

Inspection of Walton & Lees Hill CofE School

Lees Hill, Brampton, Cumbria CA8 2BB

Inspection dates:	10 and 11 December 2024
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive in this small, rural school community. They strive to follow the school's vision for pupils to be 'caring, sharing and always learning'. This is evident in the way that pupils look after each other and happily ensure that everyone is included.

Typically, pupils respond positively to the school's high expectations. Staff help them to build knowledge across the curriculum. This helps them to achieve well. Pupils in Year 6 are well prepared to face the new challenges of Year 7.

Relationships between staff and pupils, including children in the early years, are warm and positive. Pupils value the strong friendships that they develop at school. They learn to understand and respect people's differences.

Pupils benefit from the many activities the school provides, which broaden their horizons. They willingly participate in opportunities to serve others in their local and wider community. For example, they deliver food parcels, along with handwritten letters, to local residents.

Pupils learn that following the school rules helps them to be the best they can be. Most pupils behave well and those who find it difficult to control their emotions receive the help they need from staff who want the best for them.

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

Typically, the school's curriculum is ambitious and well designed to match the interests and abilities of pupils. Teaching is effective. This means that most pupils learn well and can recall key information with ease. Pupils listen attentively to their teachers during lessons. Pupils respond well to the strategies that teachers use to address any gaps that they identify when checking on pupils' knowledge.

In most subjects, pupils achieve well. Teachers make sure that pupils learn key knowledge in a logical order and practise this regularly until it is secure in their long-term memories. However, in a small number of subjects, some of the intended learning is not as clearly defined. As a result, pupils do not learn as well as they could.

Reading is at the heart of the curriculum. Children in the early years enjoy learning about patterns of sounds in words through well-loved stories, songs and rhymes. Pupils who are at the early stages of reading receive expert support from staff. This helps them to quickly build up secure phonics knowledge.

Pupils practise their reading regularly with books that contain the sounds that they know. Teachers check pupils' reading knowledge carefully. By the end of Year 2, most pupils can read fluently and accurately. Children in the nursery benefit from the priority that staff place on developing children's language and communication skills. This prepares them well for the Reception Year.

Pupils develop a love for reading. Older pupils can speak knowledgeably about authors, poets and books that they enjoy.

Children in the early years are well looked after by skilled and experienced staff. Children start to develop routines that help them to be well prepared for Year 1. Children develop a good grasp of numbers through the early mathematics curriculum. While there is an ambitious curriculum for all children in the early years, staff do not routinely use activities well enough to engage children in meaningful and appropriate learning. When this happens, pupils' attitudes to learning are not as strong as they could be.

The school is typically calm and orderly. Pupils are rewarded for making the right choices about how to behave. This helps to motivate them to focus on their learning. Pupils know what bullying is. They say it happens rarely and if it does happen, pupils have confidence that staff will deal with it well.

Pupils understand the importance of staying healthy and they have a good knowledge of nutrition. The school teaches pupils strategies that help them to manage their emotions successfully. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. The school's personal development provision supports pupils to grow into responsible, well-developed citizens.

Pupils make a strong contribution to the community. For instance, they sing Christmas carols for local residents and raise funds for local and national charities. Pupils learn to be courageous advocates who can make a positive difference to world issues. They have a good knowledge of the fundamental British values. They demonstrate this through expressing their views that everyone should be respected and accepted.

Governors have a secure knowledge of the school's strengths and priorities. They provide effective support and challenge to the school and ensure that resources are used effectively. The school provides appropriate training and support for staff. It carefully considers staff's workload and well-being when making changes.

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 small number of subjects, the school has not considered the incremental steps of knowledge that need to be taught, in order for pupils to learn the curriculum in sufficient depth. This hinders how well pupils learn in these subjects. The school should ensure that, for all subjects, there is a clearly sequenced ambitious curriculum in place that helps pupils to achieve well.
- On occasion, the activities that pupils are given do not support them to learn the most important knowledge in the curriculum. This means that pupils move on to new

learning before they are ready. The school should ensure that teachers deliver the curriculum consistently well so that pupils can connect new and prior learning.

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	112256
Local authority	Cumberland
Inspection number	10348099
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	26
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Joss Scouler
Headteacher	Lynn Rooney
Website	www.leeshillschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	11 December 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This Church of England primary school is part of the Diocese of Carlisle. The last section 48 inspection, for schools of a religious character, took place in October 2023. The next section 48 inspection will take place by the end of 2028.
- The school does not make use of 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.

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- 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 and other leaders to discuss SEND, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, and art and design. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at a sample of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector observed pupils read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors looked at a sample of pupils' work, and evaluated the curriculums, in some other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record and took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils. They considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The lead inspector held a meeting with representatives of the governing body, including the chair of governors. She spoke to representatives of the diocese and the local authority.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They considered responses from staff and pupils to Ofsted's online surveys.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils about their experiences of school and their views of behaviour and bullying. They observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors spoke with staff about their workload and well-being.

Inspection team

Cleo Cunningham, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Garry White

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street Manchester
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