

Inspection of High Hesket CofE School

High Hesket, Carlisle, Cumbria CA4 0HU

Inspection dates:	4 to 5 March 2025
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding for overall effectiveness at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since September 2014. Since September 2024, schools have not been awarded an overall effectiveness grade.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is an incredibly happy and welcoming school. Pupils throughout the school are delightful and keen to engage with visitors. They show their kind nature to those around them by holding doors open and checking that visitors are well and know where to go.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They benefit from staff and other peers knowing them exceptionally well as individuals. Pupils are confident that if they have any worries, there is always a member of staff who will listen and help them.

There are many opportunities for pupils to broaden their horizons, for example through residential to nearby capital cities or by welcoming visitors to the school. There are many extra-curricular clubs, such as sewing, chess and countless sporting activities. Pupils take on leadership responsibilities as school councillors, librarians and captains. Older pupils relish the opportunities to adopt responsibility for their younger peers.

Pupils understand that the school expects them to work hard and produce work of a high quality. They rise to these expectations and achieve well. They enjoy helping and learning from each other.

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

The school has constructed an ambitious curriculum, which enriches pupils' learning. It has been developed with a focus on the school's locality and the wider world. The key knowledge that pupils will learn from the early years to the end of Year 6 is clearly identified and builds in a logical order. The school enhances this learning through carefully designed trips and visits to museums, forests and local farms.

Teachers benefit from high-quality training that helps them deliver the curriculum consistently well. The school ensures that staff receive the guidance they need to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. Staff make adaptations to their teaching and use well-chosen resources that match pupils' carefully identified needs. This helps pupils with SEND to build their knowledge.

The school carefully monitors what pupils know and can do. In the main, pupils achieve well in most subjects. Teachers identify and address pupils' misconceptions as they arise. However, in a few subjects, staff do not give pupils the opportunity to revisit the knowledge that has been taught previously. This means some pupils struggle to recall their learning across a range of subjects.

Pupils learn to read quickly, starting their journey in the early years. In the Nursery class, children are immersed in songs, rhymes and stories. In the Reception Year, teachers introduce children to the sounds and vocabulary that support them to become confident readers. Staff deliver the phonics programme successfully. Those pupils who need additional help to learn to read receive it swiftly. Most older pupils read with accuracy and independence. They enjoy talking about the stories they have shared in class or have read in the newly devised outdoor reading shed.

Children in the early years are very well behaved. They follow established routines and learn cooperatively alongside one another. Pupils' behaviour across the school is highly positive. Kindness runs like a golden thread through how staff and pupils act in school. Everyone follows the motto 'treat others like you would wish to be treated'. Pupils have excellent rates of attendance. They bound into school each day and rarely want to miss out on their learning or seeing their friends.

The school places great importance on pupils' wider development. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe while online and how to keep themselves physically and mentally healthy. Pupils enjoy learning about different careers that may be open to them when they finish their education. This provides them with aspirations and dreams for their futures. However, the school has not ensured that pupils have the understanding they need of faiths and cultures beyond their own. This hinders pupils' preparation for life in modern Britain.

Governors understand their role and have the necessary skills to support and challenge the school. They have a clear focus on the quality of education provided by the school and carry out their duties effectively. Staff feel valued and are incredibly proud to work at this school. They appreciate the support offered around their well-being as well as the commitment to their ongoing professional learning.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's strategies to help pupils recall previously learned knowledge are not as effective as they could be. This means some pupils do not remember what they have been taught over time. The school should ensure that staff support pupils so they know and remember.
- Some aspects of the school's provision for pupils' wider development are limited. This means pupils are not as secure about the differences that exist between people in modern society such as different faiths and cultures. The school should ensure that pupils gain a deeper knowledge of these aspects so they are ready for life in modern Britain.

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	112248
Local authority	Westmorland and Furness
Inspection number	10348098
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	141
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Rachael Tulip
Headteacher	Amy Harvey
Website	www.high-hesket.cumbria.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	16 and 17 September 2014, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- This Church of England school is part of the Diocese of Carlisle. Its last section 48 inspection, for schools of a religious character, took place in January 2020. The next section 48 inspection is due by the end of 2027.
- The school provides a before- and after-school club for pupils.
- The school does not currently make use of any alternative provision for pupils.

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.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. They met with subject leaders and with teachers. Inspectors visited lessons, looked at examples of pupils' work and talked with groups of pupils about their learning.
- The lead inspector observed a sample of pupils from Years 1 to 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 lead inspector spoke with members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority and the diocese.
- Inspectors spoke with staff about their workload and well-being. They also took account of the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff.
- Inspectors met with leaders who are responsible for attendance, behaviour and pupils' personal development.
- Inspectors looked at a range of policies and documentation relating to pupils' welfare and education. They observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and around school.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to the online parent survey, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences at the school. They took account of the responses to Ofsted's online pupil survey, including the free-text comments.

Inspection team

Sue Dymond, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Philip Barlow

Ofsted Inspector

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