

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Montreal CofE Primary School

Ennerdale Road, Cleator Moor, Cumbria CA25 5LW

Inspection dates:

11 February 2025

Outcome

Evidence gathered during this ungraded (section 8) inspection suggests that aspects of the school's work may not be as strong as at the time of the previous inspection. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are polite and kind-hearted. They forge strong friendships with each other. Pupils develop a respectful confidence which is shown through the positive interactions that they have with staff. They benefit from the nurturing environment provided by the school. Children in the early years settle quickly. Pupils are happy.

The school has high aspirations for pupils' achievement. However, some pupils do not achieve as well as they could. The school has not ensured that pupils benefit sufficiently well from the school's academic curriculum.

Pupils enjoy taking part in a range of clubs such as sports, dance, board games and bingo. The school provides pupils with opportunities to take on responsibilities. For example, leading class assemblies and acting as buddies for younger children. Children in the early years celebrate festivals from around the world, such as Chinese New Year. The school ensures that pupils access a number of trips, including outdoor adventurous activities. These experiences help pupils to become resilient and independent young people.

Pupils live up to the high expectations that the school has for their behaviour and attendance. They value the awards and recognition that they receive from the school as 'stars of the week' and 'golden champions'.

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

Governors have established an environment where everyone is valued. They carry out their statutory duties effectively. Governors provide appropriate support and challenge to

the school. However, the school has not ensured that recent changes to the curriculum prepare pupils sufficiently well for each stage of their education. Despite this, the school has a clear vision for what needs to be done to realise its high aspirations for the achievement of all pupils.

The school ensures that pupils study a broad range of subjects. It has thought carefully about the important knowledge that pupils should learn from the Reception year to Year 6. This clarity about the curriculum has supported staff with their workload. However, the activities that staff design, do not routinely help pupils to develop a secure understanding of the subjects that they study. As a result, some pupils are not suitably prepared to tackle more complex learning in the future.

In those subjects where staff have strong subject knowledge, they make effective checks on what pupils know and remember. However, in some subjects, staff do not spot the gaps or misconceptions that pupils have in their learning and they miss opportunities to correct errors in pupils' knowledge. As a result, pupils do not build on what they know and can do. When this happens, teachers move on to new learning before pupils are ready.

The school accurately identifies the additional needs of pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school provides staff with comprehensive guidance and training to support these pupils effectively. Typically, staff use this information well to ensure that pupils with more complex needs can learn successfully alongside their peers.

Improvements to the school's reading programme have ensured that staff provide effective support to pupils who find reading difficult. The school helps most pupils to become confident and fluent readers. Typically, pupils who have gaps in their phonics knowledge receive the help that they need to catch up quickly. Pupils read from books that help them to gain a broad understanding of the world. For example, they learn about the importance of caring for others, justice and the many differences that exist between people.

In the early stages of their time at the school, some pupils do not receive the support that they need to make a strong start with their written communication. For example, pupils' handwriting lacks fluency because their use of punctuation and the formation of letters lacks precision. As a result, pupils do not have the knowledge and skills that they need to write about their learning sufficiently well as they move through the school.

Most pupils are motivated by their learning. They are keen to join in with whole class and small group activities. Pupils work well together to support each other's learning. The school makes attendance a priority. Pupils attend regularly. They know that they need to come to school so that they can learn. The school provides intelligent support to a small number of pupils to ensure that their attendance improves. This has resulted in a reduction in the number of pupils that are persistently absent from school.

The school's provision for personal development prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain. Pupils know how to keep themselves physically and mentally healthy. They know how to stay safe in the community, including online.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- At times, staff design activities that do not help pupils to develop a secure knowledge of the subjects that they study. This prevents some pupils from achieving as well as they could. The school should ensure that it supports staff to design learning activities that prepare pupils well for each step in their education.
- Staff do not routinely check what pupils have learned and remembered. As a result, errors and misconceptions go unnoticed and persist over time. The school should ensure that staff check pupils' understanding and address any misconceptions, enabling them to secure key knowledge and tackle more complex learning.
- The school's expectations for pupils' early writing are not sufficiently ambitious. This means that pupils have not developed the appropriate foundations that they need for their written communication by the time they leave Year 2. This hinders pupils' writing fluency and communication as they move through the curriculum. The school should ensure that there is an increased emphasis on building pupils' writing skills so that pupils are well-equipped to develop their learning across the curriculum.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in July 2019.

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	132170
Local authority	Cumberland
Inspection number	10348225
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	122
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Kathryn Lee
Headteacher	Lisa Wilson
Website	www.montreal.cumbria.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	9 and 10 July 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has a religious character. It is part of the Diocese of Carlisle. The most recent section 48 inspection took place in June 2018. Its next inspection is due by the end of 2026.
- The school runs a before- and after-school club.
- The school makes use of one unregistered alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time inspection 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.
- Inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other senior leaders.
- The lead inspector held meetings with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. He also spoke with a representative from the local authority and the diocese.
- Inspectors met with leaders to discuss SEND, the school's Pupil Premium strategy and pupils' attendance.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They took account of the responses from staff to Ofsted's online survey and gathered the views of staff and pupils throughout the inspection.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors spoke to staff about their workload and well-being.

Inspection team

Andy Cunningham, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Sue Bowman

Ofsted Inspector

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