

# Dean CofE School

Dean, Workington, Cumbria CA14 4TH

## Inspection dates

27–28 March 2018

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an inadequate school

- Safeguarding is ineffective in the early years and across the rest of the school. Leaders and governors have not been vigilant in ensuring that a strong culture of safeguarding exists around child protection.
- Staff have not been provided with all the relevant information relating to the latest statutory requirements which outline their responsibilities to keep pupils safe.
- Procedures to track vulnerable pupils are not strong, resulting in information being uncoordinated.
- Governors are not adequately holding leaders to account for the safeguarding of pupils.
- Leaders and staff have not worked cohesively to improve outcomes for pupils. There are tensions between some staff and leaders.
- Leadership of the curriculum is not good enough. This is because one statutory subject is not being taught in an effective manner.
- Not enough has been done to ensure that the teaching of writing throughout school has improved quickly enough. There are too few opportunities for pupils to write across different subjects.
- Provision for children in the early years does not ensure rapid development and appropriate preparation for Year 1. The use of the outdoor provision is weak.
- Some teachers do not routinely challenge the most able pupils currently in school to enable them to make the progress of which they are capable.
- Teachers do not routinely use the information that they have about pupils to design tasks that are appropriate to pupils' starting points, for example the least able pupils.

### The school has the following strengths

- Pupils throughout school behave well and cooperate with each other both during lessons and when playing. Their personal development is promoted well.
- Leaders ensure that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong.
- Community links are strong, enabling pupils to contribute to a range of events in the locality.
- In 2017, pupils' attainment at the end of key stage 2 in reading and mathematics was above the national average.

## Full report

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that governors and leaders take immediate action to make safeguarding effective by:
  - making sure that all safeguarding policies and procedures meet statutory requirements
  - ensuring that all members of staff are appropriately trained and that they have a clear understanding of their statutory responsibilities in relation to child protection
  - ensuring that there is a strong culture of safeguarding throughout the school, including the early years
  - ensuring that the procedures to record communication relating to vulnerable pupils are rigorous and enable all the relevant parties to access this information when required
  - making sure that governors hold leaders to account for all aspects of safeguarding.
- Ensure that leaders review the curriculum so that all statutory subjects are taught effectively.
- Ensure that leaders improve the quality of teaching and raise pupils' outcomes by:
  - enabling teachers to make precise use of assessment information to design appropriate tasks that are suited to pupils' starting points, including those who are most able and those who are least able
  - making sure that the curriculum provides a broad range of opportunities to teach writing across a range of subjects and to a consistently high standard
  - making sure that pupils' progress in writing improves and at least matches the success in reading.
- Raise standards in the early years by:
  - ensuring that leaders provide staff with consistent messages relating to teaching and learning
  - developing further the outdoor provision to ensure that children benefit from a broad range of activities to support their learning
  - increasing the number of children who achieve and exceed a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year
  - ensuring that transition arrangements for children entering Year 1 are improved.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Inadequate

- Safeguarding is inadequate across the school, including in the early years. Leaders and governors have failed to ensure that all safeguarding policies, procedures and practices are effective. As a consequence, staff have not been provided with enough information or training to ensure that pupils can be kept safe.
- The culture of safeguarding is not fully embedded throughout the school. Documents provided to governors are not always read and understood. The child protection policy has been inaccurate in parts for several years without the awareness of governors, leaders or staff. Their knowledge and understanding of current safeguarding requirements and guidance is poor.
- Significant turbulence in relation to staffing over the last four years has contributed to a lack of consistency in teaching, learning and assessment. Nonetheless, leaders have not done enough to ensure that pupils benefit from good teaching against a backdrop of staff change.
- Pupils access many subjects, both within and beyond the classroom, as part of their curriculum. Leaders ensure that the curriculum is enhanced by regular educational visits. For example, pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 enjoyed a mountain walk on the week of the inspection. However, leaders are not ensuring that all subjects are taught well. This is because modern foreign languages are not developed throughout key stage 2 in a consistent and progressive manner.
- Leaders have not acted quickly enough to address pupils' weaker progress in writing at key stage 2. The school's improvement planning does not make sufficient provision for developing this subject. The development of writing was an area for improvement at the time of the last inspection. This has not been addressed by leaders in an effective manner.
- Leaders have tackled some underperformance in the quality of teaching. They provide a range of support to teachers and teaching assistants to ensure that their skills develop. As a result, the quality of teaching and learning is improving. Leaders have begun the process of checking all aspects of teaching. However, this requires further development to ensure that that leaders are able to assess effectively how well pupils are performing over time.
- Leaders and governors have secured support from the local authority, the diocese and from a partner primary school to develop the school's effectiveness. This expertise has been of a high standard and has enabled staff to undertake effective ongoing training. However, the impact has been limited due to staffing issues.
- Leaders use the additional funding for the small number of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special education needs (SEN) and/or disabilities effectively. Additional support from teaching assistants enables these pupils to catch-up.
- The physical education (PE) and sport premium for primary schools is used in an effective manner. Pupils access a broad range of after-school clubs. Leaders have purchased a mini bus to ensure that all pupils, including those who have SEN and/or disabilities, have ease of access to events beyond the school. Leaders have acquired

high-quality sports equipment to support learning. A specialist coach supports the ongoing training of teachers in PE. Pupils particularly enjoy the morning 'move it – shake it' activity, which allows them to begin the day with guided dance, body awareness and coordination development.

- Parents and carers who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and those spoken with during the inspection were overwhelmingly positive about many aspects of the school. However, they were less positive about how well the school is led and managed and about the effectiveness of homework.
- Senior leaders track the progress that pupils make in reading, writing and mathematics. This is now being used to provide teachers with the guidance that they need to improve their teaching, especially for identified groups of pupils.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is actively developed. The school's Christian ethos is reinforced through the links that it enjoys with its local church. Additionally, pupils are given opportunities to visit places of worship from other faiths. Pupils enjoy raising money for a range of charities. Leaders are justly proud of the links between the school and the local community. For example, pupils take an active role in local festivals, shows and poetry competitions.

## **Governance of the school**

- The governing body has not ensured that safeguarding is effective. Governors have been remiss in making sure that everyone, including those who teach in the early years, contribute to a strong culture of keeping pupils safe. Governors have not ensured that policies and procedures relating to child protection are up to date and fit for purpose. As a consequence, leaders have not been challenged where inaccuracies exist.
- Some governors are unaware of who the designated leader for safeguarding in the school is. As a consequence, links between those in governance responsible for safeguarding and those responsible on the leadership team are ineffective.
- Governors acknowledge the shortcomings in their actions. They plan to address the current failings without delay.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.
- Leaders do not have suitable written policies and procedures for safeguarding pupils. Staff training is not regular or appropriate. For example, staff have not received the 'Prevent' duty training. Consequently, staff are not well equipped to spot, and then report swiftly, the signs that pupils may be suffering from harm.
- The record-keeping procedures for child protection matters are uncoordinated and unsystematic. On occasions, necessary information is not recorded and is not easily accessible to those who may require this information.
- The lack of rigour and attention to detail evident in the school's safeguarding policies and practices are equally evident in the procedures for recruitment of staff. While the systems for checking the suitability of staff to work in the school are appropriate, other recruitment procedures are not always fully effective.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment are improving throughout the school. However, they are not securely good over time. Leaders agree that weaker teaching in the past has affected pupils' attainment and progress. This has been particularly apparent in the teaching of writing, where pupils do not make the progress that they should.
- Some teachers do not routinely provide an appropriate level of support for the least able and the most able pupils. This is because assessment information is not used effectively to plan tasks that are suitable to pupils' starting points. As a result, the least able pupils struggle with their work in some lessons and the most able do not receive enough challenge.
- The teaching of mathematics is generally secure. However, some teachers do not make good use of appropriate resources to enable pupils to undertake problem-solving and reasoning exercises in an effective manner.
- Leaders and teachers ensure that pupils have access to a broad range of fiction and non-fiction books in classrooms and in the well-stocked library. Pupils are encouraged to read widely and often. Teachers develop pupils' reading skills and help them to gain a deeper understanding of books. Pupils who spoke to the inspector talked enthusiastically about a wide range of fiction books that they have read.
- The teaching of phonics has not been strong historically. However, leaders have ensured that a more consistent approach to the teaching of early reading has been introduced throughout school. Staff have received appropriate training and are now confident in their delivery of phonics. Children in early years and pupils in key stage 1 are now able to use their knowledge of sounds well to read and spell unfamiliar words. This is not the case in key stage 2, where pupils have not benefited from this more consistent approach in the past.
- Some improvements in the teaching of writing have been made as a result of effective staff training. During the inspection, pupils in the Year 5 and Year 6 class were given effective and focused support to write an account of their mountain walk. Nevertheless, due to staff changes, pupils' progress in writing remains inconsistent throughout the school. Pupils' books in some classes indicate that their writing skills are not developed well over time.
- Pupils enjoy the positive relationships that they have with the staff who work with them. Classrooms are well organised and displays are used effectively to celebrate pupils' achievements. In some classrooms, displays are used to develop further pupils' understanding and allow them to become more independent in their learning. These learning spaces reflect teachers' commitment to engage, excite and develop pupils' understanding.
- As a result of recent effective training, teachers' use of questions to promote pupils' learning is good. Some teachers plan exciting and interesting lessons to motivate pupils to learn well. In a Year 1 and Year 2 lesson, pupils were very excited to study Africa through art, geography, information technology and music. As a result, pupils were able to make meaningful and clear connections with an earlier writing lesson entitled 'Let's go on safari'. That said, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills across different subjects to aid their progress in this subject.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Despite the whole-school weakness in relation to safeguarding, the vast majority of pupils say that they feel safe. Furthermore, all of the parents who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, said that their children feel safe at school.
- Pupils have a good overall understanding of how to stay safe online and in the real world. Pupils note that bullying incidents are rare and they are confident that teachers are able to resolve such issues when they arise. Almost all pupils say they are confident that teachers will support them if they are worried about anything.
- The breakfast club and 'move it – shake it' activity provide pupils with a positive, safe and active start to their school day. Pupils noted that the messages which are reinforced during the 'move it – shake it' activity, such as 'be kind, happy and a good friend to others', stick in their minds.
- Pupils visit a range of places of worship, including a Catholic cathedral and a Muslim mosque. Such experiences enable them to develop a good understanding of other faiths and cultures.
- Pupils enjoy a range of educational visits to develop their understanding of British values. For example, pupils have the opportunity to visit London to learn about the process of democracy in the Houses of Parliament. Pupils have also had the opportunity to visit the Royal Courts of Justice to develop their awareness of the rule of law.
- Pupils understand the need to be kind to friends and to be good to the planet. Pupils were able to explain how such qualities help them when they care for younger pupils in roles such as play leaders and library monitors.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- All parents who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, commented that the school makes sure that its pupils are well behaved. Inspection evidence concurs with parents' positive views about pupils' behaviour.
- Pupils demonstrate good behaviour in the classrooms and work in an exceptionally positive, cooperative and thoughtful manner.
- Attendance remains stable over time and is broadly in line with the national average for all groups of pupils. Pupils are punctual to school and well prepared for their lessons. Leaders have not excluded any pupils from school.
- Pupils' behaviour during breaktimes is of a high standard. They play cooperatively and use the wide range of equipment provided for them in a safe and sensible manner. Pupils are aware that the use of such equipment keeps them healthy. Pupils are particularly proud of their role in caring for the younger children and enjoy sharing games with them.

- When speaking with adults and with each other, pupils are polite, respectful and considerate of others. Pupils routinely hold doors open for those coming through.
- Leaders ensure that transition arrangements for Year 2 pupils as they move into key stage 2 are strong. Pupils receive support at such times and teachers share information about pupils' progress to ensure that no time is wasted at the start of a year. Arrangements are in place to ensure that pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 visit a local secondary school that they may attend. This is undertaken over a series of sessions to provide a smooth transition.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Requires improvement

- Current attainment across the school in reading, writing and mathematics is variable. This is due to some weaker teaching over time. However, the support that current teachers and teaching assistants are receiving from the school's external partners is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' achievement.
- Pupils have not made consistently strong progress in phonics over time. However, improvements in the planning and teaching of this subject mean that an increased number of pupils are currently on track to meet the required standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check.
- Pupils' performance in the key stage 1 assessments shows that, in 2016, the proportion of pupils working at both the expected standard and at greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics was below that seen nationally. However, in 2017, pupils' performance improved and was broadly in line with the national average in writing and mathematics. Reading attainment remained below that seen nationally at greater depth.
- Pupils achieve well in science. By the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2, pupils perform at a standard which is well above the national average.
- Leaders have provided staff with training on the teaching of grammar, punctuation and spelling. This has been effective and has resulted in pupils attaining above the national average at the higher level in the 2017 end of key stage 2 tests. Work in pupils' books shows increased accuracy in spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- The progress of pupils by the end of key stage 2 in mathematics is broadly average over time. The 2017 performance information at the end of Year 6 shows that a much larger proportion of pupils than that seen nationally achieved the expected standard in this subject.
- Pupils' progress in reading at key stage 2 improved further in 2017 and continued to be above the national average and in the top 40% of schools nationally. Pupils' attainment in reading also increased in 2017 and was well above the national average at both the expected and the higher levels.
- Published data by the end of key stage 2 shows that pupils' attainment in writing remains below the national average. Pupils' progress in writing at the end of key stage 2 has also been below the national average for at least the last three years.



## Early years provision

## Inadequate

- There is a historical lack of strategic direction and focused leadership in the early years. As a result, staff have not always received the support that they require to ensure that children's learning builds progressively from their starting points and as they moved through the early years.
- Children enter school with skills, knowledge and understanding that are broadly typical for their age. However, performance over time is poor, with consistently low numbers of children achieving a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year. Very few children are exceeding the early learning goals in reading, writing and mathematics. This is because teaching is not stretching children, especially the most able children.
- Leaders cite a historical lack of structure in teaching as the root cause for these weaknesses. This shortcoming is currently being addressed. Leaders have gained support in developing the early years provision from the local authority and from a partner primary school. Training is also being provided for staff. As a consequence, the provision is improving and learning is now becoming more skilfully constructed to meet the children's needs.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are working hard to provide children with a broad range of activities which excite and engage them. For example, during the inspection, children watched with fascination as eggs hatched and quail chicks were born. The children were able to explain the process in detail, using subject-specific vocabulary. One child from the Nursery noted: 'That's an incubator. It keeps the chicks warm so that they hatch.'
- Leaders and teachers ensure that there is a good range of high-quality resources within the indoor spaces and that these are used effectively by the children. However, the outdoor space is not used as well and the lack of suitable resources limits learning.
- The provision for two-year-old pupils ensures that their needs are well met. There are adequate facilities for changing and these young children benefit greatly from learning alongside older children. Assessments are undertaken regularly to ensure that these children make good progress.
- Children generally behave well in the early years. They are polite, cooperative and eager to support the learning of others. However, during the inspection, a small number of boys lacked concentration and persistence in the outdoor area. This was because staff did not use resources well to challenge and stimulate learning.
- Relationships with parents are strong. Teachers ensure that information about children's behaviour and academic progress is provided to parents.
- Staff in the early years ensure that the statutory welfare arrangements are in place to support children. However, overall safeguarding arrangements are ineffective because leaders and governors do not ensure that policies, procedures and practices meet requirements. Governors do not fulfil their statutory duties in relation to the safeguarding of children in the early years.
- Transition from Nursery to Reception is effective. However, leaders are aware that transition between Reception and Year 1 is weak. This is because a low proportion of children achieve a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year.



Additionally, plans to ensure a smooth transition from the early years curriculum to that of key stage 1 are not clearly thought through. This results in children being unprepared for the expectations placed upon them.

## School details

Unique reference number	112336
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	10045784

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	94
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Claire Kirkpatrick
Headteacher	David Fasham
Telephone number	01946 861408
Website	<a href="http://www.dean.cumbria.sch.uk">www.dean.cumbria.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:office@dean.cumbria.sch.uk">office@dean.cumbria.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	14–15 January 2014

## Information about this school

- Dean CofE School is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- There are very few pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils, historically, with an education, health and care plan is above average. This is not currently the case.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is below the national average.
- The school met the government's current floor standards in 2017, which set the minimum expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year

6.

- Pupils are taught in four classes – the Nursery and Reception class, Year 1 with Year 2, Year 3 with Year 4, and Year 5 with Year 6.
- There is a breakfast club and an after-school club on the school site which are managed by the governing body.

## Information about this inspection

- Her Majesty's Inspector gathered a range of evidence from the school's documentation, including evidence of external support, assessment information relating to pupils' progress and attainment, and work in pupils' books, and by observing in lessons. Other documents examined included safeguarding records, the school's improvement plan, leaders' self-evaluation documentation, school policies, reviews of pupil premium and sport premium spending, and minutes from governors' meetings.
- The inspector observed teaching and learning in all classes and across a range of subjects.
- The teaching of phonics was observed and the inspector listened to some key stage 1 and key stage 2 pupils read.
- The inspector talked with two groups of pupils to ascertain their views of the school. Additionally, informal conversations took place during breaktime. The inspector examined the results of a pupil questionnaire provided by the school and took account of 23 online questionnaires completed by pupils.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and the senior teacher, seven members of the governing body, including the chair of governors, and the school administrator. Additional meetings were also held with a local authority general adviser, a school effectiveness consultant from the diocese and the headteacher of a partner primary school, who all provide support and challenge for the school. The inspector also met with a group of staff and members of the early years team.
- The inspector took account of 33 parental responses to the online questionnaire and another questionnaire for parents provided by the school. The inspector spoke with parents at the beginning of the school day.
- The inspector also took account of five questionnaires completed by school staff.

## Inspection team

Gill Pritchard, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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