

Inspection of a good school: Beetham CofE Primary School

Stanley Street, Beetham, Milnthorpe, Cumbria LA7 7AS

Inspection date: 5 October 2022

Outcome

Beetham CofE Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to this small and welcoming school. They embrace leaders' values of love, perseverance and respect. Pupils appreciate the friendships that they have with each other across all ages and the positive relationships that they have with staff. Pupils feel safe and know who to talk to if they have any worries or concerns. They are confident that staff will deal effectively with bullying should it ever occur.

Leaders expect all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to follow the principles of 'caring for everyone, learning together and achievement for all'. Pupils rise to leaders' high expectations for their behaviour and learning. They are considerate of each other and try hard in their lessons. As a result, most pupils achieve well.

Leaders provide pupils with opportunities to be responsible members of the school and wider community. For example, the school council recently worked with volunteers in the church community to collect food for a local food bank. They also organise stalls for the winter fair and have revived the school tuck shop. Some pupils are members of a pupil parliament where they meet Members of Parliament and debate topical issues. This helps pupils to be confident and to contribute positively to society.

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

Leaders have designed a broad and ambitious curriculum for all pupils, including those with SEND. They have thought carefully about the essential knowledge that pupils should learn and when, from the early years to Year 6. Pupils build their knowledge over time and make links between prior learning and new learning in different subjects. This means that most pupils achieve well. Leaders identify the needs of children and pupils with SEND quickly. These pupils are supported effectively to learn the same curriculum as their classmates.

Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subjects that they teach. In most subjects, they check pupils' understanding with skilful questions. However, in some subjects, the curriculums have been recently introduced. In these subjects, teachers are less accomplished in using assessment strategies to make sure that pupils have learned all that they should. At times, this hinders some pupils from remembering more over time.

Leaders have prioritised reading in the curriculum. They have created new library areas for pupils to enjoy. Leaders have also carefully selected new books to ensure that there is a diverse range of texts available for children and pupils to read. Pupils enjoy reading and do so widely in and out of school. Leaders have successfully introduced a new phonics curriculum. They have provided training for staff to deliver this curriculum well. The phonics curriculum is taught from the beginning of the Reception Year. Leaders ensure that the books pupils read match the sounds they are learning in class. Those children and pupils who need help to catch up with the curriculum are supported effectively. This means that most pupils become confident and fluent readers.

Pupils, including children in the early years, are kind and polite. They help each other in lessons and at playtimes to make everyone feel welcome. Staff establish clear routines. For example, children in the early years learn how to move around the school sensibly and older pupils help with the equipment at breaktimes. Pupils are excited about their learning in lessons and listen carefully to their teachers. They can concentrate on their learning because lessons are rarely interrupted by poor behaviour.

Leaders ensure that pupils have many opportunities to develop their knowledge beyond the academic curriculum. For example, leaders have established a link with a school in Senegal. Pupils learn about the country, the faith and culture as well as raising vital funds to help maintain the school building there. Pupils exchange postcards with those pupils. This helps pupils to broaden their understanding of the world and their place in it.

Pupils gain important knowledge to help them become citizens of the future. For example, they learn about their role in creating a more sustainable environment. They take an active part in looking after their environment. For example, they have planted trees and hedgerows in the local area. Pupils also work on local projects and recently secured funding to buy LED lightbulbs for the school. Leaders provide opportunities for pupils to participate in a wide range of trips and residential visits. Pupils develop resilience and independence during these experiences.

Leaders and governors have a clear and ambitious vision for the school. Governors know the school well. They ask leaders challenging questions about their work to improve the school. Leaders are considerate of staff's workload and are mindful of this in the decisions they make. Staff appreciate the care leaders show for their well-being and feel valued by leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that staff have regular safeguarding training. Staff know pupils well. They respond quickly to any signs that pupils may be at risk of harm. Leaders ensure that staff know how to report any safeguarding concerns that they may have. Leaders act on these in a timely and appropriate way. They seek help and support for vulnerable pupils.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including when online. Staff and other agencies, such as the police and the fire and rescue service, teach pupils about how to be safe when they are near roads and around strangers.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the curriculums are new. As a result, teachers are less accomplished in using assessment strategies in these subjects to make sure that pupils have learned all that they should. At times, this hinders some pupils from remembering more over time. Leaders should ensure that teachers make effective use of assessment strategies to check that pupils are learning the intended curriculum.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. 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 would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in January 2013.

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](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	112313
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	10211162
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	53
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	John Lomax
Headteacher	Abi Johnson
Website	www.beethamschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 January 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This school belongs to the Diocese of Carlisle. The most recent section 48 inspection was in March 2018.
- Leaders do not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During this inspection, inspectors met with the headteacher and other leaders in school. They also spoke with a range of staff.
- The lead inspector met with six governors, including the chair of the governing body. She also spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- The lead inspector spoke to parents and carers at the end of the school day.

- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted’s online survey, including the free-text comments. They also considered the responses to the Ofsted survey for staff. There were no responses to the Ofsted survey for pupils.
- Inspectors examined a range of safeguarding documentation. They checked how leaders ensure that safer recruitment procedures are in place. Inspectors checked records of staff’s safeguarding training. They also spoke to staff to check how well they understand safeguarding procedures.
- Inspectors observed pupils’ behaviour at playtimes, in lessons and around school. They also spoke to pupils about their experiences at school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and geography. They met subject leaders and teachers and visited a sample of lessons. Inspectors spoke with pupils. They also looked at examples of pupils’ work. The lead inspector observed pupils reading to trusted adults.

Inspection team

Sally Timmons, lead inspector

His Majesty’s Inspector

Paul Edmondson

Ofsted Inspector

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