

Inspection of a good school: Himbleton CofE First School and Nursery

Neight Hill, Himbleton, Droitwich, Worcestershire WR9 7LE

Inspection date: 30 January 2020

Outcome

Himbleton CofE First School and Nursery continues to be a good school.

However, inspectors have some concerns that standards may be declining, as set out below.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a friendly village school where pupils feel safe and valued. Caring relationships exist between staff and pupils. Pupils are respectful. Behaviour around the school and in lessons is generally good. Staff do not tolerate bullying, and if it occurs, teachers deal with it immediately.

Pupils are proud of their school. They want to please their teachers. Pupils develop a 'can do' attitude to learning and are keen to learn. Pupils have good manners and are confident when talking to visitors.

Pupils enjoy a wide range of visits and curriculum experiences which help to drive their imagination and make learning fun. Recently, pupils have visited Think Tank in Birmingham, the central library in Worcester and the Young Voices event. There are a range of clubs for pupils to join.

The newly appointed headteacher and her leadership team have high expectations. They want pupils to do well. This has resulted in some recent, significant improvements across the school, with further plans to improve the curriculum. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about recent changes in the school.

Some pupils are absent too often. In addition, sometimes, staff do not follow safeguarding policies and procedures closely enough to make sure that pupils receive the right support promptly.

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

In some areas of the curriculum, including mathematics and English, learning is well planned. Teachers are clear about what pupils need to learn. They plan lessons that build on what pupils have learned before. Work is well matched to the needs of learners.

In other areas of the curriculum, including history, learning is not as well planned. Lessons do not always build on what pupils already know. Leaders are aware and have plans in place to address this.

Pupils get off to a good start with their reading and develop a love of reading during their time at the school. Leaders' new plans to improve pupils' reading help teachers to develop pupils' reading knowledge and skills. Teachers are now more precise in their teaching of reading than they have been in the past. Phonics teaching has a clear structure and staff use appropriate resources. Leaders recognise that pupils' reading books are not always well matched to the phonics sounds that they have been taught. They have very recently purchased a new reading scheme to address this. Leaders check what teachers are teaching and ensure that staff are supported to teach reading well. Children read from a wide range of texts. Pupils in key stage 2 learn about China and the Shang Dynasty through books such as 'The Firework Maker's Daughter', 'The Willow Pattern Story' and 'The Magic Paintbrush'. Exciting events help to promote a love of reading further. These include the key stage 2 book club, a visiting artist to discuss favourite story settings, celebrating World Book Day and improvements to the school library.

Children settle quickly in the early years. They develop good relationships with staff and their peers. They respond well to routines and expectations. There is a strong emphasis on developing children's literacy and mathematical skills from the outset. Pupils enjoy learning about the history of toys through books such as 'Threadbear' and 'The Old Toy Room'. Staff use the outdoor space well to support learning. Pupils enjoy exploring the outdoor environment, particularly the forest school. Children in the early years have access throughout the day to the outdoor area.

Staff want pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged pupils to do well. Teachers make sure that all pupils are fully involved in lessons, adapting curriculum plans to help pupils overcome any barriers to learning. Leaders make sure that all pupils receive the support they need.

Personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education helps pupils to develop an understanding of themselves. Leaders encourage pupils to respect individual differences. They provide pupils with meaningful opportunities to understand how to be responsible, respectful citizens, who contribute positively to society, for example through the 'Archbishop of York Young Leaders Award'.

The new headteacher, supported by staff and governors, has worked hard to improve the school. Governors are now providing the right challenge and support to bring about improvements. Staff value the training that they now receive. They agree that the new leadership team is considerate of their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff and governors receive training on how to keep pupils safe. Leaders carry out the right checks on all staff, governors and volunteers to ensure that they are suitable to work with children. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe online. However, some staff do not always follow the school policy when recording concerns about the welfare of a small number of pupils, which can result in a delay in accessing the support they need. Leaders rectified this during the inspection and need to ensure that the school child protection policy is fully adhered to.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers' plans in some foundation subjects do not help them to organise learning that build pupils' knowledge over time. Leaders need to ensure that the content of curriculum plans is carefully selected and sequenced. Teachers need to enable pupils to draw on previous knowledge to master new ideas.
- Pupil welfare concerns are not recorded consistently in line with the school policy. Leaders should make sure that staff follow the policy closely, including making a timely multi-agency referral if required, so that those pupils that need it receive the right support at the right time.
- Pupils' attendance rates are below the national averages. Leaders need to work closely with parents to improve pupil attendance rates so that more pupils attend school regularly.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 14 February 2011.

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	116821
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10122580
Type of school	First
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	60
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Claire Johnston
Headteacher	Gemma Martin
Website	www.himbleton.worcs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	24 May 2016

Information about this school

- The school has a breakfast club and an after-school club which operate on the school site. The provision is managed by the school.
- Children can attend the Nursery provision from the age of three.

Information about this inspection

- We had formal meetings with the headteacher, subject leaders, the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo), teachers and pupils. I met with three members of the governing body, including the chair. I also spoke on the telephone to a local authority education adviser.
- During the inspection, we focused on reading, mathematics and history. In these subjects, we visited lessons, looked at pupils' work, examined teachers' plans and talked with pupils and staff about the way these subjects are taught. We also looked at other subjects in less detail to check how they were organised and taught. Leaders accompanied inspectors for most of the inspection activities.
- We examined external performance data about the school and looked at documents. These included information about behaviour, attendance, the school curriculum and improvement planning. The school's website was also checked.

- We asked pupils, staff, leaders and governors about safeguarding arrangements. We examined the record of employment checks on school staff and looked at other school records.
- We watched pupils' behaviour in class and at other times during the day. We talked informally with pupils, staff and parents to gather general information about school life.
- We looked at the responses from parents, pupils and staff to the Ofsted questionnaires.

Inspection team

Lorraine Lord, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Amanda Clugston

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