

# Inspection of a good school: Coniston CofE Primary School

Shepherd's Bridge, Coniston, Cumbria LA21 8AL

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Inspection date: 28 March 2023

## **Outcome**

Coniston CofE Primary School continues to be a good school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils, including children in the early years, enjoy attending this small, caring and friendly village school. Everyone enjoys positive and nurturing relationships. Pupils live out the school's values of being respectful and hardworking. The school is a happy place for pupils to learn.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils' achievements. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), work hard and enjoy their lessons. Children in the early years are enthusiastic about the activities they do. They show independence and resilience.

Staff expect pupils to behave well, and they do. The school is like a family. Everyone gets along well together in lessons and at breaktimes. Leaders do not accept bullying. If it does happen, staff deal with it quickly. This makes pupils feel safe.

Pupils benefit from the many opportunities that leaders provide. They take active roles in the school community. These roles, which develop their interests and talents, include school councillors, worship leaders and members of the green team. Leaders ensure that pupils have the opportunity to explore diverse cultures and religions. This helps to make the school a very welcoming place. Pupils enjoy the after-school clubs on offer. These include art and running.

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

Leaders have ensured that pupils, including those with SEND, follow a broad and ambitious curriculum. In most subjects, they have thought carefully about what they want

pupils to learn from early years to Year 6. The curriculum is well sequenced and taught in a logical order.

In some subjects, such as English and mathematics, teachers use assessment strategies well to establish what pupils know and can do. They skilfully question pupils to check their understanding. They address misconceptions quickly. For example, teachers probed older pupils who were able to analyse poetry using a range of vocabulary. However, in other subjects, they do not check as precisely what pupils know. In these subjects, some pupils do not remember the essential knowledge they will need for future learning.

Leaders prioritise reading. Children's phonics lessons begin as soon as they start school. Pupils read books that match the sounds they are learning. This means that they can read with accuracy and increasing confidence. Leaders ensure that pupils who fall behind in their phonics learning are identified quickly and helped to catch up without delay. Older pupils have developed a love of reading. They talk confidently about their favourite authors and the books they enjoy reading. They particularly enjoy attending the school library and the burrow.

Staff know pupils very well. Leaders are quick to identify the needs of pupils with SEND. They work with a range of external agencies to help pupils and meet their needs. They have ensured that teachers are clear about how to make adaptations so that pupils with SEND successfully follow the same curriculum as their peers.

Pupils are polite and well mannered. They move around school in a calm and orderly way. Children in the early years quickly learn what is expected of them. Pupils are keen to learn, and lessons are not disrupted by poor behaviour.

Pupils' personal development is woven effectively through the curriculum and all aspects of school life. Pupils, including those with SEND, have enjoyed a range of trips and visits, including to the beach, Windermere and Manchester. Pupils are confident about the importance of equality and diversity. They benefit from a variety of cultural and social experiences that prepare them for life in modern Britain. The school has links with Ghana and South Korea. Pupils write and communicate regularly. Pupils regularly raise money for a number of charities to help people less fortunate. This allows them to contrast their lives with those of others.

Leaders, including governors, know what the school does well and what it needs to do to improve even further. They ensure that staff are well supported to manage their workload and well-being. Staff are proud to work at Coniston.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and governors make sure that teachers and other adults in the school receive regular and ongoing safeguarding training. Staff are alert to the signs and symptoms of abuse or neglect and the procedures to follow to report concerns. When necessary,

leaders work closely with other agencies to ensure that families get the help and support they need.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe. They learn about road safety, healthy eating and how to stay safe online. They know that there is someone they can talk to if they are worried or concerned.

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

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

- In some subjects, leaders have not identified clearly what they want pupils to learn and when they want them to learn it. Leaders should ensure that their curriculum intentions are clear and detailed enough for teaching staff to follow in all subjects so that pupils know and remember more.
- In some subjects, teachers do not check well enough if pupils have missing or insecure knowledge. As a result, they cannot address their misunderstandings or gaps in learning. Leaders should ensure that in all subjects teachers identify and address gaps in learning so that pupils achieve well.

## **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 April 2017.

## **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>	112279
<b>Local authority</b>	Cumbria
<b>Inspection number</b>	10226147
<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>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	67
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Joyce Hallam
<b>Headteacher</b>	Danielle Fitzsimons
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.coniston.cumbria.sch.uk">www.coniston.cumbria.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	21 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The headteacher is new to her role since the previous inspection.
- Leaders do not use alternative provision.
- The school operates an after-school club.
- The school is a Church of England School. The last section 48 inspection under the Education Act for schools of a religious character was February 2023.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors conducted deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, they discussed the curriculum with subject 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 listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and executive headteacher. They also met with subject leaders and a group of teachers.
- Inspectors met with governors. The lead inspector also spoke with a local authority adviser to the school.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils in meetings and around the school.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the responses to staff and pupil questionnaires.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation about safeguarding. They spoke with staff to understand how they keep pupils safe. They reviewed the school's record of checks undertaken on newly appointed staff.

### **Inspection team**

Emma Jackson, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Paul Edmondson

Ofsted Inspector

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