

Inspection of Whittington CofE Primary School

Whittington, Worcester, Worcestershire WR5 2QZ

Inspection dates: 21–22 January 2020

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

The school's values of love, learn and achieve are at the heart of school life. Staff form supportive relationships with pupils and treat them with respect. Pupils feel safe and happy, because adults look after them very well. Bullying happens rarely. Pupils feel confident that any issues will be addressed promptly and successfully, if they arise.

Pupils contribute positively to school life, by helping to shape their own community. They take on many varied roles in the school, including school councillors and eco-councillors, who regularly litter-pick in the village.

Leaders work hard to support pupils' personal development. Adults provide an impressive range of stimulating opportunities to nurture all pupils' talents. For example, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) represent the school in accessible sports, such as wheelchair basketball, and learn to play the piano.

Pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum. Pupils talk confidently about how lessons are planned to build up their learning in a sequence. They say this helps them to remember more.

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. One parent said: 'Education is important to us, but just knowing how happy our child is at this school is all we could ever ask for.'

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

Senior leaders know their school very well. They are proud of its many strengths and know what could be even better. Their proactive work with the local authority and the diocese helps them to make ongoing and relevant improvements.

The school helps pupils to develop a love of reading from an early age. Staff are effective in teaching younger pupils to read. Children begin to learn phonics as soon as they start in Reception. The school has a well-planned and systematic phonics programme. Teachers read stories and poems to pupils. Reading is an important part of their everyday life. Pupils told inspectors that they enjoy reading the books that they take home. Pupils in Year 1 talked about how the school helped them to read more at home. They said: 'Our teachers gave us a reading pet, which is a cuddly toy that we read to for 15 minutes a day.'

The teaching of mathematics has improved. Pupils now have regular opportunities to explain and solve mathematical problems. Teachers check understanding and adapt teaching to meet most pupils' needs. However, this is not always the case for the most able pupils, as sometimes the work set does not allow them to think deeply enough. This is also the case in science.

Schemes of work for subjects other than English and mathematics are well considered. Leaders map out the knowledge they want pupils to learn over time. However, subject leaders have not fully checked the way teachers are bringing these plans to life. As a result, there are inconsistencies in how effectively these plans are being implemented in the classroom.

Children in Reception settle quickly. The learning environment is organised to encourage independence and enquiry. Children relish the rich selection of activities on offer. Children enjoy talking to adults. The early years curriculum is carefully adapted to meet children's needs and interests. Staff use questioning well to add challenge and to extend opportunities to learn through play. Staff promote children's vocabulary development extremely effectively. Children quickly gain in confidence and the knowledge they need, so that they are ready for Year 1.

Pupils with SEND are catered for well. Appropriate adaptations and adjustments are made when needed. The school is inclusive and a hub of activity where all are encouraged to succeed.

British values thread through all aspects of the school's work and reflect the school's Christian ethos. The school has a real family atmosphere and welcomes all pupils, regardless of race, gender or background. Pupils learn about other faiths and cultures. This helps them to appreciate the diversity of the world in which they live. They raise money for charitable causes, helping to support others facing challenging circumstances.

Governors care deeply about the school. They have a broad range of skills and visit the school regularly to maintain oversight of the school's performance. However, they do not always check the impact of leaders' work thoroughly enough. Staff are proud to work at the school and agree that leaders ensure that their workload is manageable.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school has strong systems to keep pupils safe. There are rigorous checks in place to assure the suitability of staff to work with children. Staff are well trained in safeguarding procedures. They know what to do if they have a concern. School records show that the school responds immediately if staff have identified a problem.

Staff teach pupils about the risks that they might face in their everyday lives, including road safety. Pupils know how to keep safe when online. Pupils know that they should speak to a trusted adult if they are worried or upset.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Subject leaders have not yet monitored the impact of their plans. This has led to inconsistency in the teaching of some curriculum subjects, for example. As a result, pupils' progress in these subjects is not as strong as it should be. Senior leaders must make sure that subject leaders take steps to iron out any variability in the implementation of schemes of work across year groups
- Teachers do not always provide work that challenges the most able pupils; this is particularly the case in mathematics and science. Teachers need to plan opportunities to deepen their understanding and apply their learning to more complex tasks. This will enable the most able pupils to think more widely and deeply and make more progress in these subjects.
- Governors are highly involved in school life. They know the school well and play a big part in developing and supporting the school's ethos. However, they do not challenge leaders effectively enough. This means they do not check how leaders' actions have a direct impact on the school. Governors should put in place better measures to check the information they receive.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	116856
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10122447
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	204
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Newell
Headteacher	Gary Richards
Website	http://www.whittington.worcs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	14–15 November 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has a Christian ethos. The last statutory inspection of Anglican and Methodist schools took place in 2016. The school was judged to be outstanding for its religious distinctiveness.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- We did deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, science and computing. We visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and examined teachers' plans. We talked with pupils and staff about the way these subjects are planned and taught. We also looked at work from other subjects and spoke with pupils, staff and parents about the school.
- We examined the school's published performance data and looked at the school's website.
- Pupils, staff including lunchtime staff, leaders, parents and governors spoke to us about safeguarding arrangements. We examined the single central record and other documents relating to safeguarding.

- We observed pupils' behaviour in class and at other times of the day. We spoke to parents, staff and pupils about behaviour.
- During the inspection, we had formal meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, governors, staff and pupils. We had telephone conversations with the school's learning partner and with an adviser from the Worcester Diocese. We also talked informally to pupils and parents to gather information about the school.
- We considered the responses to Ofsted's questionnaires for parents, pupils and staff.
- We scrutinised a wide range of documentation, including the school's own evaluation and development plan, the headteacher's reports and external reports.

Inspection team

Eve Morris, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Martin Spoor

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