

Storth CofE School

Address: Storth Road, Storth, Milnthorpe, Cumbria, LA7 7JA

Unique reference number (URN): 112265

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 ●

Early years

Strong standard ●

Leaders are highly knowledgeable about the early years. Their expertise ensures that the new class for 2-year-olds integrates seamlessly into the school's early years provision. Leaders prioritise wellbeing and ensure that care practices are appropriate for the age of the children.

Leaders work with staff to develop a curriculum that provides children with the key building blocks of learning they need from the time they enter school to the end of Reception. Staff make full use of the outdoor environment and respond to children's interests. They make well-considered choices about when to guide activities and when to allow children to explore their learning independently.

Leaders emphasise communication and language development. Staff use every opportunity to talk with children. They model the language they want to hear and help children develop their vocabulary. Staff help children who are initially reluctant to speak to gain confidence and develop their understanding.

Staff consistently teach phonics and early mathematics well. Children read with increasing fluency and accuracy. They develop an effective and comfortable pencil grip, which helps them as they begin to write. Children use mathematical vocabulary to talk about quantities and shapes.

Children, including those who face barriers to their learning, make progress through all areas of the curriculum. Children are happy and safe. They are very well prepared for learning in Year 1.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard ●

Leaders have developed a coherent programme of personal development and wellbeing that is designed to reflect the context of this village school. This supports pupils' understanding of both their community and life in modern Britain. Pupils learn about jobs in rural industries such as farming. They visit a nearby university, helping some to develop aspirations to be engineers or scientists.

From an early age, pupils learn to work cooperatively together. Pupils understand values such as democracy. They reflect thoughtfully about discrimination and discuss inspirational figures who stood up for social justice. Pupils are confident and resilient and behave thoughtfully. They understand the need to respect others at times such as Halloween and bonfire night. Older pupils look out for younger pupils as a matter of course.

Pupils are fully involved in the cultural life of the village and its local area. They learn to sing, dance and play musical instruments, such as the flute. Pupils perform regularly at village events and to larger audiences in regional arts venues. Some pupils develop their sporting talents and thrive in events such as cricket and cross-country running.

Pupils develop a secure understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They understand the dangers of sharing personal information online. Through their work with the Royal National Lifeboat Institution, pupils learn about water safety and the risks associated with the school's coastal location. Pupils learn about the way their bodies change as they get older and the place of consent within healthy relationships.

Leaders have a deep understanding of their pupils and anticipate when additional pastoral support might be needed. Staff use their expertise to provide this support very effectively. Leaders ensure that every child has access to the full range of personal development opportunities on offer. Pupils are prepared very well for life beyond school.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

By the end of key stage 2, pupils' attainment in national tests is typically in line with national averages. In 2025, reading attainment was not as high. However, this does not reflect the reading standard of pupils currently in the school. Pupils read with confidence and fluency across the curriculum. Pupils apply their mathematical skills in other subjects. For example, in history, pupils learning about Viking Britain use their understanding of number to place events in the correct order. Pupils generally write effectively and spell accurately. At times, less fluent handwriting makes it harder for some pupils to record their ideas with ease.

Pupils discuss their learning and produce work that, on the whole, shows they have the knowledge and skills they need to be ready for the next stage of their education. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, who progress steadily through the curriculum.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Pupils enjoy school and want to attend. Leaders know children and their families well. Staff work with parents and carers to overcome any barriers to regular attendance. This includes providing adapted starts to the school day for some pupils. Leaders arrange extra support from outside agencies to bring about improvements in attendance when needed. Pupils' overall attendance is largely in line with the national average. It is above average for disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders' day-to-day attendance processes are effective. However, their analysis of attendance information and work to improve attendance further are not well defined. This means that trends and patterns in pupils' absences sometimes go unnoticed, making it harder to tackle them early.

Leaders use an approach to behaviour that is based on positive relationships. They prioritise pupils' emotional wellbeing and make adaptations for pupils who need extra support. For example, some pupils take breaks from lessons when they need help to settle. They return to class ready to learn. Leaders have high expectations of pupils' conduct. Bullying is not tolerated. Leaders establish routines that are well understood. Pupils generally behave well and have a positive attitude to their work. Staff deal with any low-level misbehaviour quickly,

and it does not disrupt lessons. This leads to a calm and settled atmosphere across the school.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have designed a broad and engaging curriculum. They understand the quality of this curriculum and prioritise the teaching of reading, spelling and mathematics. Staff teach phonics consistently well across the school and ensure that pupils learn the key vocabulary they need in each subject. For instance, younger pupils use precise language when describing shapes in mathematics. In science, they use the correct vocabulary to describe the parts of a plant. Teachers ensure that pupils regularly revisit prior learning and build their knowledge over time. They check pupils' understanding and act quickly to correct misconceptions. Recently, this information has helped leaders to make improvements to how handwriting is taught. Leaders ensure that staff have the expertise they need to teach across the curriculum. As a result, the curriculum is generally taught well.

Teachers make full use of the school grounds and the local area to provide opportunities for outdoor learning. For instance, they help pupils to learn about caring for the environment. Staff provide some pupils with adapted resources to help them learn independently. Other pupils receive additional support when appropriate. Pupils engage well in, and benefit from, lessons that are practical and closely matched to their needs.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders have created a culture where staff recognise and respond to the barriers that some pupils may face. Staff identify pupils' additional needs accurately, and they respond quickly when difficulties emerge. Staff value input from parents and carers and take specialist advice when required. They use this information to help understand the best way of working with each pupil. As a result, barriers to learning and wellbeing are reduced. This means that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities can access the curriculum and make progress.

Leaders ensure that pupils known to social care receive the support they need. Staff understand that some pupils may struggle with social and emotional needs. Staff use their expertise to adapt both social and lesson times. As a result, these pupils are generally able to remain calm and manage the school day. They access lessons and make progress.

Leaders use additional funding, such as the pupil premium grant, to support pupils who need extra help to catch up with key skills. For example, they make sure staff are trained to support pupils with early reading and mathematics. This means that pupils, including those facing disadvantage, close gaps in their knowledge quickly.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders, including those responsible for governance, have established a culture in which pupils experience a positive and enriching school life. They understand the school's strengths and areas for further development. They largely take appropriate action to bring about improvement. For example, leaders' work to develop the teaching of reading has led

to improved reading standards across the school. Leaders have also taken effective action to establish an early years provision for some of the youngest children in the community. There are times when leaders' oversight of some aspects of the school's work lacks detail, for example in how they analyse patterns of absence from school.

Governors are well equipped to meet their statutory duties and provide appropriate levels of challenge and support to leaders. Staff consistently report high levels of support from leaders in relation to their wellbeing and workload. For example, leaders provide opportunities for staff to work with colleagues from other schools. This helps staff to develop their expertise to teach subjects across the curriculum and work skilfully with pupils who need extra help, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Leaders prioritise engagement with parents and carers. Leaders work closely with the community to integrate the school into village life. Pupils support village events and benefit from the experiences and skills of volunteers who are regular visitors to school. Leaders have created a culture where the whole community works together and acts in the best interests of pupils.

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

Pupils enjoy attending this friendly, close-knit village school. They feel part of a caring community where staff know them well and support them both academically and personally. Relationships between pupils and staff are warm and respectful. Pupils are welcomed with a smile each morning. This helps them to feel safe and attend regularly. Pupils are confident to ask for help when they need it.

Pupils talk enthusiastically about their learning and are keen to share what they know. They enjoy reading and follow a broad curriculum. They draw on previous learning to support their understanding of new ideas. They build their knowledge steadily over time. This provides them with the skills and knowledge they need to be well prepared for their transition to secondary school. Pupils who need a different approach to learning or additional help are supported well.

Pupils benefit from a broad range of experiences beyond the classroom. They learn to play musical instruments and represent the school in sporting events, such as rounders and football. They support the events and celebrations that are part of the ongoing life of the village. Pupils learn about the heritage of the local area. They proudly represent Cumbria during visits to the Houses of Parliament. Pupils learn how to garden and tend to their chickens and rabbits. They cook and raise money, both for resources in school and for local causes.

Pupils get on well with their classmates. Children of all ages mix easily across the school. Pupils are clear that bullying is not tolerated at their school. They are confident that staff would sort out any issues quickly if they were to arise.

Next steps

- Leaders should continue with their work to ensure that pupils secure the necessary accuracy and fluency in handwriting in readiness for their future learning.
 - Leaders should ensure their analysis of each aspect of the school's work is detailed and insightful so that they can more swiftly identify and act on priorities for improvement.
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About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Philip Hyman.

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, other senior leaders, governors, staff and groups of pupils during the inspection. Inspectors also spoke with some parents and carers at the start of the school day.

This school is registered as having a Church of England religious character. It is in the Diocese of Carlisle. Its last section 48 inspection was in December 2023.

The school currently uses no alternative provision.

Headteacher: Simon Brabant

Lead inspector:

Chris Fielding, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:

Dawn Cranshaw, 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

84

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

100

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)

13.51%

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

9.52%

Well above 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

19.05%

Above average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Well 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 |
|------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Latest 3 year average | 60% | 61% | Close to average |
| 2024/25 (final) | 63% | 62% | Close to average |

| Year | This school | National average | Compared with national average |
|------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 2023/24 (final) | 62% | 61% | Close to average |
| 2022/23 (final) | 56% | 60% | Close to average |

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 |
|------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Latest 3 year average | 73% | 74% | Close to average |
| 2024/25 (final) | 63% | 75% | Below |
| 2023/24 (final) | 77% | 74% | Close to average |
| 2022/23 (final) | 81% | 73% | Above |

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 |
|------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Latest 3 year average | 69% | 72% | Close to average |
| 2024/25 (final) | 75% | 72% | Close to average |
| 2023/24 (final) | 69% | 72% | Close to average |
| 2022/23 (final) | 63% | 71% | Below |

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 | 87% | 73% | Above |
| 2024/25 (final) | 88% | 74% | Above |
| 2023/24 (final) | 92% | 73% | Above |
| 2022/23 (final) | 81% | 73% | Above |

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 | 17% | 46% | Below |
| 2024/25 (final) | S | 47% | S |
| 2023/24 (final) | S | 46% | S |
| 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 | 50% | 62% | Below |
| 2024/25 (final) | S | 63% | S |

| Year | This school | National average | Compared with national average |
|-----------------|-------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| 2023/24 (final) | S | 62% | S |
| 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 | 33% | 59% | Below |
| 2024/25 (final) | S | 59% | S |
| 2023/24 (final) | S | 58% | S |
| 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 | 33% | 60% | Below |
| 2024/25 (final) | S | 61% | S |
| 2023/24 (final) | S | 59% | S |
| 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 | 17% | 68% | -51 pp |
| 2024/25 (final) | S | 69% | S |
| 2023/24 (final) | S | 67% | S |
| 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 | 50% | 80% | -30 pp |
| 2024/25 (final) | S | 81% | S |
| 2023/24 (final) | S | 80% | S |
| 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 | 33% | 78% | -44 pp |
| 2024/25 (final) | S | 78% | S |
| 2023/24 (final) | S | 78% | S |
| 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 | 33% | 80% | -46 pp |
| 2024/25 (final) | S | 81% | S |
| 2023/24 (final) | S | 79% | S |
| 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) | 5.1% | 5.2% | Close to average |
| 2023/24 (3 term) | 6.7% | 5.5% | Above |
| 2022/23 (3 term) | 5.2% | 5.9% | Close to average |

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) | 10.8% | 13.0% | Close to average |
| 2023/24 (3 term) | 13.3% | 14.6% | Close to average |
| 2022/23 (3 term) | 18.2% | 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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