

Inspection of Skelton School

Skelton, Penrith, Cumbria CA11 9SE

Inspection dates: 25 to 26 June 2024

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to this school. They are happy and know that they are well cared for. This includes even the youngest children in the Nursery Year. The nurturing environment that the school has fostered means that pupils feel safe and that they know who to speak to if they have any concerns. Parents and carers described the school as having a 'family feeling'.

The school has high ambitions for what pupils can achieve. In lessons, pupils are motivated to work hard. The school's vision to develop pupils into 'confident and capable learners' is realised. This is reflected in the high quality of pupils' work. The majority of pupils learn well.

Pupils consistently demonstrate respect for each other. They behave well and respond positively to staff's instructions. Pupils attend school regularly.

There are many opportunities in place to broaden pupils' horizons, for example through whole-school trips and events. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), participate in these activities. There are many extra-curricular clubs available that pupils attend regularly, including those with SEND and those from disadvantaged backgrounds. Older pupils relish the opportunities that they have to adopt responsibility for their younger peers.

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

The school has an ambitious curriculum that clearly identifies the knowledge that pupils need to learn at different stages in many subjects. This is particularly the case in mathematics and has resulted in pupils being confident in exploring different concepts and processes. Pupils use the right vocabulary to discuss their learning in mathematics and they are making strong progress.

In areas where curriculum is less well defined, on occasion, the activities that staff select do not support pupils to learn essential knowledge as deeply as they could. Added to this, some staff do not have the expertise required to successfully adapt the delivery of the curriculum to meet the additional needs of pupils who find it difficult to learn the content and apply knowledge fluently.

The school carefully monitors what pupils know and can do. Typically, teachers identify and address pupils' misconceptions as they arise.

Pupils learn to read quickly, starting their journey in the early years. Children in the Nursery Year are introduced to the sounds and vocabulary that will support them to become confident readers. They enjoy regularly sharing stories and rhymes. This sets them up well for learning phonics from the start of the Reception Year.

Staff deliver the phonics programme successfully. Those pupils who need additional help to learn to read receive this swiftly. Most older pupils read with accuracy and

independence. They also enjoy talking about the stories that they have shared in class and those that they are studying.

In the early years, the curriculum has been designed to build on children's interests and knowledge. Children quickly develop their understanding of the world around them and how to interact with others positively. Occasionally, staff do not support children to consolidate or practise their learning as well as they should.

The school identifies the additional needs of pupils with SEND swiftly and accurately. In subjects where the curriculum is designed well, staff make appropriate adaptations to the delivery of the curriculum. In these subjects, pupils with SEND learn successfully alongside their peers.

The vast majority of pupils attend school regularly. The school has been tenacious in ensuring that those pupils who need to improve their rates of attendance receive appropriate additional support. Pupils adhere to the school's high expectations and incidents of poorer behaviour are rare. When these incidents do occur, the school addresses them quickly. Clear routines are embedded from the Reception Year, and this contributes to the calm and purposeful atmosphere in the school.

The school provides a wide range of opportunities, woven throughout the school day, for pupils to develop personally. This has included trips to a mosque and visits to a castle and the theatre. All pupils take part in these activities, and there has been careful consideration of how these experiences link to pupils' wider learning. Pupils also know how to keep themselves healthy, what positive relationships look like and ways to stay safe online. They also have opportunities to learn about democracy through the school council, and they often take on responsibilities in the school and the wider community.

Staff feel extremely well supported by the current leadership team. They are proud to work at this school. Governors have ensured that they have taken effective steps to support both the workload and well-being of staff.

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, some staff do not deliver the curriculum effectively. This hinders some pupils from building a rich body of subject knowledge. The school should ensure that staff are supported to design appropriate learning and adapt the delivery of the curriculum well. This is so that pupils learn as deeply as they should.
- In the early years, from time to time, staff do not support children to practise

their learning as well as they should. This means that some children do not develop their knowledge and skills as quickly as they could. The school should ensure that staff are fully equipped to support all aspects of children's development.

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	112121
Local authority	Westmorland and Furness
Inspection number	10321330
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	82
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Daniel Griffiths
Headteacher	Sam King
Acting headteacher	Helen Newton
Website	www.skelton.cumbria.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	28 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- The school is currently being led by the acting headteacher.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provisions.
- The school runs a breakfast club on the school site.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- 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.
- The inspectors completed deep dives in the following subjects: early reading,

mathematics and geography. They met with subject leaders, had discussions with staff and pupils, visited a range of lessons and looked at pupils' work.

- The inspectors also looked at a range of pupils' work in other subjects.
- The inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including the school's evaluation of the school and its priorities for improvement.
- The inspectors met with a range of senior leaders, subject leaders, teachers and support staff.
- The inspectors also met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors, and a representative of the local authority.
- 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 views of pupils and staff were considered through discussions and a review of Ofsted's online surveys.
- Inspectors met with some parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.

Inspection team

Zoe Enser, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Chris Metcalfe

Ofsted Inspector

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