

Inspection of Bookwell Primary School

Bookwell, Egremont, Cumbria CA22 2LT

Inspection dates: 5 and 6 June 2024

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Early years provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Outstanding

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since October 2011.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive at this welcoming and friendly school. The school's belief that every pupil matters resonates throughout the school. Staff ensure that pupils are happy and that they are excited by their learning and the wider experiences afforded to them. Pupils behave exceptionally well. They take great care of one another. Older pupils have immense pride in being positive role models for their younger peers.

The school has exceptionally high expectations for pupils' achievement. Pupils rise to these and have excellent attitudes to learning. They are enthusiastic, motivated and keen to do well. Pupils achieve highly and are extremely well prepared for their next stage of education.

Pupils make a highly positive contribution to the life of the school and to the wider community. For example, they are particularly proactive and successful in organising events to raise money for the school and for local charities. Pupils have also helped to create a sensory flower bed in the local castle's grounds. They display their artwork in a local art gallery, and they have worked with a heritage centre to raise funds. These rich experiences support pupils to become confident and responsible members of society.

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

The school has designed a broad, rich and ambitious curriculum. It has carefully identified the small steps of learning that pupils should acquire from the beginning of the early years to the end of Year 6. The curriculum is innovative, creative and constructed to include many references to the local area. It meets the needs of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), exceptionally well. The additional needs of pupils with SEND are identified early. Staff are adept at supporting these pupils. They adapt curriculum delivery effectively to meet pupils' individual needs.

Teachers are highly skilled at delivering the curriculum consistently well across the school. They have the knowledge and expertise to help pupils to acquire a deep body of knowledge over time. Teachers promote rich discussions about subject content. They check what pupils know and can remember, quickly identifying and addressing any misconceptions in pupils' learning. Learning activities, resources and the environment help pupils to learn the ambitious curriculum extremely well. This is reflected in the school's published outcomes.

Pupils take great care and pride in their learning. The work that they produce across the curriculum is of a consistently high quality. Pupils behave very well during lessons. They have high levels of respect for one another and for staff. Pupils are especially committed to their education. Attendance is a high priority. The school is successful in securing positive levels of attendance. It takes effective action to secure improvements if pupils have low prior attendance.

The school prioritises reading. Pupils enjoy reading a diverse range of texts and do so often, in and out of school. The school has established an effective phonics programme that children learn from the beginning of the Reception Year. The phonics programme is implemented consistently well by confident and competent staff. Pupils learn and remember the sounds and letters that they need to read unfamiliar words. Those who need additional help are supported effectively. Pupils become confident and fluent readers by the time that they leave school.

The school has designed an extensive personal development programme that extends beyond the academic curriculum. This begins in the early years, where children's personal, social and emotional development is at the heart of the curriculum. Children acquire a deep understanding of the wider world, including their place in it. They learn about faiths, beliefs and cultures beyond their own experiences. Older pupils develop a profound respect and appreciation of how people can be different. They discussed the experiences of different communities around the world with empathy and compassion.

Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND, have plentiful opportunities to develop their talents and interests. For example, they benefit from sports tournaments. Pupils relish partaking in many different clubs, including in drama and dance, choir, cookery, gardening and orienteering. Some pupils also learn how to play musical instruments to a proficient level. Others challenge themselves during outdoor pursuits, such as ghyll scrambling, canoeing and fell-walking.

The school ensures that the high-quality education that it provides has a consistently positive impact on pupils, including those with SEND. Governors have the knowledge and expertise to provide highly effective support and challenge to the school, with a focus on the quality of education. The school has ensured that staff benefit from highly effective professional development. This has significantly contributed to the staff's expert delivery of the curriculum. The school is considerate of staff's workload and well-being. For instance, it has taken steps to ensure that teachers have time to prioritise their teaching.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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 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

Unique reference number	112155
Local authority	Cumberland
Inspection number	10290009
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	208
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Stuart Humphries
Headteacher	Russell Hardy
Website	www.bookwell.cumbria.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	11 and 12 October 2011, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- 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, deputy headteacher and other leaders of the school. They also spoke with a range of staff.
- The lead inspector spoke with four governors, including the chair of the governing body. She also spoke with a representative of the local authority.

- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also considered the responses to Ofsted’s online surveys for staff and for pupils.
- 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 and religious education. They met with subject leaders and teachers, and they visited a sample of lessons. Inspectors spoke with pupils about their learning in these subjects. They looked at examples of pupils’ work. The lead inspector also considered the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The lead inspector observed some pupils from Years 1 to 3 read to a familiar adult.

Inspection team

Sally Timmons, lead inspector

His Majesty’s Inspector

Cleo Cunningham

Ofsted Inspector

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