Inspection of Stramongate Primary School

Blackhall Road, Kendal, Cumbria LA9 4BT

Inspection dates:	13 and 14 May 2025
The quality of education	**Good**
Behaviour and attitudes	**Good**
Personal development	**Good**
Leadership and management	**Good**
Early years provision	**Good**
Previous inspection grade	28 and 29 January 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Matthew Beresford. This school is part of Cumbria Education Trust, which means that other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Lorrayne Hughes, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by George Beveridge.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy at this school. Staff build nurturing relationships with pupils. They help them to feel safe and to live out the school's values of respect, responsibility and resilience. Pupils typically behave well. They move around school calmly and are polite to others.

The school and the trust have high expectations for pupils' achievement. Pupils learn a broad and engaging curriculum. This is enriched with visits, residential trips and outdoor learning experiences. For example, pupils take part in Canadian canoeing, camping, city visits and fell walking. These experiences promote pupils' character and broadens their knowledge and skills. Pupils achieve well. When they leave the school at the end of Year 6, pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.

The school promotes pupils' leadership skills through roles such as school councillors and 'worry buddies'. Pupils are proud of the impact they have through these roles. For example, older pupils support younger pupils to play games at social times. They help children to settle quickly when they join the Reception class. Pupils contribute to the community through planting bulbs and trees in the local area, raising money for charities and singing at the care home nearby.

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

The school's curriculum is ambitious. It is informed by the local context to make it relevant for pupils. The school has defined clearly the key knowledge it expects pupils to know each year, starting from the early years. Pupils develop a broad knowledge across a range of subjects.

The school has thorough transition processes that enable staff to get to know pupils quickly when they start. It works effectively with families and specialist professionals to accurately identify pupils' needs. The school puts support in place to meet those needs swiftly and effectively. This includes the additional needs of vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

The school has ensured that staff's subject and pedagogical knowledge are strong. Staff enable pupils to make connections in their learning across subjects. They typically design activities that support pupils to build on their knowledge and skills. However, in some subjects, these activities do not precisely match the important knowledge that the school intends them to learn. As a result, some pupils do not deepen their knowledge and build on this securely over time.

In most subjects, the school uses its checks on learning effectively to inform future teaching. Staff identify gaps in pupils' knowledge and deliver further support to focus on these areas. However, in a small number of subjects, these processes are still being refined. Where this is the case, staff do not clearly identify how securely the key knowledge has been learned. This means that some pupils have gaps in their understanding that are not addressed swiftly enough.

The school has strengthened its early reading curriculum in recent years. Pupils read books that are well matched to their reading level. This helps pupils to quickly gain confidence in reading. Staff deliver the phonics programme well. There are clear processes in place to identify where pupils struggle to keep up. Staff provide focused additional support for these pupils, which helps them to rapidly catch up. Pupils are independent, avid and fluent readers.

The school's and trust's high expectations for attendance are shared widely and are understood by staff, pupils and parents and carers. The school's actions to reduce the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent have been highly effective in improving pupils' rates of attendance.

Pupils enjoy their learning and take pride in their work. Staff remind pupils to listen and to follow routines, which helps them to remain focused in lessons. The school provides effective, individual support to pupils with SEND who struggle to regulate their emotions. Staff in the early years support children well to understand the feelings of others and model how to resolve minor disagreements. This helps children to learn how to manage this independently.

The school supports pupils' broader development effectively. Pupils learn about the importance of maintaining their mental and physical health. The school develops pupils' talents through extra-curricular clubs, including darts, chess and choir. Pupils achieve particularly well in sports and enjoy representing the school in competitions. Pupils learn about different cultures and celebrate diversity. Pupils are well prepared for life beyond school.

Together, the trust and the school have a shared vision. The best interests of pupils lie at the heart of any changes that are made, and the impact on staff workload is considered. Trustees understand their responsibilities well. They provide effective support and challenge to 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 some subjects, the work that some pupils complete does not focus sharply enough on the key knowledge that the school intends them to learn. This hinders some pupils from building their depth of understanding securely. The school should ensure that the implementation of the curriculum across all subjects is consistently effective and fully embedded so that pupils develop a secure body of knowledge and learn as well as they can.

- In a small number of subjects, the school's processes to check how securely pupils are learning do not enable the school to clearly identify gaps in their knowledge. This means that key gaps in some pupils' learning are not addressed well enough. The school should ensure that staff are equipped to identify clearly what pupils know and remember to inform their next steps in learning accurately.

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	137962
Local authority	Westmorland and Furness
Inspection number	10377999
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	261
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	George Beveridge
CEO of the trust	Lorrayne Hughes
Headteacher	Matthew Beresford
Website	www.stramongate.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	28 and 29 January 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher was appointed in January 2021.
- The school has been part of Cumbria Education Trust since March 2025.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school operates before- and after-school clubs.

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 and representatives of the multi-academy trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, computing and physical education. 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 reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors observed pupils at breaktime, lunchtime and when moving around the school.
- Inspectors spoke to parents and considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. Inspectors spoke to pupils and to staff to gather their views. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for pupils and staff.
- 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
Gillian Crompton	Ofsted Inspector
Philip Barlow	Ofsted Inspector

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