

Inspection of a good school: Allithwaite CofE Primary School

Church Road, Allithwaite, Grange-over-Sands, Cumbria LA11 7RD

Inspection date:

9 November 2022

Outcome

Allithwaite CofE Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils, including children in the early years, care about each other in this supportive school. Older pupils act as welcoming buddies to younger pupils. This helps pupils to make friends easily and learn routines quickly. They are happy at school.

Leaders and staff want all pupils to succeed. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils and children work hard in their lessons. They live up to leaders' and teachers' high expectations for their work and conduct. Pupils achieve well in a range of subjects.

Pupils and children behave well. Pupils understand how their words and actions, including bullying, can hurt others. Pupils feel safe. They said that trusted staff would work quickly and effectively to stop any bullying.

Pupils work with pride to support charities close to home and further afield. For example, they support a school community in Uganda, families affected by the conflict in Ukraine and a local children's hospice. Pupils explained to inspectors their current drive to sell poppies to support the Royal British Legion.

Pupils smiled as they told inspectors about the annual 'Allithwaite's Got Talent'. They enjoy sharing their musical, sporting and creative talents during this popular event.

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

Leaders have ensured that pupils, including children in the early years, experience a rich, balanced and broad curriculum. The curriculum is organised so that teachers and staff are clear about the knowledge, skills and vocabulary that pupils will learn. This builds in a logical way from the Nursery Year to Year 6. Leaders ensure that pupils, including those with SEND, follow the same ambitious curriculum where appropriate. Consequently, pupils achieve well.

Staff have secure subject knowledge. They deliver the curriculum in a way that meets the needs of all pupils. In lessons, staff adapt their approaches and identify when pupils are struggling. They support pupils to revisit knowledge and skills often. This helps pupils to remember the knowledge in the curriculum. In lessons, staff check if pupils have learned the curriculum knowledge. This allows teachers to adapt their teaching so that pupils revisit missed or forgotten knowledge. However, in some subjects, the strategies used for checking pupils' understanding are at an earlier stage of development.

Staff are experts in teaching pupils to read. Leaders have prioritised the teaching of phonics. This starts from the Reception Year. Prior to this, children in the Nursery Year receive a curriculum that develops their listening and attention skills well. Staff quickly identify those pupils and children who struggle to read. Leaders ensure that these pupils, including those at an early stage of reading in key stage 2, receive effective support. However, at times, pupils do not read books that are closely matched their phonics knowledge. This knocks pupils' confidence and hinders their progress in reading. That said, most pupils become confident fluent readers.

Leaders work closely with staff and other agencies to quickly identify any pupils who may have SEND. Staff support these pupils well.

Pupils take pride in their work. Children in the Nursery Year settle quickly and listen carefully to staff. Poor behaviour rarely disrupts learning in lessons. Pupils respond well to the reward systems in place. House captains encourage other pupils to win the house cup each week.

Leaders provide pupils with opportunities to develop beyond the academic curriculum. For example, pupils explained to inspectors that they are looking forward to a trip to London. Leaders offer this visit so that pupils experience a diverse city different to their own locality. Pupils understand the importance of living in harmony with people from faiths or families that are different to their own.

Governors hold leaders to account for their actions. They support leaders' and staff's well-being effectively. Staff reported that leaders are approachable and caring. Leaders have ensured that staff's workload is considered carefully.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that pupils learn how to stay safe. This includes when pupils are working or playing online. Pupils understand the importance of not sharing personal information. Pupils and children recently learned about the dangers of fireworks and the importance of staying safe and being considerate to your neighbours during Halloween.

Leaders, staff and governors have created a strong culture of safeguarding. Staff receive effective, regular safeguarding training. This helps staff spot any signs of neglect. Staff report concerns promptly. When required, leaders quickly involve other agencies so that pupils and their families receive suitable help, support and guidance.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some pupils, including those at an early stage of reading in key stage 2, read books that do not match their phonics knowledge as closely as they should. This hinders these pupils' progress in reading. Leaders should ensure that the books pupils read closely match the phonic sounds that they know.
- In some subjects, teachers' assessment strategies do not provide useful information so that they can identify gaps in pupils' knowledge and shape future teaching. This slows pupils' progress in these subjects. Leaders should ensure that staff improve their use of assessment strategies to strengthen their identification of weaknesses in pupils' knowledge and provide suitable support to pupils.

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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in May 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 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.

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	112282
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	10226146
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	106
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	John Whitehead
Headteacher	Gillian Elliott
Website	www.allithwaite.cumbria.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	21 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- A special educational needs coordinator and an assistant headteacher have been appointed since the previous inspection.
- Leaders provide before- and after-school care for pupils and children.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Carlisle. The last section 48 inspection took place in February 2018.
- Leaders do not make use of alternative provision.

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 completed deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. They met with subject leaders, visited some lessons, reviewed children's and pupils' work and spoke with teachers and pupils. The lead inspector observed

pupils reading to a familiar adult. Inspectors also reviewed the curriculums in some other subjects and spoke to pupils about their learning.

- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation. The lead inspector spoke with the headteacher throughout the inspection.
- The lead inspector met with governors, including the chair of the governing body. He also spoke with representatives of the local authority and the diocese by telephone.
- The lead inspector held meetings with the staff responsible for safeguarding and scrutinised the single central record. Inspectors considered leaders' safeguarding processes and procedures. They observed children and pupils during lessons and social times. Inspectors discussed safeguarding with children and pupils.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also considered the responses to the staff survey. There were no responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

Adam Sproston, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Andy Hunt

Ofsted Inspector

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