

Inspection of a good school: Ancaster CofE Primary School

Mercia Drive, Ancaster, Grantham, Lincolnshire NG32 3QQ

Inspection dates:

13 and 14 December 2022

Outcome

Ancaster CofE Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Ancaster CofE Primary School is thriving. It is a happy place. Pupils enjoy their learning. One pupil said: 'Every day, when I arrive at school, I always get such a big smile and it's lovely.' Pupils say that they feel safe. They are proud of their school.

The school's values permeate its work. Pupils know and understand the values. Staff have very high expectations of all pupils. They prioritise pupils' personal and academic development. Pupils have positive attitudes to their work. They are aspirational. Pupils want to do their best.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They work hard and care for each other. Pupils are polite and respectful. They know what is expected of them. Pupils know that staff quickly sort out any problems and that bullying is not tolerated. Pupils know and understand the school rules. One pupil said, 'We treat one another equally.' Pupils have a very clear understanding of difference and equality.

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. One parent, typical of many, said: 'The children are taught to be the best they can be, and it shines through.' Parents feel well informed about their children's learning. They appreciate that staff make them feel so welcome.

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

Leaders have developed a strong curriculum. They ensure that pupils build their knowledge over time. Pupils remember what they have learned. For example, pupils recall learning about rivers. They can explain the river processes of erosion, transportation and deposition. Other pupils confidently explain the difference between a village, a town and a city. Children in the early years can identify landmarks on maps of Ancaster village. Leaders are reviewing curriculum plans. They have rightly identified that curriculum thinking is not quite as coherent in some subjects as it is in others.

Leaders ensure that there is a sharp focus on reading from the moment that pupils join the school. There is a consistent approach to the teaching of phonics. Pupils build their phonic knowledge enabling them to learn to read. They use their phonic knowledge to sound out unfamiliar words. Teachers regularly check how successfully pupils learn new sounds. Teachers make sure that the books pupils read match the sounds they have learned. They are quick to provide support if pupils fall behind. Leaders promote a love of reading throughout the school.

Pupils say that they enjoy mathematics. Pupils gradually build their understanding over time. Teachers take the time to explain the learning. Teachers frequently check pupils' learning. They are quick to address misconceptions. Pupils explain their learning well using mathematical vocabulary. For example, pupils use 'four quadrants' and 'x and y-axis' when discussing coordinates. Other pupils confidently explain that an improper fraction is one where the numerator is greater than the denominator. Leaders are reviewing the order in which pupils learn new knowledge in mathematics. Leaders have rightly identified that some of the content pupils learn would work even better in a different sequence.

Teachers have good subject knowledge. They have an unwavering determination to meet pupils' needs. Leaders have provided high-quality training so that staff know how to best meet pupils' needs. Teachers identify the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) accurately. They adapt their teaching so that these pupils can access the curriculum.

Leaders are reviewing the school's approach to assessment. In some subjects, teachers check carefully how well pupils acquire knowledge and use it fluently. In other subjects, where leaders have not identified precisely the key content that pupils need to learn, approaches to assessment do not identify gaps in pupils' learning.

Pupils are a credit to the school. They behave well and focus during lessons. Pupils play happily together at breaktimes. Teachers quickly establish the routines in the early years.

The school's work to enhance pupils' personal development is of high quality. The curriculum extends beyond the academic. Pupils know how to keep fit and eat healthily. A high proportion of pupils attend extra-curricular clubs. Pupils' knowledge of different faiths and beliefs is strong. Pupils have a secure understanding of fundamental British values, such as democracy. Pupils show respect for people who may be different from themselves. Pupils like to be school councillors, mini police and playground leaders. They like to contribute to school life.

Governors and representatives of the local authority offer support and robust challenge to leaders and staff. Leaders are very effective. Staff are overwhelmingly positive about the leaders. The strength of relationships between staff and the school community is very positive. There is a shared endeavour to help pupils flourish at Ancaster CofE Primary School.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a strong culture of safeguarding at the school. Governors regularly check the school's safeguarding procedures. Leaders provide regular training for staff and governors. Staff know how to spot pupils who may be at risk. They pass on concerns promptly. Leaders support pupils' welfare. Leaders ensure that pupils and their families get support quickly, through a range of agencies, to keep pupils safe.

Pupils know who to go to if they have a concern. They know that staff take their concerns seriously. Leaders ensure that the curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to learn how to stay safe, including when online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The key knowledge that pupils need to learn in some subjects is not as well sequenced as in other areas of the curriculum. In these subjects, it is not yet fully clear what pupils should learn and by when to build their knowledge over time. Leaders are in the process of making these amendments. Leaders should ensure that curriculum thinking for all subjects sets out precisely the knowledge that all pupils, including those with SEND, should know and by when.
- Teachers regularly check what pupils know in the core subjects. However, leaders have not developed a consistent approach to assessment for the foundation subjects. As a result, teachers do not regularly check how successfully pupils access the wider curriculum. Leaders need to develop a consistent approach to assessment in the wider curriculum subjects and ensure that the use of assessment does not place unnecessary burdens on staff or 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 January 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	120512
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10210880
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	185
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Joanna Entwistle
Headteacher	Sam Eden
Website	www.ancasterprimary.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	19 January 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- The last section 48 inspection of Anglican and Methodist schools took place in October 2015. This is an inspection of the school's religious character.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the assistant headteacher, curriculum leaders, the leader with responsibility for the provision for pupils with SEND and teaching and support staff.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and geography. For

each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum 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 inspector also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in other subjects.
- The inspector examined a range of school documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation, improvement plans and documentation relating to attendance and behaviour.
- The inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead. He considered the safeguarding policy, training records and examples of safeguarding concerns.
- The inspector considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and the responses to Ofsted's free-text service. He also considered the responses to the staff survey and the pupil survey.

Damien Turrell, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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