

Inspection of Cherry Orchard Primary School

Timberdine Close, Worcester, Worcestershire WR5 2DD

Inspection dates: 21–22 January 2020

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Inadequate

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Children get off to a good start with their learning in early years. Pupils behave well throughout the school. They have positive attitudes to learning. They are kept safe and bullying is exceptionally rare. Leaders deal well with any isolated incidents. Leaders place a very high emphasis on pupils' emotional well-being. There is a rich range of experiences, subjects and activities on offer. This includes forest school and clubs such as sports, gardening and photography.

Standards and the progress pupils make in reading, writing and mathematics are not good enough. Leaders and governors do not recognise this. They are not doing enough to tackle weaknesses.

Leaders and teachers have low expectations of pupils. Pupils are not sufficiently challenged in mathematics to achieve highly. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to write enough in English. Work in pupils' books shows they also write very little in subjects such as history. Teachers' approaches to learning and assessment place little emphasis on the importance of correct grammar, punctuation and spelling. They do not identify pupils' errors and misconceptions. Pupils who find reading difficult are not consistently taught by expert staff. Leaders do not check well enough how teachers are implementing the curriculum.

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

Standards and rates of progress have been low in recent years up to 2018. They fell sharply in 2019 and show little sign of improving. Leaders spend too much time justifying low standards and progress as issues at the expense of identifying the root causes of underachievement in school. Governors accept too readily leaders' reports on why standards and progress are low.

Leaders are committed to a curriculum philosophy where few demands are placed on pupils or teachers. Pupils choose their own level of challenge, but for too many it is not at the appropriate level. Leaders do not formally monitor how well teachers are implementing the curriculum or the impact it is having on pupils. Leaders have provided guidance in some subjects, such as art and physical education (PE). This is through skill and progression maps for each year group. A great deal is left to individual teachers to choose. In PE and art, teachers do this very well to support pupils' progress. However, there is too much inconsistency in the way teachers plan and sequence lessons in other subjects, including English, mathematics, geography, history, art and science.

Teachers stick faithfully to the school's feedback and marking policy. However, they are not successful in identifying and addressing pupils' mistakes and misconceptions. This is especially so in grammar, punctuation and spelling. Teachers too readily accept poor standards of written work in English.

Leaders have low expectations for pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders rightly place a high emphasis on pupils' emotional well-being. However, this does not translate into high expectations for their outcomes. By Year 6 too many pupils with SEND are not entered for the end-of-key-stage-2 tests. Yet their needs are not sufficiently high for any of them to be formally disapplied. As a result, too many are not sufficiently ready for the academic challenges of secondary school.

Leaders have not identified opportunities within the wider curriculum for pupils to practise their skills and to raise achievement in reading, writing and mathematics. For example, there is no clear indication of the key vocabulary pupils are expected to learn in subjects such as art and geography that will help with their reading and writing. As a result, pupils struggle to recall key terms they have been taught. A scrutiny of pupils' topic books showed an almost complete absence of writing in geography, religious education (RE) and science. There are few plans in place to check how well pupils are doing in a wider range of subjects .

Children settle very quickly into routines in Reception. They start to learn phonics promptly, developing the skills they need to read unfamiliar words. Teachers plan the learning of reading sequentially. This enables children to progress rapidly. This does not carry on into Year 1. Too many pupils are below the phonics standard for their age. Pupils do not consistently read books well matched to the letters and sounds they know.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. They have consistently positive attitudes to their learning. They respect each other's differences. Leaders plan well for pupils' personal development through the extensive range of subjects, trips and activities and experiences they enjoy.

The very high number of responses from parents, pupils and staff were overwhelmingly positive about the many strengths in the school. These were especially around care and support, safety, the wider curriculum and the commitment of staff. However, a small minority were rightly concerned about the school's approach to reading and writing and the quality of SEND support.

Leaders have done much to reduce the workload of staff and have been unanimously praised by staff for doing this.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders put pupils' safety and well-being at the heart of all their work. They are well trained to carry out their safeguarding role. Reported incidents are followed up promptly and all concerns logged securely. Staff know how to respond, should a safeguarding incident arise. They are up to date with the latest guidance and information.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations, including fire, water and road safety. They know about internet risks. Leaders meet all their statutory duties and responsibilities, but governors are too accepting of the information they receive.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils' standards and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2 are not good enough. Standards are low and declining rapidly in pupils' English grammar, punctuation and spelling. Leaders should ensure that the implementation of the curriculum through the broad range of subjects on offer leads to rapidly improving progress and standards for all pupils. They should ensure that teachers place sufficient emphasis on the importance of grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- Leaders are not doing enough to check how teachers implement the curriculum and its impact on pupils. They should ensure that subject leaders are given the time to check how teachers plan lessons sequentially to enable pupils to learn more and remember more and to hold them to account where this is not happening.
- Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to develop their writing skills across the wider curriculum. This issue was identified at the previous inspection, but leaders have not yet taken effective action. Leaders should ensure that pupils have greater opportunities to develop their writing in a wide range of subjects.
- Expectations for pupils are too low. Leaders should ensure that pupils are challenged in mathematics so that more achieve a high standard by the end of Year 6. Leaders should do more to ensure that pupils with SEND achieve the best possible outcomes.
- The books that pupils are reading are not consistently well-matched to the letters and sounds they know. Those who find reading difficult do not consistently receive expert teaching and support. Leaders should ensure that books are well-matched and that those who find reading difficult have consistent access to expert staff.
- Governors do little to hold leaders to account for low progress and standards. They should do more to challenge leaders on the impact of the curriculum on pupils, including those with SEND.

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	116749
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10138715
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	620
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Joanne Weston
Headteacher	Lee Card (Acting Headteacher)
Website	www.cherryorchard-pri.worcs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	6 July 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The deputy headteacher has been in post as acting headteacher since January 2020. The previous headteacher left in December 2019.
- Levels of staff absence are very high and well above the national average.
- Phonics leaders in Reception and key stage 1 took up their roles in September 2019.
- The school had not been in receipt of any external challenge since the previous inspection.

Information about this inspection

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

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

- We held meetings with the acting headteacher, other senior leaders, subject leaders, the coordinators for early years and SEND, and other members of staff. We spoke to pupils. We met a representative from a company commissioned by the local authority to provide support and challenge to the school. We met two members of the governing body, who were the chair and vice chair.
- We spoke to parents in school. We also took account of 106 responses to the Parent View free-text service and 267 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. We reviewed a letter from a parent received at the start of the inspection. We also considered 52 responses to the pupil survey and 45 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- We considered behaviour and attendance information. We scrutinised policies and procedures relating to SEND, pupil premium funding, safeguarding and child protection.
- There are no children in alternative provision.
- The inspection focused deeply on early reading, English, mathematics, art, geography and PE. We visited lessons, looked at pupils' work, and spoke to subject leaders, teachers and pupils. We also reviewed pupils' work in science, history and RE.

Inspection team

Mark Sims, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Gill Turner	Ofsted Inspector
Janet Lewis	Ofsted Inspector
Sara Arkle	Ofsted Inspector

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