

# Inspection of Rockcliffe CofE School

Rockcliffe, Carlisle, Cumbria CA6 4AA

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Inspection dates: 7 and 8 February 2023

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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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 enjoy school, are happy and feel safe. They are friendly and polite. They are respectful to and tolerant of those who may be different from themselves. A typical comment from pupils was: 'No matter how you look or how you want to be, you are always welcome in our school.'

Leaders and teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Most pupils behave sensibly. The few pupils who find it difficult to manage their own behaviour receive the right support from staff. Lessons are rarely disrupted. Leaders deal with bullying and name-calling effectively.

Pupils participate in cultural visits and adventurous activities in the local area and further afield. They look forward to visits to outdoor education centres where they can stay overnight. These build character and help pupils to learn about life in wider British society.

Pupils look after one another. Older pupils take responsibility for younger pupils, for example through being reading buddies.

Parents and carers of children in the early years typically commented on how well children flourish in the school. They said that staff are caring and inspire children.

Pupils know that teachers expect them to work hard and present their work neatly. Leaders make sure that pupils who sometimes find learning difficult, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), receive effective support. Most pupils, as well as children in the early years, achieve well.

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

Leaders and teachers are ambitious for all pupils. They recently revised the curriculum, ensuring that it is organised in a logical way. As a result of a well-designed and well-taught curriculum, pupils are developing an increasingly secure body of knowledge in most subjects.

Despite the many strengths in the curriculum, in a few subjects pupils' learning lacks depth. They do not know and remember enough. This is because leaders' improvements to the curriculum are relatively recent. Pupils have not benefited from these improvements in previous year groups.

Children in the early years also have a well-structured curriculum. Through playing and exploring together, they build on their knowledge of the world around them and become confident, happy learners. Teachers provide lots of practical opportunities for children to learn to count and to compare numbers and sizes. This means that most children are ready to follow the mathematics curriculum in key stage 1.

Leaders prioritise reading throughout the school. Children in the Nursery Year start their journey to becoming readers through singing nursery rhymes and listening to stories. Staff teach the phonics curriculum consistently well from the beginning of the Reception Year. Skilled staff help pupils to practise their reading from books that they carefully select to match pupils' phonic knowledge. Teachers spot any pupils who may be falling behind very quickly and help them catch up. They read to pupils frequently. Most pupils become fluent readers as they move up the school.

Teachers have good subject knowledge. They are also skilled in providing support to meet the needs of all learners, including those with complex SEND. Teachers make good use of the range of training opportunities available to improve their leadership and teaching of the curriculum. They use assessment strategies effectively to check that pupils are learning the curriculum content.

Leaders and teachers identify the needs of pupils with SEND accurately and at the earliest possible stage. They are determined to enable these pupils to follow the same curriculum as their peers. They constantly adapt classroom activities and their plans for trips and visits to ensure that all pupils can take part. This means that pupils, including those with SEND, succeed and most are ready for the next stage in their education.

Pupils usually behave well. They rarely disturb the learning of others. Most pupils attend regularly and on time. Classrooms are calm, bright and well organised.

Leaders provide opportunities for pupils to develop their skills and knowledge beyond the academic curriculum. For example, key stage 1 pupils visited an outdoor centre where they learned map-reading skills, built dens and enjoyed campfires. Older pupils recently explored a range of possible careers in science and engineering, building on their aspirations for adult life. These opportunities help pupils to learn about the wider world and prepare them well for the future.

Pupils vote for class representatives on their school council. Councillors give pupils' views on important issues, such as the school's vision and values. This helps pupils to learn about democracy and citizenship.

Governors know the school well and fulfil all their statutory responsibilities. Governors and leaders consider staff workload and work-life balance when making decisions. Staff feel valued and appreciated.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and governors ensure that all staff know how to keep pupils safe. Staff and governors receive regular and up-to-date training. This helps them to know when a pupil may be at risk of harm. Leaders respond to any concerns and make sure that pupils and families receive effective support.

The curriculum helps pupils learn about how to manage risks and keep themselves safe outside of school. For example, they learn about how to be safe online. They also learn the boundaries they need to observe in friendships and to respect privacy and personal space. Pupils said they know that they are safe because staff are always watching out for them.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- In some foundation subjects where the revised curriculum has only recently been introduced, pupils' learning is not as deep as it is in other subjects. Leaders should ensure that the implementation of the curriculum is consistently strong across the full range of subjects.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	112258
<b>Local authority</b>	Cumbria
<b>Inspection number</b>	10226295
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	142
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Michael Deans
<b>Acting headteacher</b>	Amanda Lee
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.rockcliffe.cumbria.sch.uk">www.rockcliffe.cumbria.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	2 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is a voluntary-controlled Church of England school. The most recent section 48 inspection took place in March 2018.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken this into account in the evaluation of the school.
- During this inspection, the inspectors met with the acting headteacher, subject leaders and five members of the governing body.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history, and art and design. For each deep dive, they discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to

some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. They also looked at pupils' work in some other subjects.

- The inspectors observed pupils reading to a familiar adult and spoke to pupils informally.
- The inspectors met with representatives of the local authority and the diocese.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of safeguarding documentation, including the single central record of checks on staff suitability to work with pupils. They met with the designated safeguarding leader and checked how leaders record and respond to safeguarding concerns.
- The inspectors spoke with staff about their workload and well-being.
- The inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. There were no responses to the staff and pupil surveys.

### **Inspection team**

Jan Corlett, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Linda Griffiths

Ofsted Inspector

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