Trips, visits and charity work all contribute to deepening pupils' learning about life in modern Britain. Leaders should ensure that pupils' awareness and knowledge of other cultures and religions are developed in line with the high priority given to other aspects of the curriculum.

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	143536
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	10121922
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	56
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair governing body	John Moffat
Headteacher	Jacqui Wilson
Website	www.northsideprimary.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of the 'Be the Change' multi-academy trust.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- We met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and subject leaders throughout the inspection.
- We met with four members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- We held a telephone conversation with the interim chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust.
- We met with the leaders of the provision for pupils with SEND.
- We spoke with pupils about behaviour and safeguarding.
- We scrutinised a range of documentation in relation to safeguarding. We examined the single central record and records in relation to safer recruitment. We spoke with staff about their safeguarding knowledge.

- We spoke with parents and considered the four responses to the staff survey.
- We considered reading, mathematics, design and technology and science as part of the inspection. We spoke with subject leaders about their work. We visited some lessons and spoke with pupils about their learning. We spoke to the teachers and scrutinised examples of pupils' work. We listened to pupils read and examined how well the school's phonics scheme was being implemented.

Inspection team

John Donald, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Stephen Rigby

Ofsted Inspector

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