

# Inspection of Leven Valley CofE Primary School

Backbarrow, Leven Valley CofE Primary School, Ulverston, Cumbria LA12 8QF

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Inspection dates:	12 and 13 November 2024
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Good

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

Positive relationships lie at the heart of this happy, calm school. Pupils and children in the early years are respectful to each other and have developed strong bonds with the nurturing staff. They are clear that anyone would be welcome at this small, friendly school. Pupils are keen to help each other and to follow the school's rules.

Pupils at this school develop a love and appreciation of the outdoors. They value the many opportunities that the school offers them to explore, learn and be active outside. Pupils' learning is brought to life through going on trips far and wide, such as to cities, farms and lakes. This includes annual residential trips across key stage 2, that the school carefully plans to build on pupils' skills and confidence each year. At school, pupils thoroughly enjoy playing in the wild wood area at social times and attending extra-curricular sports clubs.

The school's ambitious and rich curriculum reflects its vision for all pupils to achieve well in their academic and personal development. Pupils enjoy learning new concepts and confidently make links with what they already know across different subjects. Pupils build a secure body of knowledge and are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

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

The school has carefully considered its local context when designing the curriculum. Pupils access a broad curriculum that captures their interests, broadens their experiences and builds on their knowledge well. The school has identified what pupils should learn each year. It has ensured that staff can deliver the curriculum effectively to mixed-aged classes. Staff present new knowledge clearly to pupils. They ensure that the work that pupils complete enables them to apply what they have learned. This includes in the early years, where staff plan activities that effectively build on children's knowledge and skills. Pupils progress well through the curriculum.

The school has systems to check how well pupils are learning. These systems support staff to accurately identify what pupils need to learn next. The school engages positively with parents and carers and ensures that staff keep them informed about their children's progress. The school provides parents with information that enables them to support their children's learning at home.

The school knows its pupils well. It accurately identifies the additional needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school works closely with external professionals, such as speech and language therapists, and acts on their advice. This helps to ensure that the support that is in place for pupils with SEND meets their needs effectively.

The school aspires to foster a love of reading across the school. Pupils access a diverse range of books and have many opportunities to read and to hear stories. Pupils read books that match the sounds that they know. This helps them to develop their confidence in reading. Staff deliver the school's phonics programme consistently, starting from the

Reception Year. The school provides additional support to pupils who find reading difficult. However, the school does not focus this support sharply enough on pupils' precise gaps in phonics knowledge. This does not help them to catch up quickly when they fall behind.

Pupils' rates of attendance are high. The school uses a range of strategies to ensure that parents understand the impact that absences have on their children's learning. Pupils engage well in lessons and listen attentively to staff. Staff provide effective support when needed to help pupils to remain focused. In the early years, children play together collaboratively and help each other to problem solve in their learning. Pupils behave well.

The school places a high focus on promoting pupils' wider development. Pupils enjoy accessing a range of extra-curricular activities, including recorder club and 'little big band'. They relish opportunities to take part in sports events with other schools, including cross-country. Pupils enjoy being able to make a positive impact on their local community and to the lives of others. They spoke with pride about planting wildflowers to help the environment and singing in the local care home. Pupils are keen to take on positions of responsibility, such as school councillors and librarians. These experiences prepare pupils well for secondary school and beyond.

The school has developed positive partnerships with other schools. This has provided staff with opportunities to develop and to share their knowledge and expertise. The school is considerate of staff's workload and well-being.

Governors carry out their roles well. They ensure that the best interests of pupils remain at the heart of decisions that the school makes.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- The school's support for some pupils who are struggling to keep pace with the phonics programme is not precise enough. This hinders pupils from quickly overcoming their gaps in phonics knowledge and delays them developing their reading fluency. The school should ensure that pupils who fall behind the phonics programme receive swift, targeted support that enables them to secure their knowledge of phonics.

## **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>	112356
<b>Local authority</b>	Westmorland and Furness
<b>Inspection number</b>	10294295
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	68
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Andy Allan
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ian Nicol
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.levenvalley.cumbria.sch.uk">www.levenvalley.cumbria.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	11 September 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is a voluntary aided Church of England primary school and is part of the Diocese of Carlisle. Its last inspection under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 was in June 2023. The school's next section 48 inspection will be within five school years.
- The school does not use any alternative 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 met with the headteacher, other leaders, governors, and staff at the school. The lead inspector spoke with representatives from the local authority and the diocese.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. 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 also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- 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.
- The lead inspector listened to some pupils read to a known adult.
- Inspectors observed pupils at breaktime, lunchtime and when moving around the school.
- Inspectors spoke to parents and carers and considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff. Inspectors spoke to pupils and to staff to gather their views.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including those related to the governance of the school.

### **Inspection team**

Liz Dayton, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Keith Wright

Ofsted Inspector

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