

Inspection of Kells Infant School

High Road, Kells, Whitehaven, Cumbria CA28 9PQ

Inspection dates:	8 and 9 October 2024
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
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 July 2014. Since September 2024, schools have not been awarded an overall effectiveness grade.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils' happy faces show how much they like this friendly school. Their parents and carers have many positive things to say about the support that their children receive. Nursery children enter excited about what the day will bring. Older pupils relish the activities that the school provides at social times. Pupils thrive in the knowledge that staff care for them well.

The school expects pupils to achieve well so that they are ready for junior school. Pupils work hard and try their best in lessons. They listen carefully to teachers and show perseverance when they learn new skills. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), typically achieve well in a range of subjects.

The school has established rules and routines for pupils to follow. For example, pupils walk sensibly when moving around the school and show good manners when eating their lunch.

The school provides pupils with a varied programme of activities beyond their academic learning. For instance, pupils participate in a range of after-school clubs. They visit art exhibitions and museums to learn more about the history of their own community. Pupils learn, in age-appropriate ways, about the differences between people and their families. These activities help to prepare pupils extremely well for future life.

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

The school has established a broad and ambitious curriculum. It has identified what pupils need to know and be able to do by the time that they leave the school. This important knowledge is broken down into carefully ordered steps, starting from the early years.

Staff deliver the curriculum well. They make effective adaptations so that pupils with SEND can fully access learning alongside their peers. Staff check regularly to ensure that pupils understand the knowledge that they are learning. This ensures that any misconceptions are addressed swiftly and successfully.

In most subjects, the school checks that the curriculum is having the desired impact in helping pupils to know more and remember more over time. In a few subjects, work to develop this is at an early stage. This limits the extent to which the school knows how well pupils are learning the intended curriculum.

Reading is at the heart of the curriculum. In the Nursery class, children are introduced to a wide range of stories, songs and rhymes. Older pupils are provided with an extensive selection of books to borrow and to read in school. Pupils relish regular visits to the new, vibrant library. Pupils gain the phonics knowledge that they need to become confident and fluent readers.

Nursery children quickly develop confidence and curiosity for learning because of the very high standard of care that they receive. Staff successfully develop children's language and

communication skills. The sensitive support that staff provide enables children to learn to share and play happily alongside others. This prepares them very well for the Reception Year.

Pupils are attentive in lessons, and they develop enthusiastic attitudes towards learning. Overall, they behave sensibly and appropriately for their age. This helps to create a positive environment where everyone can learn with little disruption.

Pupils with SEND have their needs identified quickly. The school communicates well with parents and professionals to secure expert support for pupils who need it. As a result, these pupils achieve well from their individual starting points.

The school has rightly prioritised pupils' regular attendance and punctuality. As a result of more rigorous action, attendance has now improved.

Pupils develop an understanding of difference and diversity in their community and the wider world. They learn about values such as tolerance and respect. Additionally, pupils learn about relationships and how to be healthy in an age-appropriate way. These rich and varied experiences help to prepare pupils very well for their next stage of education.

Mostly, governors understand their role and carry this out effectively. However, they have not sufficiently held the school to account for the quality of education that it provides. The school has ensured that staff have a manageable workload. Staff are proud to work at 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 very small number of subjects, the school has not checked the impact of the curriculum on pupils' learning. This limits its ability to identify necessary improvements to the curriculum so that pupils can build knowledge securely over time. The school should ensure that it checks how well pupils learn and remember the curriculum.
- Governors do not systematically review the impact of the school's actions to improve pupils' learning. As a result, they are not sufficiently clear about the areas that the school needs to improve. Governors should ensure that they consistently hold the school to account for the quality of education that pupils receive.

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

Unique reference number	112169
Local authority	Cumberland
Inspection number	10348091
Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	104
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Emma McQuade
Headteacher	Wendy Figes
Website	www.kells-inf.cumbria.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	8 and 9 July 2014, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- The school does not make use of any alternate provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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 carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading and phonics,

mathematics and art and design. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors met with leaders who are responsible for the curriculum, attendance, behaviour and pupils' personal development.
- 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 looked at a range of policies and documentation relating to pupils' welfare and education. They observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors met with parents at the start of the school day. They took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.
- Inspectors spoke with staff about their workload and well-being. They also took account of the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils about their experiences at school. There were no responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils.

Inspection team

Keith Wright, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Lindy Griffiths

Ofsted Inspector

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