

# Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Waberthwaite CofE School

Waberthwaite, Millom, Cumbria LA19 5YJ

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Inspection date:

19 November 2024

## **Outcome**

Waberthwaite CofE School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

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

Pupils are friendly and polite. Just as the school's vision states, they strive to ensure that they all 'fit together', which includes celebrating any differences between themselves and others. Staff create a strong culture so that new pupils feel welcome in the school.

Most pupils achieve well, they work hard to live up to the school's high expectations for their achievement and behaviour. Pupils show enthusiasm in lessons and take pride in their work.

Children in the early years learn in a calm and settled environment. They benefit from clear routines and expectations, which help them to make a positive start to their education. Older pupils behave well in classrooms and around the school.

The school serves a small and rural community. As such, the school is determined for pupils to be prepared well for life beyond school and their immediate locality. It provides opportunities for pupils to visit cities, such as Liverpool including a ferry trip, and Manchester.

The school welcomes regular visitors, such as an imam from Bradford, to widen pupils' knowledge of other cultures. Pupils learn how to lead safe and healthy lifestyles.

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

The school provides pupils with a broad and ambitious curriculum, which is carefully designed to take account of the mixed-age classes and the context of the school.

The school has introduced a new scheme for developing grammar and writing across the school. This has helped to improve pupils' attitudes towards high-quality writing across the curriculum and supports learning of the wider world around them. Pupils' books show that they take pride in their work.

The school is alert to any pupils who may have SEND. There are effective systems in place to identify such pupils early. These pupils are supported well to access learning alongside their peers and achieve well.

Children in the Nursery class become familiar with the sounds of letters through songs and rhymes. The school's phonics programme is securely embedded. Therefore, children develop their understanding of letters and sounds and begin a love for reading as they move through the Reception class. Staff deliver the phonics programme consistently, so pupils quickly become competent, fluent readers. From the start, staff identify any pupils who struggle to keep up with the programme and provide swiftly the support that they need to catch up.

The school has benefitted from partnerships with the local authority and other settings in developing the curriculum. Leaders have carefully considered how well the curriculum is implemented across the wider curriculum. As a result, they have made effective changes to what is taught and when.

In most subjects, the school can assess how well pupils are learning. However, in a small number of subjects, the use of assessment is over complex. This means that the school is not able to check clearly what pupils are remembering over time.

Pupils understand fully the school's expectations for behaviour. Pupils know that if they make the wrong choice, staff will support them to put this right. Relationships between staff and pupils are very positive.

Attendance rates are high. Where pupils' attendance has not been so strong in the past, the school has been quick to tackle and address this. As a result, pupils' attendance in these cases has improved sharply.

The school provides a range of experiences to support pupils' personal development. For example, pupils have regular opportunities to debate current affairs. This helps pupils to develop confidence to express their opinions, even when they differ from those of other people. It also contributes to their preparedness for life beyond the school. There is a clear programme for teaching personal, social and health education (PSHE). However, the PSHE curriculum is not delivered consistently as the school intends it to be. As a result, pupils have some gaps in their knowledge, including of fundamental British values.

Pupils' talents are recognised and, where possible, the school provides clubs to support these. Many pupils come to school by bus, so the school strives to work around this challenge. Pupils demonstrate a secure understanding of their roles and responsibilities and fulfil these well.

Staff are proud to work at this school. They acknowledge that their workload is sometimes high but appreciate leaders' efforts to reduce this.

Governors fulfil their roles well and meet their statutory duties. They recognise the challenges of working in a small school. They consider carefully the fine balance between offering the best support that they can while also considering staff workload and well-being. This enables them to hold the school to account effectively.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- In some subjects, assessment systems are overly complex, so teachers are not clear about the essential knowledge that pupils need to know and remember. As a result, teachers are not able to accurately check whether pupils' knowledge builds over time. The school should clarify the essential knowledge in these subjects so it can more easily assess how well pupils achieve.
- The PSHE programme is not routinely implemented as the school intends. As a result, pupils' understanding, including of fundamental British values, is not as strong as it could be. The school should ensure that the PSHE programme is delivered consistently.

## **Background**

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 good for overall effectiveness in July 2019.

## 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>	112352
<b>Local authority</b>	Cumberland
<b>Inspection number</b>	10348111
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	55
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	John Moffat
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sandra Cummings
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://google.waberthwaite.cumbria.sch.uk">google.waberthwaite.cumbria.sch.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	2 and 3 July 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is a voluntary aided Church of England primary school. The most recent section 48 inspection of the school's religious character took place in January 2018. The school is awaiting confirmation from the diocese about its next section 48 inspection.
- The school has provision for two-year-olds.
- The school does not use any alternative provision for its pupils.

## Information about this inspection

- 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 held meetings with the headteacher and other members of staff. In addition, they met with representatives of the governing body, the local authority and the diocese.
- The inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. They also considered documents and spoke to some staff about the curriculum, SEND, attendance, safeguarding, personal development and behaviour.
- Inspectors considered how the school prepares pupils for life in modern Britain, which included reviewing the curriculum for PSHE.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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.
- The responses to Ofsted Parent View were reviewed. This included the free-text responses. The responses to the staff questionnaires were also considered. There were no responses to the pupil survey.

### **Inspection team**

Keith Wright, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Garry White

Ofsted Inspector

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