

Inspection of a good school: Defford-cum-Besford CofE First School

Hill View, Defford, Worcester, Worcestershire WR8 9BH

Inspection dates:

4 March 2020

Outcome

Defford-cum-Besford CofE First School continues to be a good school.

However, inspectors have some concerns that one or more areas may be declining, as set out below.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a warm and friendly school. Pupils are kind and respectful and play well together. The older pupils look out for the younger pupils at breaktimes. Leaders successfully promote the Christian values of forgiveness, love and compassion. Pupils respect each other. They know it is important to be kind.

Pupils feel safe in school. They do not worry about bullying. This is because they know who to talk to if they have concerns and they trust staff to help them. Parents and carers told us that staff take very good care of pupils.

Leaders and staff work hard and want all pupils to achieve. The school's outside space offers pupils different opportunities to play and learn together. However, leaders' and teachers' work is not having the impact that leaders would like. There have been some improvements in reading, writing and mathematics recently but not in other subjects. This is because the curriculum is not consistently well planned in all subjects. Furthermore, some staff do not have the training they need to be able to teach the range of subjects they are required to teach well.

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

The curriculum is well planned and sequenced in reading, writing and mathematics. However, this is not the case in other subjects. Pupils do not achieve as well as they could in foundation subjects. The development of the curriculum in these subjects is further ahead than in some others.

Children settle quickly in the early years and they enjoy learning. This is because adults plan activities that interest them. Children are encouraged to explore and investigate the world around them. Staff are responsive to what the children can do, and what they need to learn next. Through a range of well-structured activities, children learn how to

communicate and interact with each other, and the world around them. The early years curriculum is well planned and ambitious.

Staff promote a love of reading throughout the school. Leaders have put reading at the heart of the curriculum. Children are taught phonics systematically from the moment they start school. In the early years, children enjoy songs and rhymes which help them to learn sounds quickly. The books that pupils read are carefully matched to the sounds that they know. Pupils read regularly throughout the day and they particularly enjoy story time. Additional help is available for those who find reading difficult. Pupils have developed a love of reading and they confidently talk about the books they enjoy.

Teachers have benefited from training in some subjects, such as mathematics. They are putting this training to good use. For example, teachers are now planning work that challenges pupils to develop their knowledge and skills. Also, in some subjects, including mathematics, the curriculum is designed in a logical way so that pupils use the knowledge they have acquired in one lesson to tackle more complex tasks. However, teachers have not received the same level of training in other subjects. As a result, work is not as demanding as it needs to be. For example, sometimes pupils practise basic skills that they can already do over and over again without being encouraged to develop them further. Teachers do not use assessment consistently well. In some subjects, teachers check how well pupils have understood their work. In other subjects, this does not happen.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well. Teachers adapt their plans appropriately. Pupils with SEND access the full curriculum and they are achieving well.

Leaders encourage all pupils to attend school regularly. Attendance is improving for most pupils. Leaders ensure that pupils are respectful towards each other. They behave well in lessons and work well together. Pupils gain a good understanding of the world around them and learn about different religions and cultures. They also benefit from a range of extra-curricular clubs and educational visits. Pupils are being well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Staff say that leaders care about their well-being. Recent changes have been made to the school's assessment procedures to reduce the workload for staff.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that the correct checks are made on staff who join the school. Governors carefully monitor and review the school's safeguarding procedures. All staff receive up-to-date safeguarding training.

Pupils' safety and well-being are of great importance to leaders and staff. Staff know the pupils well and they are alert to any signs that may suggest that a pupil is at risk of harm. Staff teach pupils about how to keep themselves safe, including when online. Leaders

work closely with other agencies and professionals. This ensures that pupils and their families get the support that they need.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's curriculum is not sufficiently coherently planned and sequenced in some subjects. However, it is clear from the actions that leaders have already taken that they are in the process of bringing this about. Leaders should ensure that curriculum plans, in each of the foundation subjects, are sequenced in a way that helps pupils to learn more and remember more.
- Some teachers have not had the subject content training they need. This prevents them from planning work that is appropriate for all pupils and therefore limits how well pupils can learn and develop knowledge and skills in these subjects. Leaders should ensure that all teachers have the necessary training they need.
- Teachers do not use assessment consistently well to identify what pupils can and cannot do. Consequently, teachers are unaware when work for pupils is not as demanding as it should be. Therefore, leaders should ensure that teachers are supported in how to use assessment well to ensure that it informs future teaching that is ambitious for all pupils.
- Leaders' plans to improve the school have not been implemented effectively. This means that some aspects of the school's work are not having the impact that leaders want. Leaders, including governors, should ensure that their plans to improve the school are implemented and monitored effectively.

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 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 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 first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 20–21 October 2015.

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	116802
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10111801
Type of school	First
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	51
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Mr James Riley
Headteacher	Mrs Elaine Mather
Website	www.deffordschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	20–21 October 2015, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Defford-Cum-Besford C of E School has a Christian ethos.
- The school has a governor-led preschool for children from the age of two years and nine months. They also provide before-school and after-school childcare.

Information about this inspection

- We met with the headteacher, early years leader, the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo), teachers and pupils. We met with members of the governing body, including the chair, and spoke to a representative from the local authority.
- We reviewed a range of school documents, including leaders' plans to improve the school, leaders' curriculum plans and behaviour and attendance records.
- We focused on reading, mathematics, geography and art and design technology. Inspectors met with teachers, visited lessons, reviewed pupils' work and talked to pupils about their learning and experiences in these subjects.
- We considered parents' views. Inspectors spoke to parents and considered the responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and the 23 free-text responses.

- We also considered the responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Ed Masterson, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Mark Bailie

Ofsted Inspector

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