

Inspection of a good school: Newbridge House PRU

Newbridge House, Ewan Close, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria LA13 9HU

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 March 2024

Outcome

Newbridge House PRU continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils who attend this school have the opportunity to have a fresh start in education. They have trusted adults around them who will listen and support them when they need it. Pupils settle well into school life. They develop strong and positive relationships with staff. Pupils feel safe and happy in school. They know that staff care for them and want them to succeed in life.

Over time, pupils' behaviour improves. They have the space and time to reflect on their actions. Sometimes pupils fall out or lose their temper. When this happens, they have the support that they need to better manage their emotions and behaviour. For example, a school counsellor is available for pupils to talk to.

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well. The school has high expectations for pupils' learning. The majority of pupils have experienced turbulence and challenges in their previous education. However, in this school, pupils experience success in their learning. This helps pupils to gain in confidence. They begin to enjoy learning. Their self-esteem improves and pupils aspire to return to a mainstream school or to move into further education or training.

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

Many pupils have experienced long periods of non-attendance in their previous schools. This is often because of a medical or behavioural need. The school carefully considers pupils' individual needs in the design of its curriculum. It ensures that pupils, including pupils with SEND, can access the same ambitious curriculum. Pupils study a broad range of subjects and achieve nationally recognised qualifications, including GCSEs and vocational awards.

Staff identify gaps in pupils' knowledge and work to swiftly close these gaps so that pupils have the key knowledge that they need in each subject. Teachers quickly correct any misconceptions that pupils may have in a supportive and respectful manner. They use

questions effectively to prompt pupils to recall prior learning and to deepen their knowledge. Staff harness pupils' interests and ambitions well, especially in practical subjects, such as construction, art and design, engineering and music.

In the English curriculum the school has chosen novels and non-fiction books to inspire pupils and encourage them to read more widely. This has resulted in pupils producing some very imaginative work, including horror stories and analytical writing. The school identifies any pupils who may have fallen behind with their reading. These pupils have additional one-to-one support so that they can catch up quickly and become confident, fluent readers.

The school's work to support pupils' personal development is highly effective. There is a consistent approach to promote the school's values and to develop pupils' manners and respect for each other. A robust careers programme helps pupils to learn about work and training opportunities. Bespoke work experience placements help pupils to learn skills that employers want to see, for example punctuality, following instructions and working independently. This prepares pupils well for their next stage in education or employment.

The school ensures that the relationships and health education that pupils receive is the correct information at the right time. There is an open and transparent culture around pupils' personal development in school. This helps pupils to ask for help and information around their health and personal needs when they need it.

Pupils enjoy the work that they undertake in the community. For example, they engaged enthusiastically in a local project to plant trees and pollinators to improve a local green common area. They relished renovating a wildlife garden and pond for a local school. These activities help pupils to understand about the importance of looking after the environment and gives them a sense of achievement and pride.

There are a small number of pupils in the school who have reduced timetables. While these pupils study academic subjects, they do not benefit from the wider curriculum including the personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) curriculum.

The attendance of the majority of pupils improves over time. This is because the school takes swift and timely action when a pupil is absent. A dedicated team of staff work with families to overcome barriers to attendance.

The school's values and caring ethos also support staff. Counselling and supervision is in place for them. Daily staff briefings ensure that staff can share and discuss any concerns and have support from their colleagues and leaders. The school is also mindful of staff workload and ensures that staff have additional time when needed to meet any deadlines.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- A minority of pupils do not have access to the PSHE and wider curriculum. These pupils are not as prepared as they could be for their next steps in education, employment or training. The school should ensure that all pupils are supported well with their personal development.

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 July 2014.

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	112098
Local authority	Westmorland and Furness
Inspection number	10242091
Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Pupil referral unit
Age range of pupils	7 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	49
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Headteacher	Lisa Balderstone
Website	www.southcumbriaap.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	14 September 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school uses one registered alternative provider and four unregistered alternative providers.
- The school has a tuition centre based in Kendal.
- The school caters for pupils who are not in mainstream education due to permanent exclusion or medical needs.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

- 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.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders and members of the management committee, including the chair of the management committee. An inspector also spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, design and technology, construction and mathematics. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- 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.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including policies and analyses of pupils' behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors spoke to some pupils and staff about the school. They also observed pupils during lunch and breaktimes.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils. There were no responses to Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Julie Bather, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Jane Holmes

Ofsted Inspector

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