

Inspection of a good school: George Romney Junior School

Cobden Street, Dalton-in-Furness, Cumbria LA15 8SE

Inspection dates:

4 December 2019

Outcome

George Romney Junior School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy learning. They feel safe. They know that adults will deal with any problems that they have. Bullying is dealt with effectively by staff. Pupils are supported well. This is particularly true for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Pupils are well behaved, polite and considerate. They meet the high expectations that their teachers have of them. Pupils work hard to live out the school's core values. They help and support each other. For example, Year 6 pupils practise reading with Year 3 'buddies'. This helps the youngest pupils to feel part of the school family.

Pupils enjoy carrying out research. They visit places in the locality to explore different aspects of the Lake District. They also visit and learn about contrasting locations. They experience what it is like for pupils who belong to other cultures. These and other carefully planned activities help pupils to develop a good understanding of local, national and global issues.

The many different experiences that teachers plan enable pupils to achieve well academically. Teachers also provide a wide range of extra-curricular activities. These activities contribute to pupils' personal development. Pupils are prepared well for secondary school.

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

Leaders have high expectations of every pupil. Adults ensure that pupils maintain good behaviour. There are no disruptions to pupils' learning. Bullying is not tolerated.

Leaders have developed a rich and ambitious curriculum. They make sure that pupils continually build on prior knowledge. As a result, pupils attain as well as other pupils nationally in writing and mathematics. Pupils' reading ability is strong. Year 6 pupils attain more highly in reading than other pupils nationally of the same age.

Teachers are quick to spot when pupils have misconceptions or gaps in their knowledge. They provide swift and effective support. Leaders make sure that the curriculum is adapted well for pupils with SEND.

Leaders ensure that pupils build on the phonics that they learned in key stage 1. This helps pupils to read and spell increasingly complex words. Leaders provide effective support for pupils who have fallen behind in their reading. These pupils catch up well to become fluent and accurate readers. Overall, pupils use their reading knowledge to help them to learn well in most other areas of the curriculum.

Leaders motivate many pupils to read widely, including classic stories and Shakespeare's plays. Pupils use the vocabulary that they have learned to produce pieces of high-quality writing. Many pupils love to read. However, a small number of pupils do not read as regularly as their peers because they do not enjoy it. This can hamper their progress across the curriculum. Despite this, all pupils practise reading at home and at school. Pupils enjoy the stories that teachers read to them.

Pupils are proud of the many facts that they can recall. They said that they learn best when they can find things out for themselves. Sometimes, however, the resources that teachers provide for research are too challenging. Some pupils struggle to fully understand the materials that they have been given.

In history, for example, pupils explained in detail what life was like in Anglo-Saxon times. They had clearly read and understood information from a range of sources. Conversely, after studying the Georgian period, pupils' recall of facts was not as strong. Pupils had not been able to access the research materials. Therefore, they struggled to understand the complexity of this time period.

Pupils enjoy using their mathematical knowledge in real life activities. They use data handling to carry out surveys while on field trips around Cumbria. Older pupils run a tuck shop at breaktime selling healthy snacks. They manage and record the accounts independently.

Leaders also help pupils to become active and responsible citizens. Pupils learn about the challenges and benefits of living in different places. They also learn how to help address important issues. For example, they campaign in their town about single-use plastics.

Leaders and governors focus effectively on continual school improvement. Staff work closely together. There is a strong sense of teamwork.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that all staff know how to keep pupils safe from risk of harm. All staff follow the school's clear procedures to make sure that pupils are safe. Pupils understand about personal safety, especially when online. They know that they should not share personal details. They tell adults or staff if they have any worries. Leaders liaise with

other agencies to make sure that the most vulnerable pupils get the support that they need. Leaders work with families to improve pupils' attendance when it is not as good as it should be.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Most pupils love to read. Some pupils do not enjoy reading as much as others. As a result, these pupils do not develop the same confidence or ability in reading as their classmates do. This hampers their progress in some subjects. Leaders need to continue the effective work that they have carried so far to further develop the love of reading across the school so that all pupils excel.
- Teachers expect pupils to use their reading knowledge to find things out for themselves. This is especially true in history. Sometimes, teachers do not make sure that enough of the information is accessible to all pupils to help them to learn. Occasionally, the content of text that pupils need to read is too complex. At these times, although pupils continue to try their best, some do not fully understand what they have read. This makes it harder for some pupils to recall what they have studied. Teachers need to check that sources of information for pupils are readily available and easily understood by pupils.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good or we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged George Romney Junior School to be good on 4–5 February 2016.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can complain to Ofsted.

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

Unique reference number	112234
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	10111056
Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	101
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Joy Lowes
Headteacher	David Reddy
Website	www.grjs.cumbria.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	4–5 February 2016

Information about this school

- There have been no significant changes to the school since the previous inspection.
- Most pupils previously attend Chapel Street Infant School, which is near to the school.

Information about this inspection

- We spoke with the headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo), a group of governors, including the chair of the governing body, and representatives from the local authority.
- We looked at a range of documentation for safeguarding, including the record of required checks carried out on school staff. We also reviewed staff training logs and case files. We met with the person responsible for safeguarding to discuss how the school keeps pupils safe.
- We observed pupils' behaviour at breaktimes and lunchtimes. We also observed them in the breakfast club and as they moved around the school.
- We spoke with pupils about their experiences at school.

- We looked at the 21 responses to Ofsted’s parental questionnaire, Parent View, and the 12 free-text responses from parents to find out their views of the school. We spoke with parents as they dropped their children off at school.
- We focused closely on reading, mathematics and history. We talked to the leaders of these subjects. We visited lessons. We looked at examples of pupils’ work. We talked with teachers and pupils about what pupils were learning.

Inspection team

Claire Cropper, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Paul Edmondson

Ofsted Inspector