

Clehonger C of E Primary School

Gosmore Road, Clehonger, Hereford, Herefordshire HR2 9SN

Inspection dates

6 to 7 June 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Since their appointment 18 months ago, senior leaders have led the rapid improvement of the school. The quality of teaching, especially the teaching of mathematics, is rising steeply.
- Teachers set work that builds effectively on the differing abilities of pupils in the class. Tasks are appropriately challenging.
- Leaders have introduced a broad curriculum in which ideas are often linked in imaginative ways. Learning is well paced and engaging.
- Teachers question pupils well to check on and deepen their understanding. However, sometimes staff do not pick up on pupils' misconceptions and ensure that they learn from them.
- The school promotes reading effectively. Most pupils enjoy reading. A few remain reluctant to read for pleasure, which holds back their progress.
- The teaching of phonics is effective. The school is in the early stages of implementing an approach to reading that focuses on the skills older pupils need to read well.
- Staff and pupils benefit in important ways from support provided by the Herefordshire Marches Federation of Academies.
- In 2018, the school's published outcomes were disappointing. However, current pupils are making consistently strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school has the overwhelming confidence of parents and carers. Relationships are very strong. Staff look after pupils very well. Safeguarding is effective.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They conduct themselves well at social times. In class, they enjoy their work and concentrate hard. Pupils present work neatly and cooperate effectively.
- The early years benefits from particularly skilled leadership. Leaders refine teaching to address any gaps in children's skills. As a result, they make strong progress.
- A core of governors exercises effective oversight of the school. They question leaders about pupils' progress and the quality of teaching. However, there are vacancies on the governing body and responsibilities need to be spread more evenly.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that staff identify pupils' important misconceptions and check that pupils address them.
- Enhance the love of reading and achievement in reading by:
 - encouraging the minority of pupils who are reluctant to read for pleasure to do so
 - embedding the recently strengthened reading curriculum so that older pupils learn the skills to become most effective readers.
- Strengthen the effectiveness of governance by:
 - filling the vacancies on the governing body
 - ensuring that all governors are knowledgeable, confident and effective in supporting and challenging leaders in their actions to improve the school.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Since their appointment in January 2018, the executive headteacher and the head of school have led the rapid improvement of the school. They have set firm expectations for pupils' conduct, and have provided teachers with clear approaches to the teaching of English and mathematics. At the same time, they have instilled confidence and self-belief in staff, pupils and parents alike.
- Following the previous inspection, governors sought a collaborative arrangement that would strengthen the long-term leadership of the school. After some delay, the school secured support from Herefordshire Marches Federation of Academies. The federation employs experienced staff, including a special educational needs coordinator and a speech and language therapist. The school draws effectively on their expertise.
- Although leaders' formal self-evaluation was a little overgenerous, they have a very thorough understanding of the school and its strengths and weaknesses. Their plans present effective actions to improve the school further. During the inspection, leaders' views on the quality of teaching aligned with those of the inspector.
- Staff value the opportunity that the federation provides to discuss their work with those with similar responsibilities in other schools. They check the judgements they make about pupils' achievement against those made by teachers elsewhere. Teachers told the inspector that training, both within the school and outside, is helping considerably to develop their skills.
- Leaders from the federation have sharpened arrangements for the teaching of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers receive precise guidance on how to support individual pupils, which staff review with parents at the end of every term. Regular assessments allow leaders to identify those pupils who are at risk of falling behind and provide them with additional support.
- School leaders are committed to a broad curriculum that fully engages pupils' interest. Teachers plan learning around topics, and they link together work that relates to the different subjects of the national curriculum. They check at the start of each topic what pupils already know and understand so that they can make sure that learning adds to their existing skills. Leaders ensure that, over time, pupils experience a balanced curriculum that pays due regard to all the foundation subjects.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education effectively. From an early age, work in religious education introduces pupils to different faiths and cultures. Through the federation, pupils are increasingly mixing with a diverse range of pupils through combined events in the arts and sport. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 recently took part in a dance festival in Hereford.
- Leaders have successfully refocused the expenditure of the pupil premium. The premium contributes to the employment of a pastoral manager who provides nurture classes for those pupils who benefit from enhanced emotional support. This provision has significantly improved the behaviour and attitudes of some pupils, thereby overcoming their most important barrier to learning.
- The school spends the physical education (PE) and sport premium effectively. Pupils

benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular sport, including the opportunity to compete with teams from other schools. A high proportion of pupils learn to swim. The teaching of PE is a strength of the school.

Governance of the school

- Governance is effective because a small group of governors have ensured that they oversee the work of the school. They have successfully led the school into the current federated arrangement. Governors have ensured that they have undertaken training relevant to their roles. They receive detailed information from school leaders about all aspects of the school's performance, including pupils' achievement. Governors then use this information to ask questions that hold leaders to account for the impact of their actions.
- Governors play their part in keeping pupils safe. They check that all staff are aware of the latest guidance on child protection, and that the school's procedures are thorough. Governors also make sure that the school site is safe, and that staff make appropriate arrangements when pupils go on trips.
- Governors are aware of how leaders spend the pupil premium and the PE and sports premium, and they discuss the provision regularly with school leaders. They consider the impact of the expenditure during their meetings.
- There has been a large turnover of governors, so that very few governors in post at the last inspection remain. There are currently four vacancies on the board, with two recent and two of longer standing. Arrangements are in place to recruit new governors. This will strengthen the board's capacity to represent the interests of the school and its pupils. It will also allow a more equitable distribution of the specific responsibilities currently held by a few individuals.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff are well aware of how to identify and report any concerns. The school's policies and procedures meet all statutory requirements. Training is up to date, and safeguarding issues are discussed regularly at staff meetings.
- In this relatively small school, staff know individual pupils and their families very well, and they use this knowledge effectively to help to keep them safe. They work well with parents. The school has identified those risks that are particularly important in the local community and addressed them through the school's personal, social and health and economic education.
- It is uncommon for the school to require the support of other agencies that work to protect children. However, when such a situation arises, leaders are persistent in ensuring that the needs of potentially vulnerable pupils are fully met.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching is good. During the inspection, teaching across the school was consistently effective. The work in pupils' books showed that this was typical of the teaching pupils receive.
- Teaching is well paced, and it consistently succeeds in engaging pupils' interest. Their engagement contributes towards their positive attitudes to learning. Pupils concentrate well, and they cooperate effectively when teachers ask them to work in pairs or small groups. They take the initiative, for example, in using classroom resources such as thesauruses or number lines to help them with their work. The relationships between staff and pupils are very strong.
- Teachers plan effectively. They set work that allows pupils of all abilities to build on the knowledge and understanding that they already have. Tasks for the most able pupils succeed in providing a good level of challenge. In a Year 6 mathematics lesson about the order of arithmetic operations, high-achieving pupils were visibly intrigued by some of the questions.
- Teaching assistants provide effective support to individual pupils and small groups. They question pupils and break the learning down into smaller steps to enhance their understanding. They help to sustain the concentration of the few pupils for whom this would otherwise be difficult.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and explain new ideas effectively. They question pupils well. Teachers check on pupils' understanding and provide further explanation if necessary. However, sometimes when pupils' answers in class or the work in their books show significant misconceptions, teachers do not identify these and ensure that pupils put them right.
- Leaders have greatly improved the teaching of mathematics. Recognising the legacy of weak teaching in the past, they have rightly prioritised the consolidation of pupils' basic skills while maintaining their progress through the full national curriculum. Pupils have good opportunities to reason mathematically, both orally and on paper. They make effective use of mathematical equipment to support their learning.
- Pupils have good opportunities to write at length in a variety of different contexts and for different purposes. They learn about specific aspects of writing before incorporating them in their independent pieces. Pupils' work demonstrates their ability to redraft their work and identify errors in spelling and punctuation.
- Staff teach phonics effectively. They take a consistent and systematic approach, and they ensure that pupils build up their early reading and writing skills progressively. Leaders have ensured that older pupils now listen regularly to well-written books, and they have reinforced the importance of broadening pupils' vocabulary. They have recently identified for teachers the individual skills, such as inference, that pupils need to read successfully. However, implementing this promising approach is at a fairly early stage.
- Teaching in foundation subjects develops pupils' literacy and numeracy effectively. Learning sometimes combines different subjects in interesting ways. For example, at key stage 1, a Venn Diagram comparing information about Mary Seacole and Florence

Nightingale included the study of history, English and mathematics.

- Pupils and parents told the inspector that pupils enjoy their homework, and that it makes a good contribution to their learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils dress smartly; during a PE lesson, all pupils were wearing the school's PE kit. Pupils very much enjoy school. Parents told the inspector that they were keen to return after half-term. Pupils almost always take a pride in their work and present it neatly.
- Pupils feel very safe in school. They told the inspector that bullying occurs only rarely, if at all. Pupils have every confidence that the staff can resolve any disagreements that may arise between them. The school teaches pupils how to be safe in several respects, and pupils were able to recall in good detail how to protect themselves online. They also learn about fire safety, and how to stay safe on the roads.
- Staff have worked well with those few pupils who face social and emotional difficulties. As a result, their attitudes towards their work have greatly improved to their benefit and that of their classmates.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. On their appointment, senior leaders acted quickly to set high standards for pupils' conduct, and they established clear routines and procedures. All stakeholders told the inspector that, as a result, behaviour has improved a great deal in a relatively short space of time. Good behaviour is rewarded in assembly weekly.
- Pupils behave consistently well in class. They understand the importance of good behaviour, and how it contributes to their success. Even when lessons are practical and busy, pupils respond quickly to the teacher's instructions and listen carefully.
- Pupils' mature and constructive attitudes mean that they can organise their own work effectively. For example, during the inspection, a group of boys started a task by considering how best to divide it up among the members.
- Pupils' conduct at social times is orderly and responsible. Rain on the second day of the inspection necessitated pupils spending their breaktime inside, and they played and chatted happily together. The inspector saw no instances of aggression or antisocial behaviour.
- Pupils' attendance is approaching the national average. The attendance of vulnerable groups of pupils is in line with that of their peers. The school works closely with the families of those few pupils whose absence has a significant impact on the overall rate of attendance.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Outcomes are good because current pupils make consistently strong progress across a range of subjects, including English and mathematics. Pupils' workbooks confirmed the school's achievement information, showing that, this academic year, leaders' raised expectations and better teaching have transformed pupils' outcomes. Although some pockets of underachievement remain, standards are now rising quickly across the school.
- Published outcomes were disappointing in 2018. In particular, the progress that key stage 2 pupils had made in reading and mathematics from their key stage 1 starting points was well below average. The proportion of Year 6 pupils who attained the expected standard in the combined measure was low.
- Leaders have raised the school's expectations for pupils' reading. Reading records show that most pupils read at home very day. The large majority of pupils who spoke with the inspector said that they enjoyed reading, and those who read aloud generally did so with good inflection. Their ability to read unfamiliar words showed that their phonics skills were secure. However, a minority of pupils, generally boys, are more reluctant readers. Although their teachers persevere, their lack of enthusiasm threatens to hold back their broader academic progress.
- Lesson observation and a scrutiny of pupils' work showed that current pupils' strong progress reflects strengths in the teaching. Pupils work at a swift pace. Teachers explain new ideas clearly. In mathematics, pupils' much stronger progress has been boosted by their opportunity to fill any gaps in their basic knowledge while continuing to gain new knowledge and skills.
- Inspection evidence showed that disadvantaged pupils are now achieving much better. Often, this improvement reflects better attitudes to their own learning. Currently, their work shows the same care as that of other pupils, and they make similar progress. The progress of pupils with SEND has been a little inconsistent, but it is now approaching that of their peers.
- Pupils achieve well in a number of foundation subjects. In science, pupils cover a good range of topics and have a sound understanding of how to conduct an experiment. They gain a good understanding of topics in geography and history. There is evidence that pupils achieve well in PE.
- The school's broad curriculum and pupils' healthy attitudes to learning help to prepare them for the move to secondary school. However, there is still important work to be done to ensure that older pupils make up all the ground they lost through weaker teaching in the past.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years provision is a great strength of the school. Children enter the pre-school or the Reception Year with skills and abilities that vary a great deal. They make strong progress, and those with lower starting points catch up well. The proportion of children on track to attain a good level of development this summer is above the national average. Children are well prepared for Year 1.
- Leaders plan and organise the teaching in the early years exceptionally well. They use their assessments of children's relative strengths and weaknesses to guide their

teaching. For example, leaders have prioritised working outdoors in the 'forest school' to boost children's learning in understanding the world.

- Leaders ensure that staff receive the professional development that they require to improve their practice. For example, staff attended training on how children develop their abilities in communication and language, and they have used this to enhance the ways in which they interact with them. Leaders reflect on the effectiveness of the provision, with a view to further refining the effectiveness of the setting.
- Staff in the pre-school and the Reception Class work very well together so that the move from one year group to the next is a seamless one. They check that their judgements about children's skills are in line, and they also compare them with the judgements made by staff in other settings.
- The early years staff work exceptionally well with parents. Staff visit the home of each child before they join the setting, and they meet with parents formally three times a year to discuss children's progress. Each week, staff share with parents what skills their children have learned. Parents told the inspector that they much appreciated the educational games that staff sent home at the weekend.
- Children settle quickly when they join the setting, and they adopt clear routines. They learn to respect each other and adults. During the inspection, children collaborated exceptionally well, taking turns and helping each other with tasks.
- Teaching in the early years is very strong. Staff question children to probe and extend their understanding, and to strengthen their vocabulary. Both the learning environment and the activities available during continuous provision promote early reading, writing and numeracy most effectively.
- Staff meet the needs of two-year-olds very well. They are appropriately knowledgeable about their development, and they provide them with suitable comfort and support. The learning environment has areas where the youngest children can rest and play on their own. All welfare requirements for these children and others in the setting are met.

School details

Unique reference number	116795
Local authority	Herefordshire
Inspection number	10088481

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	121
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Julie Lunn
Executive Headteacher	Peter Box
Telephone number	01981 250 218
Website	www.clehongerschool.co.uk
Email address	admin@clehonger.hereford.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	22 to 23 February 2017

Information about this school

- Clehonger Church of England (C of E) Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school. The number of pupils in each year group is uneven, and there are currently few pupils in Year 4. Pupils are taught in mixed-age classes. The school provides a breakfast and after-school club, for which it charges parents.
- The school's religious character was last inspected in May 2016.
- Children attend full-time in the Reception Year, and part-time in the pre-school. The school admits two-year-olds. Some pre-school children also attend other pre-school settings.
- The head of school and the executive headteacher joined the school in January 2018.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged is slightly below average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is slightly above average. The report does not comment on disadvantaged pupils or pupils with SEND in any one year group, because

numbers are small and to do so would risk identifying individual pupils.

Information about this inspection

- Year 5 pupils were absent from school on a residential visit during the inspection.
- The inspector observed learning in all classes. Most observations were conducted jointly with the head of school. The inspector also visited the breakfast club and observed pupils' conduct at social times.
- The inspector held discussions with the executive headteacher, head of school, leaders from the federation, staff, members of the governing body and a representative of the diocese. He held a conversation by telephone with a representative of the local authority.
- A group of older pupils, chosen at random, met with the inspector. He also spoke to many other pupils informally. The inspector listened to pupils in Years 3 and 6 read.
- The inspector scrutinised, in depth, work produced by a number of pupils in Years 2, 3 and 5. His sample included the work of some disadvantaged pupils. The inspector considered information about pupils' current performance.
- The inspector looked at a wide range of documents, both electronically and on paper. These included: development plans and evaluations of the school's progress; records of how leaders check on teaching; the record of a visit made by an officer of the local authority; minutes of governing body meetings; policies; and records showing how the school supports vulnerable pupils.
- The inspector took into account the 22 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the 16 comments made using the free-text facility. He spoke to several parents bringing their children to school on the second day of the inspection. There were no responses to Ofsted's staff survey or pupils' survey.

Inspection team

Martin Spoor, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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