

Inspection of a good school: Bassenthwaite Primary School

Bassenthwaite, Keswick, Cumbria CA12 4QH

Inspection date: 22 April 2022

Outcome

Bassenthwaite Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They said that it is a friendly place. Pupils like spending time with their friends outside in the school's beautiful setting. Children in the early years enjoy playing with the exciting resources that adults provide for them. There is always someone for children and pupils to talk to even though the school is very small.

Adults expect pupils to try their best. Pupils typically settle down to work without fuss. They listen carefully to their teachers and get on with their work. Pupils know that if there is something that they do not understand, adults will help them. Pupils achieve well, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Pupils are expected to behave well. They are respectful to staff. Pupils move around the school sensibly. Older pupils set a positive example to younger pupils and children in the early years. This helps to make the school an orderly place. Leaders make it clear to pupils that bullying is not tolerated. Pupils said that bullying is very rare. They trust adults to stop incidents of bullying swiftly if they occur.

Pupils enjoy participating in a wide range of activities outside school. For example, they take part in sports events with other schools. Pupils raise funds, for example for a local animal shelter. They visit the local woodland to build dens and to learn how to use tools to cut up wood. These interesting activities help to promote pupils' personal development.

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

Leaders provide pupils with an ambitious curriculum that covers a broad range of subjects. All pupils learn well from this curriculum, including those with SEND. Leaders have thought carefully about the most important knowledge that they want pupils to learn in each subject by the time that they leave the school. Leaders have designed the curriculum so that in each year group, pupils build up this important knowledge in a logical order. This helps pupils to remember their learning over time.

In key stages 1 and 2, the curriculum is clearly organised. Teachers are clear about the smaller building blocks of knowledge that pupils need to learn in each subject. This helps teachers to design activities that enable pupils to learn everything that they need to know. However, the curriculum in the early years is less well organised. In some areas of learning, there is not enough information about the important knowledge that children should learn. This makes it more difficult for staff to ensure that children learn everything they need to be ready for Year 1.

Teachers are adept at checking that pupils have understood new learning. They provide help to any pupils who need it so that pupils' misconceptions are quickly addressed. Teachers and staff allow time for pupils to revisit and practise what they have learned in earlier lessons. This helps to ensure that pupils' learning is secure.

Leaders have ensured that reading is at the heart of the curriculum. Children begin learning about phonics straight away in the early years. Staff routinely introduce children to new sounds and letters each day. Pupils in Year 1 learn more complex groups of letters and sounds. The words in reading books contain only the letters and sounds that children have learned so far. This helps children to read with confidence. Staff use their expertise to help children catch up quickly if ever they fall behind. Children, including those with SEND, learn to read well.

Older pupils are enthusiastic readers. They enjoy selecting new books to read from the wide range on offer in school. Pupils especially like it when their teachers read to them. Across all age groups, pupils develop a real love of reading.

Leaders work with staff to identify quickly those pupils who may have SEND. They make careful adaptations to the delivery of the curriculum so that these pupils can learn as well as other pupils. Leaders communicate well with parents and with a range of professionals. This enables them to ensure that pupils with SEND receive expert help if they need it.

Leaders have high expectations for pupils' behaviour. They have devised rules and routines for pupils to follow. Most of the time pupils follow these rules and routines well. They do not disrupt each other's learning with poor behaviour. However, the information that leaders gather about pupils' behaviour is not clearly organised. This prevents leaders from developing a clear picture of how the school's rules and routines support pupils' behaviour over time, for example in preventing bullying.

Pupils learn about a range of faiths and cultures. They learn to appreciate difference and diversity in family units and in the wider world. Pupils explore their own locality when they visit the lake for kayaking or take part in field trips to the nearby fells. They learn more about places further afield through trips to cities, such as Manchester, for singing competitions. Pupils in Year 6 said that they feel well prepared for the transition to secondary school when the time comes because they have many opportunities to visit high schools.

Governors and trustees ask leaders challenging and effective questions about their work to improve the school. They are considerate of staff's workload and well-being in the

decisions that they make about the school. Staff feel supported in their work and are appreciative of leaders' concern.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that all staff receive regular safeguarding training, including those new to the school. Staff know how to report any concerns that they may have about a pupil's welfare.

Leaders work well with other professionals, such as the local authority safeguarding hub, health professionals and other schools. This enables them to share important information and to secure help for vulnerable pupils and their families in a timely way.

Through the curriculum, pupils learn how to keep themselves safe in different situations, for example when working online. Pupils know that if anything makes them feel uncomfortable, they should speak to a trusted adult.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In the early years, the curriculum does not provide enough information about the smaller components of knowledge that children need to learn. This makes it difficult for staff to make sure children are learning everything they need to know. Leaders need to ensure that the curriculum in all areas of learning contains the information that staff need to ensure that children build up their learning securely in readiness for Year 1.
- Currently, leaders do not make enough use of the information that they gather in relation to pupils' behaviour. This prevents them from developing a clear picture of how the school's rules and routines support pupils' behaviour over time. Leaders must make better use of this important information in order to understand fully whether their high expectations are consistently met.

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 predecessor school, Bassenthwaite Primary 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

Unique reference number	145326
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	10226058
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	36
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Sarah Peck
Headteacher	Sara Royle
Website	www.bassenthwaite.cumbria.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Bassenthwaite Primary School converted to become an academy school in February 2018. When its predecessor school, Bassenthwaite Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The school has joined the Keswick School Multi-Academy Trust.
- A new chair of governors has been appointed to the local governing body.
- School leaders do not make use of any alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other senior leaders. The lead inspector also spoke on the telephone with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at

samples of pupils' work. The inspectors observed pupils reading to a familiar adult. Inspectors also spoke with leaders about the curriculum in other subjects.

- Inspectors considered the views expressed by parents in their responses to Ofsted Parent View. This included the free-text comments.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the Ofsted's online surveys for staff and for pupils. Inspectors also spoke with some pupils about school life.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation about safeguarding. Inspectors also spoke with staff to understand how they keep children safe.
- An inspector spoke with some parents at the start of the day. Inspectors also spoke with staff to discuss leaders' support for them.

Inspection team

Mavis Smith, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Sally Timmons

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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