Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Low Furness CofE Primary School

Church Road, Great Urswick, Ulverston, Cumbria LA12 0TA

Inspection date: 21 January 2025

Outcome

Low Furness CofE Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils find this school a happy place to be. They live out the school values, including compassion, honesty and friendship. Pupils treat each other with kindness and respect. The school forms strong relationships with pupils and their families. As a result, pupils feel safe.

Pupils respond well to the high expectations that are set for their achievement. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are proud of their school. They demonstrate a willingness to work hard and succeed. As a result, most pupils achieve well.

Pupils behave extremely well. Older pupils foster close connections with their younger peers. They act as positive role models and ensure that everyone feels welcome. Children in the early years enjoy exploring and learning alongside their friends. They settle well into school routines.

Pupils, especially those who are older, have some meaningful opportunities to contribute to life at the school. For example, a group of pupils are part of 'rota club' and get involved with charity events in the community. Others are eco councillors who look after chickens in the school grounds and encourage recycling.

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

The school has designed a broad and balanced curriculum across key stages 1 and 2. In all subjects, the school has identified what it expects pupils to learn. In some subjects, the school has also identified the specific knowledge that pupils should learn in each topic. In doing so, teachers have a clear understanding of the curriculum content that

they should teach. In these subjects, staff check what pupils know and remember frequently. Staff use this information to identify any misconceptions and to provide pupils with useful feedback. As a result, pupils achieve well.

In a small number of subjects, however, the school's curriculum is not designed as well as it is elsewhere. In these areas, the school has not pinpointed the exact knowledge or skills that it expects pupils to learn. This hinders staff's ability to check on what pupils know and understand.

Children in early years settle well and build effective relationships with adults. However, the curriculum in the early years does not form a strong enough bedrock for children's later learning. Sometimes, the activities that teachers design do not enable children to learn all that they should. This hinders children's readiness for their move into Year 1.

The school fosters a genuine love of reading. It exposes pupils to a rich breadth of high-quality texts. Teachers deliver the phonics programme consistently well. Children in the early years and pupils in key stage 1 are given books that match the sounds that they know. The school arranges swift support for pupils who struggle to keep up with the pace of the phonics programme.

The school has effective systems in place to identify pupils with SEND early. Staff adapt the delivery of the curriculum well, so that those with SEND can access new learning. Pupils with SEND typically achieve well.

Pupils' behaviour is extremely positive. They are polite and well-mannered towards each other, staff and visitors. Pupils can learn without distraction. The school works with families to make sure that pupils attend regularly. This means that pupils do not miss out on their education.

Pupils' personal development is promoted well. They enjoy visits to various places, including cities and adventure centres. Pupils learn how to keep themselves healthy and safe. They are keen to attend the many activities offered by the school, such as film club and sports clubs.

The governing body has an effective oversight of the school's work. It uses its knowledge effectively to provide appropriate support and challenge. Staff are proud to be part of the school. They appreciate how their workload and well-being are considered when decisions are made.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum in the early years lacks ambition. It does not identify the key knowledge and skills that children will learn in each area of learning. This sometimes makes it difficult for teachers to design activities that help children learn all that they need to do for their next steps. The school should ensure that the early years curriculum is developed so that it prepares children well for key stage 1.
- In some subjects, the curriculum design is underdeveloped. The school has not thought carefully enough about exactly what they want pupils to learn. This means that teachers are less able to check if pupils have learned all that they should. The school should finalise its curriculum development across subjects so that pupils know more and remember more.

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 June 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

Unique reference number	112299
Local authority	Westmorland and Furness
Inspection number	10348103
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	136
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Gary Thompson
Headteacher	Clare Rowland-Smith
Website	www.low-furness-primary-school.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 June 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is a Church of England School. The last section 48 inspection for schools of a religious character took place in November 2021. The next scheduled inspection should take place in the academic year 2027 to 2028.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are 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.
- 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.

- Inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, other leaders and teachers.
- An inspector met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- An inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils about their experiences of school.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also reviewed the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Emma Jackson, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Alison Dickinson	Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: http://eepurl.com/iTrDn.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2025