

Inspection of a good school: Gosforth CofE Primary School

Wasdale Road, Gosforth, Seascale, Cumbria CA20 1AZ

Inspection date: 18 January 2022

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this initial (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a full inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a full (section 5) inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy to attend this small, village school. They feel safe and they value their strong friendships. Most pupils play happily with each other. However, some pupils, particularly those in older year groups, are not as clear about how they are expected to behave during social times.

During social times, some staff do not apply the systems to manage pupils' behaviour in a consistent manner. The overly boisterous behaviour of some pupils interrupts the play of others. A number of pupils expressed their concerns about this behaviour to inspectors.

Pupils know that staff will make time for them and will help them if they are worried. They are confident that adults will listen if they report bullying and make it stop quickly.

Pupils enjoy their learning. During lessons, teachers expect the best of pupils. Pupils listen attentively. They are eager to please and they take pride in their work.

Pupils enjoy a wide range of opportunities to encourage their interests. Pupils enjoy contributing to the life of the school. For example, the 'School Crew' meets regularly to suggest ways to make school better. Pupils talked with glee about their recent trip to the theatre. Older pupils are excited about their residential visit.

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

Leaders have planned a broad and appropriately ambitious curriculum for pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders have successfully designed and adapted the curriculum to ensure that it suits the school's mixed-age classes.

In most subjects, leaders have identified the most important knowledge that they want pupils to know and remember. Leaders have ensured that teachers are clear about the order in which pupils should learn this knowledge. Pupils' work shows that they progress well through the planned curriculum. In these subjects, teachers ensure that pupils revisit the important knowledge and facts that they need to undertake new learning.

However, in a few subjects, subject leaders are new to their roles. They are at the very start of designing the curriculum. As a result, they are not as clear about the knowledge that pupils need to learn, and when they need to learn it. In these subjects, pupils' learning is hindered. Teachers are hampered in designing learning that builds on what pupils already know and can do.

From the start, children in the Reception class learn to recognise their numbers and count confidently. They enjoy reading and listening to stories. Children in the early years enjoy learning new letters and sounds. They are keen to show how well they can read. Teachers help pupils to learn their sounds in a logical order. Staff keep a careful check on the sounds that pupils know and remember. Teachers ensure that pupils, including children in the early years, read books that match the sounds that they know. This helps pupils to practise their reading and to become confident readers.

If pupils fall behind with their reading, staff provide additional support to help them catch up quickly. By the end of Year 2, most pupils can read confidently and fluently. Leaders have ensured that pupils, including children in the Reception class, access a wide range of high-quality texts. This helps pupils to develop an enthusiasm for reading, develop their knowledge of vocabulary and hone their comprehension skills.

Leaders work carefully with parents to ensure that the needs of pupils with SEND are identified as early as possible. Throughout the school, staff provide appropriate support for this group of pupils. Teachers adapt activities and resources so that pupils with SEND learn the same ambitious curriculum as their peers. Leaders work with a range of professionals to ensure that pupils with SEND receive the right support when needed.

Most pupils behave well in class. They get on with their learning without disruption. However, some older pupils struggle to manage their own behaviour on the playground. Pupils told us that this leads to some fallings-out and arguments. These sometimes spill over into lessons and interrupt learning.

The curriculum is helping pupils to learn about the diverse cultures that make up modern Britain. Pupils know about the importance of democracy and equality. For example, older pupils told inspectors about the actions of civil rights activists, such as Rosa Parks. Pupils know, understand and respect how families can be different to their own.

Staff are positive about the support that they receive from leaders and governors, particularly with their workload.

Science and art and design may usefully serve as a focus for the next inspection.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that staff keep their knowledge of safeguarding up to date through regular and appropriate training. Staff remain alert to potential safeguarding concerns and they take timely and appropriate action when necessary. Staff know pupils and their families very well. This helps leaders to ensure that vulnerable pupils access the help and support that they need.

Through the curriculum, pupils learn to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations. For example, pupils learn to ride their bikes safely on the roads in the village.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, leaders are still in the very early stages of outlining the knowledge that pupils need to learn, and when they need to learn it. This hampers teachers in designing learning that supports pupils to build on what they know already and develop their knowledge of concepts over time. Leaders should ensure that they make it clear to teachers what pupils should be learning and when so that that teachers can design learning that builds effectively on pupils' prior knowledge.
- Some staff do not apply the systems to manage pupils' behaviour as well as they should. This means that some pupils, particularly older pupils, do not understand what is expected of them in terms of how they should behave. This results in some pupils misbehaving at social times. This interrupts the enjoyment of others at playtimes and causes some to become worried. This weaker behaviour sometimes spills into lessons and delays the start of pupils' learning time. Leaders should ensure that staff are supported effectively to manage behaviour so that pupils are clear about leaders' expectations and the impact of their behaviour on others.

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 second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in September 2012.

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

Unique reference number	112294
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	10211191
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	117
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Andrew Pratt
Headteacher	Sarah Layzell
Website	www.gosforth.cumbria.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	17 January 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The acting headteacher has been in post since September 2021. The governing body is in the process of appointing a substantive headteacher.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Carlisle. The school's previous section 48 inspection took place in March 2018.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspectors held meetings with the acting headteacher, the early years leader and four members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. Inspectors also spoke with a representative of the local authority and a representative of the Diocese of Carlisle.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. This involved visiting lessons, discussing curriculum plans with subject leaders, talking to pupils and teachers and reviewing pupils' work.
- An inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult. Inspectors also spoke with the subject leads in design and technology, art and design and computing.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour throughout the school day. They also spoke with pupils about behaviour.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. There were no responses to Ofsted's staff or pupil questionnaires.

Inspection team

Garry White, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Nick Capron

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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