

Aspatria Richmond Hill School

Aspatria, Wigton, Cumbria CA7 3BQ

Inspection dates	4–5 May 2016
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Outcomes for pupils have improved since the last inspection. From below typical starting points in Nursery, pupils make good progress as they move through the school, and at the end of Year 6 they reach standards in line with national averages. This means that they are well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- Teaching has improved and is good overall, particularly in mathematics. Pupils respond with enthusiasm and make especially good progress in this subject.
- From their earliest days in Nursery children receive good teaching and support to develop their skills in identifying letters and the sounds that they make (phonics). This means they swiftly become fluent readers.
- Leaders and governors have ensured that the gaps in the performance of disadvantaged pupils compared with other pupils nationally have either closed or continue to narrow rapidly.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and they are keen to learn. Good relationships with families and a range of initiatives put in place to support pupils in attending regularly mean that attendance is improving rapidly. Most pupils come to school on time each day.
- Governance is a strength of the school. Governors are well informed about the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are especially effective in financial planning so that resources are targeted where they will have the maximum impact on improving outcomes for pupils.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although teaching is good overall, there remain some weaknesses in key stage 2. A small number of teachers lack subject knowledge and the ability to check pupils' progress in lessons and adapt planning for future learning.
- Leaders assiduously check on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. However, the information gained from this is not always used effectively to make quick gains at classroom level. For example, leaders do not always swiftly address gaps in learning or provide support for minor weaknesses in teaching.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Secure consistently good teaching across all year groups in key stage 2 by:
 - strengthening teachers' subject knowledge
 - making sure that teachers use their ongoing assessments in lessons and from marking pupils' work to inform their planning for future progress.

- Ensure leaders and managers use the information they gain from monitoring activities effectively so that:
 - any weaknesses in teaching are swiftly dealt with
 - supporting action is taken rapidly to plug any gaps in pupils' learning
 - supporting action is shared with teachers and support staff, ensuring that good practice is disseminated throughout the school.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Leaders' determined and well-focused actions to improve the quality of teaching and raise standards have been effective in addressing the issues arising from the last inspection report. In the past, for example, pupils' progress in writing was much weaker than that in reading and mathematics in key stages 1 and 2. Inspection evidence shows that pupils currently in the school make good progress in writing and the standards they reach are increasingly close to those in reading and mathematics.
- Leaders regularly check on the quality of teaching and pupils' progress in lessons as well as looking at pupils' work in books. The information gained from this helps leaders to prioritise areas for improvement and formulate action plans. However, leaders do not always follow through and check on the impact of their actions. This means opportunities to build further on successful practice or intervene quickly to improve less effective practice are sometimes lost.
- The curriculum is rich and interesting and pupils enjoy their learning and experiences in school. The curriculum is supported by a variety of clubs and activities outside of school. Residential visits to an outdoor education centre in the Lake District and to Manchester broaden pupils' horizons, develop their confidence and support their good social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. The most-able pupils benefit from mastery classes arranged with the local secondary school to extend their learning and stimulate them to achieve to their full potential.
- Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Collective worship sessions give them opportunities to reflect on their own feelings and experiences and to consider their rights and responsibilities in relation to others. Pupils have a good awareness of values such as courtesy, tolerance and respect for differences. They are keen to learn about, and celebrate, other cultures.
- The pupil premium funding is used effectively to ensure that disadvantaged pupils make just as much progress as other pupils in the school. As a result, the standards disadvantaged pupils reach are in line with or above those reached by other pupils nationally.
- The physical education (PE) and sport funding is used effectively to increase the range of sporting activities on offer and to provide professional coaching sessions.
- Leaders ensure that safeguarding has a high priority in the school. Policies are rigorous and adhered to by all staff. Parents support the view that pupils are very safe in school and well looked after. Leaders and governors take their responsibility to prevent extremism and radicalisation extremely seriously. Staff are trained in recognising the signs that may indicate a pupil is at risk and know how they must act in response to this.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governance is a real strength of the school. A recent review of governance, supported effectively by the local authority, helped governors to develop their roles. They now hold leaders to account effectively for pupils' progress and improving standards.
 - Governors understand procedures for the performance management of staff, including that of the headteacher. They ensure that the management of teachers' pay is effective in rewarding teachers for improved outcomes for pupils and for the quality of their teaching.
 - Governors keep a close eye on the school's finances and make sure that any plans for spending are linked to the correct priorities for improvement. They ensure that the pupil premium and PE and sports funding are spent appropriately and result in better outcomes for pupils.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Teachers know their pupils well and skilfully adapt their teaching styles to create a positive climate for learning. Teachers are especially good at encouraging pupils to work collaboratively and purposefully so that they become increasingly independent of adult support. The most-able pupils particularly appreciate this and they provide challenge for one another in addition to that provided through the tasks they are set.
- Good teaching of phonics ensures that children in the early years and key stage 1 have the skills they need to read with fluency. As pupils move through the school, teachers ensure that they have opportunities to read widely and for a range of different purposes. Pupils typically comment that they enjoy reading and frequently read at home for pleasure.

- The development of pupils' comprehension skills is supported well through good questioning and encouragement for pupils to think about what they are reading and by developing their understanding of a range of texts.
- The teaching of writing has improved. Writing assessment books show that almost all pupils are making good progress from their starting points, although boys' writing still lags a little behind girls' in the early years.
- Pupils say that they find teachers' comments in marking to be helpful in improving or editing their work. Pupils routinely take the time in lessons to do 'green pen' editing and act on their teachers' advice.
- The teaching of mathematics is strong and, as a result, pupils are enthusiastic about their lessons and make good progress in this subject. Teachers further support this by encouraging pupils to apply their skills in calculations across other subject areas and, increasingly, to solve a range of different problems.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is not yet consistently good across all year groups in key stage 2. Leaders are tackling this and there are early signs of improvement.
- Teachers make regular and accurate assessments of pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders hold them to account for improved pupil outcomes through half-termly progress meetings. Teachers' skills in monitoring pupils' progress in lessons and adjusting their planning from one day to the next are not consistently strong enough in key stage 2 and this occasionally limits progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare **is good**

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- All members of staff, including the designated safeguarding leader, have received training to safeguard pupils. Systematic checks are carried out on new members of staff and regular visitors to the school. As a result, pupils at Richmond Hill are very safe in school.
- Leaders have developed a school-wide climate of tolerance and respect. They encourage pupils to actively embrace differences in views and cultures.
- Pupils say that there is very little bullying of any kind, but when it occurs it is swiftly dealt with by staff. Pupils know the school's 'High Five' rules and appreciate the security of knowing that the behaviour system of rewards and sanctions is always applied fairly.
- Attendance is slightly below average but has improved significantly over time. Leaders work tirelessly with families to emphasise the importance of attending regularly and to support parents in bringing their children to school on time every day. Weekly attendance awards give pupils an added incentive to make sure they come to school, unless they are ill.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are self-assured and confident learners. The vast majority are really keen to learn and there is rarely any disruption to learning in lessons.
- Pupils take pride in their achievements. Work in books is generally well presented and most pupils' handwriting is neat and tidy. During the inspection, a group of pupils shared pieces of work they were particularly pleased with, including reciting some poems they had written.
- Pupils are very polite and courteous. They routinely hold doors open to let others pass with a cheery 'You're welcome' in response to offers of thanks for this.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe from harm. They are acutely aware of e-safety and the dangers of giving out personal information on the internet. Pupils also learn self-awareness and resilience and this contributes well to their mental and physical health.

Outcomes for pupils **are good**

- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics have improved over time. In 2015 all pupils in Year 6 reached the nationally expected standards for their age or above. This means they were well prepared for the next stage in education.
- Improved provision for children in the early years means that the proportion of children reaching levels of skills and development typical for their age at the end of the Reception Year has increased significantly over time. In 2015, two thirds of children reached the standards required to prepare them to access the Year 1 curriculum. The school's assessments indicate that a similar proportion will meet the standards this year.

- Current pupils make good progress throughout the school in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Progress in foundation subjects such as history and geography is not quite so strong because the tasks set are not always demanding enough.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics is a strength of the school, including in the early years where recently increased opportunities for children to develop their skills outdoors are having a positive impact on outcomes.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs or disability make just as much good progress as other pupils in the school. This is because they receive effective and focused support for their learning.
- The school has been highly successful over time in narrowing gaps in the standards reached by disadvantaged pupils compared with other pupils nationally. In 2015, all disadvantaged pupils in Richmond Hill reached the nationally expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The most-able pupils currently in the school are making good progress due to good support and challenge. However, this is an area to develop further in those classes where the teaching is not quite so strong.

Early years provision

is good

- Children's starting points when they enter the Nursery are generally below those typical for their age. Children swiftly settle into school because teachers and other adults have created a warm and interesting environment for them to explore. Children make good progress and are happy. They listen well to instructions, behave sensibly and are keen to learn.
- Teaching is good. Well-structured small-group sessions help children develop their skills in reading, writing and numeracy. There are also plenty of activities for children to choose for themselves and to continue their learning through play. In one session in the Nursery, for example, children became robbers and drew maps to locate a secret cow and a hoard of treasure. During another session in Reception, boys enjoyed dressing up as superheroes and the teacher intervened skilfully to extend their thinking and encouraged them to develop their interests further.
- Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to express themselves creatively and experiment with a range of different materials. Sometimes, opportunities to really engage boys in writing by having resources at hand to entice them to write are missed, so boys' progress in writing is not quite as good as girls' in early years.
- The early years is well led. Record-keeping is strong and used effectively to inform future planning. Good partnerships with parents mean that parents are involved in their children's learning and can further support them at home. Equally, the early years leader has built a cohesive and effective team. All staff work together well to ensure a calm and purposeful environment with well-established routines. Parents find this reassuring and typically comment that they are confident their children are safe, happy and learning new skills.

School details

Unique reference number	112127
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	10012115

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	207
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Henry Barker
Headteacher	Helen Ford
Telephone number	01697 320 650
Website	www.richill.cumbria.sch.uk
Email address	admin@richill.cumbria.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	14–15 January 2014

Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average-sized primary school.
- Children in the early years receive full-time education in the Reception class and part-time education in the Nursery class.
- The majority of children are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs or disability is above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above average. The pupil premium is additional government funding given to schools for disadvantaged pupils who qualify for free school meals or for children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a wide range of learning activities across both key stages, in the early years and in a range of subjects. One of the observations was jointly undertaken with the headteacher. Pupils' books from different year groups and subjects were looked at.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other school leaders. Inspectors met with five members of the governing body. A meeting was held with a local authority representative. Inspectors also met with groups of pupils and spoke to pupils informally throughout the inspection.
- Inspectors considered parents' opinions through the 32 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and informal discussions with parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors reviewed the 15 staff questionnaires returned during the inspection.
- The inspection team studied information about achievement and the assessment of learning. They examined records relating to behaviour and attendance, and looked at a range of other documents used by leaders to monitor and evaluate the school's work.
- A review of safeguarding records and procedures was carried out.

Inspection team

Jan Corlett, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Lisa Crausby

Ofsted Inspector

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