

Inspection of a good school: Thursby Primary School

Thursby, Carlisle, Cumbria CA5 6PN

Inspection date:

6 December 2022

Outcome

Thursby Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are very proud of their school and feel happy and safe. Pupils respond well to leaders' high expectations for their learning. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well. They are keen learners. Pupils know that teachers expect them to work hard and do their best work. They take pride in presenting their work neatly and tidily.

Leaders and teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils know this, and lessons are rarely disrupted. Pupils are friendly, courteous and polite. They are respectful towards and tolerant of those who may be different from themselves. Staff deal with rare cases of bullying effectively.

Pupils particularly enjoy working outdoors. Pupils take part in a range of cultural and adventurous activities, such as visiting museums, places of worship and an outdoor education centre. These build character and help pupils learn about life in wider British society.

Pupils are very much part of the local community. They participate in local events, such as the recent Platinum Jubilee celebrations. Pupils raise funds for charities. Recently, they were thrilled when the Air Ambulance helicopter landed in the school field following their fundraising event. Pupils have an active elected school council. They take part in debates relating to current affairs. All this helps them understand democracy and citizenship.

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

Leaders have designed an exciting and ambitious curriculum for pupils' academic and personal development. From their first days in early years, children develop their language, communication and number skills well. Teachers know what pupils need to learn at each stage in school. They check carefully that pupils are learning and remembering the curriculum. This means that pupils achieve well in most subjects. In a

very few subjects, leaders' improvements to the curriculum are at an earlier stage of development. In these subjects, pupils' learning is not quite as deep as it is in the rest of the curriculum. Overall though, pupils become resilient, independent learners and are well prepared for the next phase in education.

Leaders and teachers ensure that reading has a high priority in the school. Children learn phonics from their earliest days in the school. Staff in early years and key stage 1 build pupils' phonics skills skilfully. Pupils read books that are well matched to their phonics knowledge. Meticulous checks on pupils' learning mean that teachers are quick to spot any pupils who may be falling behind. Staff provide very effective support to help them catch up. Once pupils are confident in phonics, they move on swiftly to read and understand more complex texts. Teachers read to pupils every day. A group of keen readers in key stage 2 have been appointed as reading ambassadors. They share their enthusiasm with other pupils and recommend books they have enjoyed.

Leaders are determined that pupils with SEND will achieve just as well as their peers. Leaders and teachers accurately identify pupils with SEND at the earliest possible stage. They check carefully that the right support is in place for these pupils to thrive. Leaders ensure that they are able to take part in all aspects of school life, including the school council, swimming lessons, trips and visits. Consequently, pupils with SEND are confident in approaching the next phase in education.

Pupils behave very well. They enjoy their lessons and are too busy to disrupt the learning of others. Children joining early years settle into school life quickly. Leaders ensure that children have ample opportunities for playing and exploring outdoors. This helps children to develop independence. Pupils learn about different faiths and cultures. They understand the importance of developing respectful relationships with people who may be different from them. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Governors visit the school frequently and are well informed. They make careful checks on safeguarding procedures to assure themselves that the school continues to be safe. Governors and leaders take staff's workload, well-being and work-life balance into consideration when making decisions about the school. Staff feel valued and appreciated. They are keen to participate in a range of opportunities for further professional development and training.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding underpins all aspects of school life. Staff understand that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. They have regular and up-to-date training. They know precisely what to do and whom to contact if they suspect that a pupil may be at risk. Leaders provide pupils and their families with the support that they need promptly.

Pupils learn about the boundaries they need to observe in friendships and the importance of respecting privacy and personal space. The curriculum helps pupils learn how to

manage risk. For example, they learn about how to be safe when online and when taking part in activities outdoors.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a very few subjects, the curriculum is at an earlier stage of development and pupils' learning is not quite as deep as it is in the remainder of the curriculum. Leaders should ensure that the implementation of the curriculum in all subjects matches the very best practice found in the school.

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 September 2011.

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	112123
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	10211058
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	111
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Richard Johnston
Headteacher	Jayne Williams
Website	www.thursby.cumbria.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	6 December 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision.

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 this inspection, the inspectors met with the headteacher, subject leaders and four members of the governing body.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with 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 also looked at pupils' work in some other subjects.
- The inspectors observed pupils reading to a familiar adult and spoke to pupils informally.

- The inspectors held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of safeguarding documentation, including the single central record of checks on staff's suitability to work with pupils. The inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead and checked how leaders record and respond to safeguarding concerns.
- The inspectors spoke with staff about their workload and well-being.
- The inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. The inspectors also considered responses to the staff survey. There were no responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

Jan Corlett, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Lindy Griffiths

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
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