

# Inspection of a good school: Richmond Hill School

Queen Street, Aspatria, Wigton, Cumbria CA7 3BQ

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Inspection dates:

10 and 11 November 2021

## Outcome

Richmond Hill School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils like their school. They are proud to take on special responsibilities, such as helping in the school office. Older pupils look after younger ones in the school playground. Pupils said that the school is a friendly place where everyone is welcome.

Staff want the best for the pupils. Pupils across the school enjoy their learning. For example, children in the early years loved joining in with the story, 'Little Rabbit Foo Foo'. Pupils in Year 6 talked excitedly about the bird boxes that they made in design technology. These activities make learning fun and memorable for pupils. Pupils achieve well.

Pupils are proud of their school's values, such as respect, kindness and honesty. Pupils show these values in their good behaviour in lessons and around the school. Pupils said that if any bullying were to occur, staff would put a stop to it straight away.

Pupils feel safe and happy in this school. They trust staff to take good care of them. They know who to ask for help if ever they have any worries.

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

Leaders have planned an effective and exciting curriculum that covers a broad range of subjects. This curriculum is ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders have decided on the most important knowledge that they want pupils to learn in each subject and in each year group. They have set out this knowledge clearly in their curriculum plans, especially for Years 1 to 6. This helps teachers to plan learning for pupils that includes this important knowledge. Leaders have made sure that children in the early years have plenty of resources to support their learning across the curriculum. In a few areas of learning, the curriculum for the early years does not contain enough information about the knowledge that children should learn in readiness for Year 1. This means that sometimes staff do not make sure that the activities they plan include the most important learning for children.

Teachers check to make sure that pupils have understood their learning. They provide help for pupils if they find anything difficult. This stops pupils from falling behind.

Most subject leaders have had training to support them in their roles. This enables them to make sure that the curriculum in their subject is helping pupils to know more and remember more. Some subject leaders are new to their roles and have had less training. They have less expertise in checking how successful pupils are in their learning.

Leaders have made sure that reading is at the heart of the curriculum. Pupils, including those with SEND, love reading. They learn to read confidently and fluently. Leaders have thought carefully about the books they want pupils to read in every class, from the two-year-olds to pupils in Year 6. These books contain the important vocabulary that leaders want pupils to learn. Children learn about phonics straight away in the early years. They learn new letters and sounds every day. Their reading books contain words made up of these letters and sounds. Very quickly children learn to read these books by themselves. Older pupils are avid readers. They talked enthusiastically about their favourite books and authors. Pupils' strong reading skills support their learning across the curriculum.

Pupils with SEND benefit from the same ambitious curriculum as other pupils. Leaders and staff work closely with other professionals to identify these pupils' needs quickly. Leaders ensure that pupils with SEND receive the help they need in order to learn well.

Leaders make sure that the curriculum helps all pupils, including those with SEND, to develop personally. For example, pupils learn to work together in teams through the school's house system. They learn about the world of work when they practise writing applications to become a school ambassador. Pupils receive a 'salary' for the duties that they carry out in school. Pupils learn about different religions and beliefs. They learn to appreciate diversity through visiting multicultural cities such as Manchester and London.

Staff have high expectations for pupils' behaviour, including children in the early years. Younger children learn to follow simple rules such as when to sit for story time, or when to tidy up. Older pupils are courteous to adults, and set a good example to younger pupils.

Leaders, including governors, are mindful of the staff's workload and well-being when they make decisions about the school. Staff feel valued and supported in their various roles.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Governors and leaders make sure that all staff have regular training in a range of safeguarding matters. Staff are vigilant and know how to recognise signs of abuse and neglect. They know how to report their concerns if they have any worries about a pupil. Leaders have strong working relationships with a range of other professionals. This enables them to get help for pupils and their families if needed.

Staff teach pupils how to keep themselves safe. For example, pupils learn how to stay safe when they use the internet.

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

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Subject leaders who are new to their roles have had limited training in leading their subjects. They lack the expertise to check how well pupils are learning the curriculum. This hampers their ability to make any necessary improvements to the curriculum in their subjects. Leaders should ensure that they provide suitable training for new subject leaders to enable them to carry out their roles effectively.
- Curriculum plans in a small number of subjects do not contain enough information about the components of learning that leaders want children to learn in the early years. This means that children are not learning some content that they need to secure firm foundations for future learning. Leaders must ensure that plans for all subjects contain specific detail about what children need to learn in the early years.

## **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 or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, 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 deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in May 2016.

## 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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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

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| <b>Unique reference number</b>             | 112127   |
| <b>Local authority</b>                     | Cumbria  |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                   | 10199736   |
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary  |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Community  |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 2 to 11  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 191  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body   |
| <b>Chair of governing body</b>             | David Brocklebank  |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Rachel Blair   |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://www.richmondhillprimary.co.uk">www.richmondhillprimary.co.uk</a> |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>         | 4 and 5 May 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005                      |

## Information about this school

- The school is currently being led by an acting headteacher.
- A new chair has been appointed to the governing body since the previous inspection.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has introduced nursery provision for two-year-olds.
- The governing body manages the breakfast club.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic and has taken that into account in their evaluation.
- The inspector met with the acting headteacher and other senior leaders. The inspector also met with representatives from the local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and design technology. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked

at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspector also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about some other subjects.
- The inspector reviewed documentation, which included the leaders' evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for improvement.
- The inspector considered the views expressed by parents and carers in their responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and in their free-text comments. They also considered responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documents about safeguarding. The inspector also spoke with staff to understand how they keep pupils safe, and reviewed the school's record of checks undertaken on newly appointed staff.
- The inspector spoke to pupils about school life, and met with leaders and pupils to discuss provision for pupils' personal development and pupils' behaviour. The inspector looked at documentation associated with these areas.
- The inspector spoke with a range of staff members to discuss leaders' support for them.

### **Inspection team**

Mavis Smith, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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