

# Bassenthwaite Primary School

**Address:** Bassenthwaite, Keswick, Cumbria, CA12 4QH

**Unique reference number (URN):** 145326

## Inspection report: 2 June 2026

|                    |             |
|--------------------|-------------|
| Exceptional        |             |
| Strong standard    | ●           |
| Expected standard  | ● ● ● ● ● ● |
| Needs attention    |             |
| Urgent improvement |             |

### ✓ Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

### How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

## Strong standard

### Inclusion

Strong standard 

Inclusion is highly effective at this school. Leaders quickly identify pupils' needs and put the right support in place. Staff know pupils very well. They use this knowledge to remove barriers so pupils can take part in lessons and wider school life. Some pupils have personalised support. Other pupils benefit from small, flexible groups to help address gaps in their learning. Staff make skilful adjustments to help pupils stay calm and focused. This enables them to work with growing independence.

Leaders use clear systems to check pupils' needs and track their progress. They review the support pupils receive and make swift changes when needed. Staff receive helpful training that builds their confidence in supporting a wide range of needs. For example, they support pupils well in early reading, communication and emotional regulation. For some pupils, 'Happy Plans' give clear steps that help them to recognise their emotions and settle quickly. Staff work closely with external specialists to review progress and strengthen their support for pupils further.

Leaders use additional funding carefully. Pupils with barriers benefit from different support groups, access to the breakfast club and participation in clubs and trips. Pupils feel included and are supportive of classmates who need extra help. Leaders have high expectations for all pupils. Their compassionate and skilled approach makes a sustained difference for pupils.

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## Expected standard

### Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils achieve well over time. Published outcomes are above national averages, and pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Younger pupils make secure gains in early reading, communication and number. Across the school, pupils typically recall important knowledge in different subjects. Pupils talk about their learning with confidence and show a clear understanding of key ideas. Pupils with barriers make suitable progress from their starting points. Continued access to additional support groups helps them to close any gaps quickly.

Above-average phonics outcomes show that pupils secure early reading and spelling skills well. Pupils develop sound learning in reading, spelling, punctuation and mathematics. This helps them to build the knowledge they need across the wider curriculum. Handwriting remains variable. However, this does not generally prevent pupils from learning or showing what they know. This means pupils are achieving well across the curriculum.

## Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Pupils' attendance is a clear success for the school and has improved over time. Leaders promote the importance of being in school. They work closely with families to identify and reduce barriers. Leaders monitor patterns carefully and act quickly when concerns arise. They know pupils well and provide additional support when needed. For example, familiar staff greet younger pupils whom they know may struggle to settle. As a result, attendance is above national figures, including for pupils who face additional challenges. Persistent absence is reducing and below the national average.

Behaviour in school is calm and purposeful. Warm and respectful relationships help pupils to feel secure and confident. Pupils understand the school's rules and routines and usually follow them well. Around school and at social times, pupils mix positively across age groups and include each other in play. In lessons, most pupils listen, join in and try their best. Some pupils can be off task, but staff notice this quickly and help them to return to learning. Leaders have introduced a new approach to promote positive behaviour. They have provided training to upskill staff in supporting pupils with social and emotional needs. Staff use these strategies well. Pupils say there is no bullying, but are confident that if there was, staff would deal with it appropriately.

## Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Recently, leaders have strengthened the curriculum. Staff set expectations for the skills and vocabulary that different age groups should use. This helps pupils build knowledge. In many subjects, leaders have identified the important knowledge pupils should learn. Staff teach this in a clear sequence that helps pupils make progress. However, in some areas of the curriculum, the knowledge that different year groups should learn is not yet defined precisely enough. This means that pupils do not deepen their learning as much as they could.

Leaders and staff have focused on strengthening early reading, spelling, punctuation and the understanding of number. This work is having a positive impact. Handwriting has been prioritised but is not consistent across the school. Staff do not provide sufficient opportunities, or design tasks carefully enough, to practise handwriting. This means that handwriting errors remain.

Teaching is well delivered. Staff have secure subject knowledge and explain new ideas in simple, clear steps. They recap previous learning and question pupils to check that they remember important knowledge. Staff teach early reading and phonics well. Pupils who need extra help receive targeted support that helps them to keep up with their peers. Staff make adjustments for pupils with barriers to learning, allowing them to take part fully in lessons.

## Early years

Expected standard 

Children experience a nurturing start to their school journey. Leaders identify the key knowledge children need. The curriculum builds learning over time. Staff understand children's starting points and use assessment information to identify gaps. They provide

individualised support where needed, including for children who face barriers to learning. This helps children to make progress across the areas of the curriculum.

Staff interact warmly with children and model language clearly. They introduce new vocabulary and support children to use and understand new words. Training is strengthening staff understanding of how their interactions enhance children's learning. Staff teach phonics accurately. Children practise these skills regularly in reading and writing. Staff support early writing and number through practical activities and play.

Staff work closely with parents and carers so that children feel settled and supported in these early stages of school. Children play happily together and understand routines. Staff help children to manage their emotions and develop early social skills. The environment supports fine motor development and offers purposeful indoor and outdoor learning. Staff adjust activities as needed so that all children can take part and learn well. Children develop the knowledge and independence they need for Year 1.

## **Leadership and governance**

**Expected standard** 

Leaders and governors share a clear understanding of the school's context, strengths and areas for improvement. They provide a high-quality education and make decisions guided by what is in pupils' best interests. Leaders have focused on the right priorities, including enhancing the early years curriculum and developing the teaching of phonics, reading, mathematics and writing. The impact of this work is already evident in many areas. Leaders are determined to continue to build on these improvements across the curriculum.

Leaders think carefully about the training and resources that staff need. Staff value this support and implement new approaches with increasing confidence. Leaders are also mindful of the importance of releasing time for staff to monitor the impact so that improvements can continue. Given the scale of change, leaders and governors consider workload and wellbeing with care. Staff feel listened to and well supported.

Leaders provide substantive support for pupils who face barriers to learning. Parents and carers speak positively about the inclusive and supportive ethos of the school and the care their children receive. They appreciate the clear communication they receive from school leaders.

Governors and trustees fulfil their statutory duties. They understand the school's priorities and offer appropriate support and challenge. They draw on expertise within the trust and maintain close links with the community. Leaders work with other schools and specialists to refine their work further.

## **Personal development and wellbeing**

**Expected standard** 

Leaders have created a broad programme of personal development. This helps pupils grow as confident and responsible young people. The curriculum is delivered in a clear, age-appropriate way. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations, including online, within their local community, on nearby fells and around deep water. Visits from local services, such as mountain rescue teams and police community support officers, help pupils understand local risks. Pupils learn about healthy relationships, physical health and how to

look after their mental wellbeing. Parents are consulted about relationships, sex and health education.

Pupils show respectful attitudes towards others. They understand and value that people have differences and that everyone should be treated fairly. Pupils can explain what discrimination means and why it is unacceptable. They learn about different faiths and cultures and show empathy through links with a partner school in Tanzania. Pupils generally have a sound understanding of fundamental British values. Pastoral support is calm and caring. Staff know pupils well and provide help when support is needed. Pupils feel safe in school and know who to speak to if they have a worry.

Pupils enjoy a varied range of enrichment opportunities. These include regular opportunities for outdoor learning and residential visits. Leaders seek further opportunities to extend the curriculum through sports coaching, music tuition, financial literacy and careers events. Clubs, such as art, gardening, creative club and taskmaster club, are well attended. Leaders use pupils' views to shape the programme of clubs, trips and wider experiences.

Pupils contribute to their community through fundraising, litter picking and planting projects. Links with local charities help pupils understand how they can make a positive difference. Leaders check who takes part and remove barriers so that all pupils can join in. These experiences help pupils develop resilience, independence and appreciation for their environment.

## **What it's like to be a pupil at this school**

Pupils are proud to belong to this small, friendly school where 'big opportunities' are part of everyday life. They arrive each morning to warm greetings from staff who know them well. This helps pupils feel settled, safe and ready to learn. Children in the early years enjoy their time in school, playing and learning with others. They quickly learn routines and explore the indoor and outdoor areas with confidence.

Pupils enjoy their learning and talk enthusiastically about the subjects they study. They say that teachers help them understand new ideas. Those pupils who find learning more difficult receive thoughtful support. This helps them to take part in lessons and make progress. Pupils enjoy the chance to apply their learning in real-life contexts, such as financial literacy projects and outdoor learning activities.

Pupils feel a close connection to their school and community. They describe the school as a place where everyone is included and treated kindly. Mixed-age friendships are common, and pupils play happily together at social times. They enjoy the wide range of opportunities available to them. Older pupils speak with excitement about residential visits, national singing competitions and drama performances that enhance the curriculum. Pupils value the chance to contribute to the school community. Many talk proudly about the impact of fundraising for local charities. Others share pride in their efforts in litter picking and shrub planting within their local rural community. Through roles as school councillors, pupils work with leaders to set out wider enrichment opportunities.

Pupils behave well and understand the routines that help the school run smoothly. Incidents of poor behaviour are rare, and staff deal with them quickly and fairly. Pupils feel safe and can explain how to stay safe online and within their locality. Pupils understand why coming to school every day matters. By the time they leave, pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

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## Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that pupils have regular, well-matched opportunities to practise handwriting so that errors reduce and pupils write with greater accuracy.
  - Leaders should complete their curriculum refinements, ensuring that the knowledge different year groups need to learn and remember is clearly defined across the curriculum.
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## About this inspection

This school is part of Keswick School Multi Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Simon Jackson, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by David Hammond.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, the acting headteacher and the early years lead during the inspection. They also met with members of the board of trustees, the CEO, members of the local governing body and a representative from the local authority.

Inspectors spoke with several pupils, staff, parents and carers. They considered the responses to Ofsted's surveys.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school currently uses no alternative provision.

Headteacher: Leanne Day

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### Lead inspector:

Andy Beattie, His Majesty's Inspector

### Team inspector:

Neil Dixon, Ofsted Inspector

## Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

 This data is from 2 June 2026

## School and pupil context

### Total pupils

**23**

Well below average

### What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 272

### School capacity

**49**

Well below average

### What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 300

### Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

**15.00%**

Below average

### What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

National average: 26.3%

## **Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan**

**4.35%**

Close to average

### **What does this mean?**

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.5%

## **Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support**

**8.70%**

Below average

### **What does this mean?**

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 15%

## **Location deprivation**

**Below average**

### **What does this mean?**

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

## **Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)**

**No resourced provision**

### **What does this mean?**

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

## **All pupils' performance**

**Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics**

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in a combined reading, writing and mathematics measure.

| Year                         | This school | National average | Compared with national average |
|------------------------------|-------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Latest 3 year average</b> | 77%         | 61%              | Above                          |
| <b>2024/25 (final)</b>       | S           | 62%              | S                              |
| <b>2023/24 (final)</b>       | S           | 61%              | S                              |
| <b>2022/23 (final)</b>       | S           | 60%              | S                              |

### **Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading**

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

| Year                         | This school | National average | Compared with national average |
|------------------------------|-------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Latest 3 year average</b> | 92%         | 74%              | Above                          |
| <b>2024/25 (final)</b>       | S           | 75%              | S                              |
| <b>2023/24 (final)</b>       | S           | 74%              | S                              |
| <b>2022/23 (final)</b>       | S           | 73%              | S                              |

### **Pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing**

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

| Year                         | This school | National average | Compared with national average |
|------------------------------|-------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Latest 3 year average</b> | 85%         | 72%              | Above                          |
| <b>2024/25 (final)</b>       | S           | 72%              | S                              |
| <b>2023/24 (final)</b>       | S           | 72%              | S                              |
| <b>2022/23 (final)</b>       | S           | 71%              | S                              |

**Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics**

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

| Year                  | This school | National average | Compared with national average |
|-----------------------|-------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| Latest 3 year average | 77%         | 73%              | Close to average               |
| 2024/25 (final)       | S           | 74%              | S                              |
| 2023/24 (final)       | S           | 73%              | S                              |
| 2022/23 (final)       | S           | 73%              | S                              |

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

**Disadvantaged pupils' performance**

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

**Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics**

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

| Year                  | This school | National average | Compared with national average |
|-----------------------|-------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| Latest 3 year average |             | 46%              |                                |
| 2024/25 (final)       | S           | 47%              | S                              |
| 2023/24               |             | 46%              |                                |
| 2022/23 (final)       | S           | 44%              | S                              |

**Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading**

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

| Year                  | This school | National average | Compared with national average |
|-----------------------|-------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| Latest 3 year average |             | 62%              |                                |
| 2024/25 (final)       | S           | 63%              | S                              |
| 2023/24               |             | 62%              |                                |
| 2022/23 (final)       | S           | 60%              | S                              |

### Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

| Year                  | This school | National average | Compared with national average |
|-----------------------|-------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| Latest 3 year average |             | 59%              |                                |
| 2024/25 (final)       | S           | 59%              | S                              |
| 2023/24               |             | 58%              |                                |
| 2022/23 (final)       | S           | 58%              | S                              |

### Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

| Year                  | This school | National average | Compared with national average |
|-----------------------|-------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| Latest 3 year average |             | 60%              |                                |
| 2024/25 (final)       | S           | 61%              | S                              |
| 2023/24               |             | 59%              |                                |
| 2022/23 (final)       | S           | 59%              | S                              |

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

## Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

### Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, including the disadvantaged gap.

| Year                  | This school | National non-disadvantaged score | School disadvantage gap |
|-----------------------|-------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Latest 3 year average |             | 68%                              |                         |
| 2024/25 (final)       | S           | 69%                              | S                       |
| 2023/24               |             | 67%                              |                         |
| 2022/23 (final)       | S           | 66%                              | S                       |

### Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading and the disadvantaged gap.

| Year                  | This school | National non-disadvantaged score | School disadvantage gap |
|-----------------------|-------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Latest 3 year average |             | 80%                              |                         |
| 2024/25 (final)       | S           | 81%                              | S                       |
| 2023/24               |             | 80%                              |                         |

| Year            | This school | National non-disadvantaged score | School disadvantage gap |
|-----------------|-------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 2022/23 (final) | S           | 78%                              | S                       |

### Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing and the disadvantaged gap.

| Year                  | This school | National non-disadvantaged score | School disadvantage gap |
|-----------------------|-------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Latest 3 year average |             | 78%                              |                         |
| 2024/25 (final)       | S           | 78%                              | S                       |
| 2023/24               |             | 78%                              |                         |
| 2022/23 (final)       | S           | 77%                              | S                       |

### Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

| Year                  | This school | National non-disadvantaged score | School disadvantage gap |
|-----------------------|-------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Latest 3 year average |             | 80%                              |                         |
| 2024/25 (final)       | S           | 81%                              | S                       |
| 2023/24               |             | 79%                              |                         |
| 2022/23 (final)       | S           | 79%                              | S                       |

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been

mirrored and applied in the report card.

## Absence

### Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

| Year             | This school | National average | Compared with national average |
|------------------|-------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| 2024/25 (3 term) | 3.0%        | 5.2%             | Below                          |
| 2023/24 (3 term) | 4.4%        | 5.5%             | Below                          |
| 2022/23 (3 term) | 3.9%        | 5.9%             | Below                          |

### Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

| Year             | This school | National average | Compared with national average |
|------------------|-------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| 2024/25 (3 term) | 0.0%        | 13.0%            | Below                          |
| 2023/24 (3 term) | 19.2%       | 14.6%            | Above                          |
| 2022/23 (3 term) | 13.0%       | 16.2%            | Close to average               |

## Our grades explained

### Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

### Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

### Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

## Needs attention ●

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

## Urgent improvement ●

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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