

# Inspection of St Gregory and St Patrick's Catholic Infant School

Esk Avenue, Corkickle, Whitehaven, Cumbria CA28 8AJ

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Inspection dates: 19 and 20 March 2024

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

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

Pupils are happy at this school. They behave well and live out the school values of kindness, friendship and respect. Pupils proudly wear golden jumpers that show when they have closely followed one of these values. Older pupils enjoy looking after younger children. They are friendly towards each other and make sure that everyone is included. Pupils welcome people from different faiths and cultures and enjoy learning about experiences that are different to their own. They appreciate the warm relationships that they have with staff, knowing that adults will help them if they have any worries.

The school has high expectations for pupils' achievement. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well. They listen carefully to their teachers and try their best. They are curious and concentrate well on their learning.

Pupils enjoy a number of roles of responsibility in school. For example, members of the school council, lunch and book monitors take their jobs seriously and fulfil them with great pride. Pupils value opportunities to take part in activities that help them to stay physically healthy. For example, some pupils enjoy the school's dance club and others benefit from going swimming.

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

The school has designed a broad and ambitious curriculum that starts from the early years to the end of Year 2. Pupils with SEND are identified early. Staff are highly skilled at supporting their additional needs.

In most subjects, the school has carefully considered what pupils should learn in each year group. However, in a small number of subjects, the school has not determined the small steps of essential knowledge that pupils should learn. This means that teachers do not have the precise information that they need to deliver the important knowledge that they should. This limits some pupils' learning.

Teachers have the knowledge and expertise that they need to deliver the curriculum well. They have designed an indoor and outdoor environment that supports the aims of the curriculum. Teachers take into account pupils' prior knowledge and their individual needs and interests to shape learning. Teachers provide frequent opportunities for pupils to revisit prior learning. They check regularly what pupils know and can remember. This helps pupils to build knowledge securely over time. However, in a few subjects, learning activities that teachers provide for pupils do not give them sufficient opportunities to practise and apply what they know, remember and can do.

The school has prioritised reading from the beginning of the early years. It has successfully fostered a love of reading among pupils. For example, pupils listen attentively to stories read by teachers and enjoy visiting the local library. The school

has established a successful phonics programme. Staff are experts at delivering it consistently well. Pupils learn the sounds and letters that they need to read new and unfamiliar words. Those who fall behind in this programme are given the support that they need to catch up. This helps pupils to become confident and fluent readers.

Pupils, including two-year-old children, follow well-established routines. For example, they learn how to sit properly at the lunch table, how to use manners and how to line up sensibly. Staff provide a nurturing environment that encourages children's play and exploration. Staff help pupils to develop skills such as turn-taking, listening to others and sharing. Pupils behave well during lessons, at playtimes and around school.

The school has prioritised attendance. It has worked tirelessly to address the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection. The school carefully analyses attendance information. It takes swift and effective action to improve the low prior attendance of some pupils. These actions have brought about sustained improvement in how well pupils attend.

The school has developed a programme that successfully supports pupils' personal development. Pupils of all ages benefit from a wide range of experiences that go beyond the academic curriculum. For example, they enjoy opportunities to visit a farm, beach and woodland. They also learn how to fly kites, bake cakes and build dens. Pupils support the local community by visiting residents in the local care home, collecting provisions for food banks and partaking in litter-picking. These rich experiences help pupils to develop a sense of belonging and responsibility.

The school is well led and managed. Governors know the school well and provide effective support and challenge. They hold the school to account for the quality of education that pupils receive. Staff appreciate the steps that the school has taken to reduce their workload so that they can fulfil their roles effectively. They feel valued and supported by the school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- In a small number of subjects, the school has not identified the essential knowledge that pupils should learn or the order in which this should be taught. This hinders how much some pupils learn. The school should ensure that the curriculum clearly sets out the knowledge that pupils should learn and when they should learn it.

- In a few subjects, teachers do not choose activities well enough to enable pupils to practise and apply their learning. As a result, some pupils do not acquire the knowledge and skills that they need to be fully prepared for new learning. The school should ensure that teachers select appropriate activities that deepen pupils' knowledge and better prepares them for the next stage of their education.

## 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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	112355
<b>Local authority</b>	Cumberland
<b>Inspection number</b>	10200840
<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	267
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Stephanie Power
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kirsty Rowell
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stgregpat.co.uk">www.stgregpat.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	19 December 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- This school is in the Diocese of Lancaster. The most recent section 48 inspection, for schools of a religious character, was in June 2022. The school is awaiting confirmation from the diocese about its next section 48 inspection.
- The school has provision for two-year-old children.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision for pupils.

## Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, assistant headteachers and other school leaders. They also spoke with a range of staff.
- The lead inspector spoke with eight governors, including the chair of the governing body. She also spoke with representatives of the local authority and of the diocese.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also considered the responses to Ofsted’s survey for staff. There were no responses to Ofsted’s pupil survey. However, inspectors spoke with pupils about their learning and experiences in school.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors reviewed the single central record, took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils’ interests first.
- Inspectors observed pupils’ behaviour at breaktimes, during lessons and around school. They also spoke with pupils about their experiences at school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, history, physical education and art and design. They met with subject leaders and teachers and visited a sample of lessons. Inspectors spoke with pupils about their learning in these subjects. They looked at examples of pupils’ work. Inspectors also considered the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The lead inspector observed some pupils from Years 1 and 2 read to a familiar adult.

### **Inspection team**

Sally Timmons, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Cleo Cunningham	Ofsted Inspector
Elizabeth Hulse	Ofsted Inspector

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