

# Inspection of St Mary's CofE Primary School

Kendal Road, Kirkby Lonsdale, Carnforth, Lancashire LA6 2DN

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Inspection dates:	28 and 29 January 2025
The quality of education	<b>Outstanding</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development	<b>Outstanding</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Outstanding</b>
Early years provision	<b>Outstanding</b>
Previous inspection grade	Good

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

Pupils thoroughly enjoy attending this vibrant, welcoming school. They are excited to come into school each day. Pupils flourish due to the supportive, caring relationships that they form with staff. These relationships help pupils to feel happy and safe.

The school has extremely high expectations for what pupils can achieve. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), consistently live up to or exceed these expectations. They shine in all that they do. This is reflected in the exceptional quality of work that pupils produce. Pupils can recall their prior learning in depth and talk about it confidently.

Pupils relish every opportunity to learn. Their behaviour is exemplary around the school. From the beginning of the early years to Year 6, there is a calm and comfortable atmosphere that enables pupils to focus completely on their learning.

The school's motto 'Nurturing creative thinkers' is borne out in the vast array of enrichment activities that pupils are offered. For example, pupils benefit from outdoor learning, including orienteering in their school grounds. Leadership skills are developed through a carefully designed range of responsibilities such as sports leaders, reading ambassadors and school councillors. Pupils accept such roles with pride. As a result of these opportunities, pupils are well prepared for life outside school.

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

The school has a coherently planned, ambitious curriculum in place that starts in the early years. It has carefully mapped out the important knowledge that pupils, including those with SEND, should learn at each stage and in each subject. Staff are provided with purposeful, high-quality training. This enables staff to design highly effective learning activities that enable pupils to learn exceptionally well.

From the moment children enter the Nursery Year they are supported to develop their speech and language through rhyme and story. Throughout the school, staff model the language and vocabulary they wish children to develop and use. As a result, pupils are articulate in conversations.

Staff promptly identify and resolve any misconceptions in pupils' learning. They use their checks effectively to identify any gaps in pupils' knowledge. The school uses this information well to shape pupils' future learning. Over time, pupils develop a deep body of knowledge in a range of subjects.

Reading takes centre stage in the school. Staff deliver the phonics programme expertly and most pupils read fluently by the end of Year 2. Pupils who find reading more difficult, receive the support they need to catch up. Pupils have access to a diverse range of high-quality texts. Older pupils talk enthusiastically about their favourite books and authors.

The school has highly effective systems to identify the specific needs of pupils with SEND at the earliest opportunity. Thoughtful lesson adaptations ensure that pupils with SEND learn successfully alongside their peers. Where pupils need something more bespoke, this is provided without delay. Staff work with specialist support agencies to further enhance their understanding of pupils' needs and the best way to support them. Pupils with SEND participate fully in all aspects of school life.

The school has high expectations for pupils' behaviour and conduct, both in the classroom and the playground. Adults teach pupils to take responsibility for their own behaviour. Pupils are kind, respectful and courteous.

Attendance is a priority for the school. Pupils enjoy attending school. If an individual's attendance falls below the accepted level, the school works with families to provide the right support to bring about improvement. As a result, attendance rates are high.

The way that the school promotes pupils' personal development is praiseworthy. In particular, pupils value the strength of the music and art curriculums. They learn to sing, play musical instruments and delight in the many performances that the school plans for them. Pupils in every year group talk excitedly about day trips and residential visits they have experienced. These opportunities are carefully designed to immerse pupils in walks of life that are unfamiliar to them. For example, they visit museums and go to a mosque and a synagogue. These experiences promote pupils' understanding of different religions and cultures. Pupils know how to keep themselves physically and mentally healthy. They understand the concept of consent and what makes a healthy relationship. They are exceptionally well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Governors are passionate about affording pupils as many opportunities to learn and grow as they can. They carry out their statutory duties effectively and hold the school to account for the quality of education that pupils receive. In addition, they carefully contemplate staff workload and well-being when making decisions. Staff overwhelmingly agree that all leaders are considerate of this. Staff feel valued and are proud to work at this school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **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>	112323
<b>Local authority</b>	Westmorland and Furness
<b>Inspection number</b>	10294292
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	229
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Jo Gill
<b>Headteacher</b>	Brian Jones
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stmarys-kl.cumbria.sch.uk">www.stmarys-kl.cumbria.sch.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	24 and 25 January 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- This Church of England Primary school is in the Diocese of Carlisle. The last section 48 inspection, for schools of a religious character, was in July 2018. The next section 48 inspection is due to take place in the 2025-26 academic year.
- The school manages an onsite breakfast- and after-school club.
- 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). 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.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The lead inspector met with the headteacher, other senior leaders and staff. She also met with members of the local governing board including the chair of governors.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and music. 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 considered the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The lead inspector observed some pupils from Year 1 to Year 3 reading to a familiar adult.
- 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 inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and breaktimes. They also spoke with pupils about their experiences of school.
- The inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. The inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's surveys for staff and for pupils.

### **Inspection team**

Ruth Moran, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Anna Carroll

Ofsted Inspector

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