

# Inspection of Castle Carrock School

Castle Carrock, Brampton, Cumbria CA8 9LU

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Inspection dates: 20 and 21 June 2023

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Good**

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The quality of education

**Good**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Outstanding**

Personal development

**Outstanding**

Leadership and management

**Good**

Early years provision

**Outstanding**

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Castle Carrock is a friendly, welcoming place for all pupils to learn. Pupils get on well together. At breaktimes, they play together as one large group. Pupils and the adults who work in the school have delightful relationships. This makes pupils feel happy at school.

Leaders have high expectations for pupils' learning and behaviour, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). There is a buzz of excitement for learning around the school. Pupils achieve well. Pupils have exceptionally high standards of behaviour. Pupils are aware of the rewards and sanctions associated with different types of behaviours.

Bullying is extremely rare. Nevertheless, leaders and staff remain alert and respond swiftly to any issues swiftly and appropriately. Pupils know that adults will take time to listen to their worries and concerns. This makes pupils feel safe in school.

Pupils try very hard to make a positive contribution to the school and the community. Many pupils hold a student leadership position. Pupils are proud to earn rewards for their efforts, such as the 'un-bee-liveable' achievement award.

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

Leaders have strengthened many aspects of the curriculum. In most subjects, subject leaders have identified what pupils need to learn and how this learning should build across the year groups. In these subjects, leaders have thought carefully about the design of these curriculums within the context of the school's mixed-age classes. This enables pupils to build their subject knowledge effectively. However, leaders have not finalised their curriculum thinking in a small number of subjects. In these subjects, some pupils in the mixed-age classes have gaps in their subject knowledge. This means that these pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They benefit from effective training and support. This enables teachers to deliver the subject curriculums well. Teachers check how well pupils have learned and remembered the curriculum. This helps teachers to identify when pupils need additional support.

Teachers are skilled in delivering the curriculum in the mixed-age classes. In the early years, teaching staff carefully distinguish between the learning for children in the Nursery Year and those in Reception Year. These staff use questioning well to encourage children to use new vocabulary in sentences. Children in the early years achieve exceptionally well across all areas of learning. They are well-prepared for the key stage 1 curriculum.

Leaders have introduced a new approach to teaching reading and phonics this year. They have ensured that staff have received effective training to deliver these new programmes effectively. Children in the early years get off to the best possible start with learning to read. They quickly learn the sounds that letters represent. Pupils take home books to read that match the sounds that they know. Pupils who struggle to keep up with the phonics programme receive effective support. Pupils learn to read with fluency and understanding.

Leaders have systems in place to identify the additional needs of pupils with SEND. Pupils with SEND benefit from the support that they receive. Teachers understand these pupils' needs well. They make careful adaptations to learning activities to help these pupils access the same curriculum as their peers.

Across the school, pupils behave exceptionally well. Pupils listen to their teachers and work hard in lessons. Children in the early years quickly learn the rules and routines. Pupils are able to learn without distractions.

Pupils have a deep understanding of what it means to live in modern Britain. They spoke passionately about their views on equality and diversity. Pupils know how to challenge stereotypes. Through the curriculum, pupils experience a wealth of cultural experiences. They engage in a multitude of activities to raise funds for local and national charities. Pupils learn about resilience, responsibility and how to demonstrate respect for one another. Every pupil in the school benefits from learning to play the ukulele or the clarinet. The wider curriculum is enhanced by many clubs and activities that encourage pupils to develop their sporting and artistic skills.

Members of the local governing body know the school well. There are effective systems in place to ensure smooth working between the local governing body and the trust. Governors have ensured that leaders have focused on improving the curriculum. Governors ensure that staff have the training and resources that they need to do their jobs well. Trustees check that pupils across the school achieve well.

Staff told inspectors that leaders ensure that their workload is manageable. Staff appreciate the steps that leaders take to look after their well-being.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders are vigilant in their safeguarding duties. They have created a strong safeguarding culture in the school. Staff are alert to possible signs of neglect or abuse. Staff receive frequent training to keep their safeguarding knowledge up to date. Staff know how to respond to concerns and document these carefully. Leaders work with several external agencies to support vulnerable pupils and families who need additional support.

Through the curriculum, pupils learn about the dangers of being near open water and the risks associated with using the internet.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- In one or two subjects, leaders have not given sufficient thought to the mixed-age classes in their curriculum design. This hinders how well some pupils achieve. Leaders should further refine their curriculum thinking in these subjects so that pupils build a deep body of subject knowledge as they move through the year groups.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	137653
<b>Local authority</b>	Cumberland
<b>Inspection number</b>	10256083
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	50
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	George Beveridge
<b>Headteacher</b>	Anna Carroll
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.castlecarrock.cumbria.sch.uk">www.castlecarrock.cumbria.sch.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	4 and 5 June 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- A new headteacher and chair of the local governing body have been appointed since the previous inspection.
- The school is part of the Cumbria Education Trust.
- Leaders do not make use of alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- 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 the executive headteacher.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. They met with curriculum leaders, visited lessons, viewed examples of pupils' work and spoke to teachers.

- An inspector observed pupils read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors met with pupils to discuss behaviour, curriculum and safety in school.
- Inspectors scrutinised safeguarding systems in the school and spoke with staff about their safeguarding knowledge.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of the local governing board, a member of the trust board and the chief executive officer of the trust.
- Inspectors spoke with parents and carers to gather their views of the school. As well as this, the inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also considered the responses to staff and pupil surveys.

### **Inspection team**

John Donald, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Cleo Cunningham

Ofsted Inspector

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