

Inspection of an outstanding school: Crosthwaite C of E School

Crosthwaite, Kendal, Cumbria LA8 8HT

Inspection date: 18 January 2023

Outcome

Crosthwaite C of E School continues to be an outstanding school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils, including children in the early years, flourish in Crosthwaite C of E School. They love coming to school and being with their friends. Pupils are extremely happy and feel safe in school. Leaders deal swiftly and well with occasional incidents of unacceptable behaviour. This includes any rare occurrences of bullying and boisterous play.

Pupils meet leaders' high expectations for success in their academic and personal development. They understand and live up to the school's values, for example by embracing the current 30 days of kindness challenge. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), behave and achieve extremely well.

Pupils relish all the opportunities that each day brings. These include sharing their sophisticated knowledge of technology with others, including adults. Pupils benefit enormously from the geographical setting of the school and the vast array of outdoor experiences that this brings. They take great pride in carrying out their various responsibilities, such as tending to the school's alpacas, bees and many reptiles. Pupils develop strong personal qualities through these experiences. They make a highly tangible contribution to school life.

Parents and carers who shared their views with inspectors would recommend this school to others without reservation. They feel privileged that their community is served by this exceptional school.

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

Leaders' vision to provide all pupils, including children in the early years, with high-quality learning experiences is well understood and shared by all staff. Leaders and staff have designed a highly effective curriculum from the early years to Year 6. The curriculum is broad, ambitious and vibrant. Pupils with SEND benefit from the same rich curriculum as their peers. Leaders make sure that they identify pupils' additional needs as early as

possible. Staff provide appropriate tailored support to ensure that pupils with SEND achieve highly.

Teachers have considerable subject expertise. Together with leaders, they have thought carefully about the key knowledge that they want pupils to learn in all subjects and when this content should be taught. Teachers regularly check that pupils remember this essential knowledge. Based on these checks, teachers introduce new learning at just the right time. This enables pupils to build up a deep body of subject knowledge across the curriculum. Pupils spoke about what they know already and their new learning with assurance and genuine interest.

Leaders make sure that staff are well trained so that they teach early reading effectively. Children learn phonics successfully from the moment that they enter the Reception Year. The books that the youngest readers take home are carefully matched to the sounds that they know. This helps children and pupils to gain the phonic knowledge that they need to be successful readers.

Pupils across the school delight in the books that their teachers share with them. Pupils enjoy the way that their teachers skilfully engage them in plot twists and turns. Leaders make sure that pupils have access to books which help them to deepen their learning across the curriculum. This includes books that explore the rich diversity among people and families. Pupils leave the school highly equipped to embrace the challenges of the key stage 3 curriculum.

Children in the early years settle into school routines quickly. They listen carefully to adults and follow instructions closely. Children develop secure social and emotional skills. Older pupils successfully build on this positive start. They are highly respectful of each other and of adults. Pupils' exemplary attitudes mean that everyone can learn without disruption.

Leaders provide pupils with wide-ranging and exciting opportunities to learn and develop personally. These include carefully designed experiences in the school's expansive outdoor environment. Pupils thrive on these experiences. Staff encourage them to be brave and adventurous. This contributes well to pupils becoming independent and resilient learners.

Pupils learn about the lives and achievements of people from a range of backgrounds and ethnicities. They develop a strong understanding and respect for differences between people. Pupils show considerable sensitivity when discussing issues such as racism and disability. They are well prepared to grow up in modern Britain.

Governors bring a rich array of expertise and experience to their roles. They have strong associations with the school and its community and a keen sense of pride in their work. Governors provide leaders with well-informed support and challenge as a result.

There is a palpable sense of teamwork among staff. They are overwhelmingly positive about the support and consideration that they receive from leaders, including governors. This includes how well leaders manage staff workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders know their school community well. They make sure that staff know how to keep pupils safe. Staff are vigilant. They pass on any concerns that they may have about a pupil's welfare quickly. Leaders follow up any concerns assiduously. They ensure that pupils receive appropriate support. This includes highly effective support for pupils' emotional health and well-being.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. They have a keen sense of the risks and benefits of working and playing online. Leaders make sure that pupils understand how to stay safe in their rural community.

Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding in March 2017.

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 | 112317 |
| Local authority | Cumbria |
| Inspection number | 10256096 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary aided |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 100 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Jeni Boothman |
| Headteacher | Matthew Jessop |
| Website | www.crosthwaiteprimary.net |
| Dates of previous inspection | 22 and 23 March 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- A new chair of governors has been appointed since the last inspection.
- This school is part of the Diocese of Carlisle. Its last section 48 inspection took place in November 2017.
- The school operates a breakfast and after-school club.
- Leaders do not make use of any alternative provision for pupils.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this 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 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 a range of staff.
- An inspector spoke with a group of governors, including the chair of the governing body. She also spoke with representatives of the local authority and the diocese.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. They talked with curriculum leaders of these subject areas. Inspectors also visited lessons, looked at examples of pupils' work, held discussions with teachers and spoke with pupils.
- Inspectors also spoke with leaders from other areas of the curriculum.
- An inspector listened to pupils read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents shared through Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. An inspector also spoke with parents as they dropped their children off at school.
- Inspectors spoke with staff about their workload. Inspectors also considered the views of staff shared through Ofsted's online survey for staff.
- Inspectors checked the arrangements for keeping pupils safe. They reviewed documentation and spoke to leaders and staff about safeguarding.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences at school. Inspectors also considered the views of pupils shared through Ofsted's online survey for pupils.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at playtime and lunchtime.

Inspection team

Jackie Stillings, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Lindy Griffiths

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023