

Inspection of Exhall Cedars Infant School

Exhall Cedars Infant School, Trenance Road, Exhall, Coventry, West Midlands
CV7 9FJ

Inspection dates: 11–12 March 2020

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders have created a warm and welcoming environment for pupils and staff. Pupils like school and they are safe. They are proud of their work. Pupils enjoy learning and going on trips and having visitors in school.

Children settle well into the Nursery and Reception classes. Nurturing relationships exist between adults and children in the setting. Children get off to a good start in their education.

Pupils enjoy talking about their work and are enthusiastic about the books they read. They rapidly learn the sounds that letters make, so that they become fluent readers.

The school day starts calmly, so that learning gets underway quickly. Most pupils behave well and learn happily with one another. However, while staff want the best for pupils, they sometimes accept behaviour that disrupts the learning of other pupils. Bullying is not tolerated. If it happens, staff deal with it swiftly and effectively.

Pupils understand how the school helps them to feel safe and stay safe. For example, pupils learn about road safety.

Leaders know the school well. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and they have also identified what still needs to improve.

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

Leaders are ambitious for pupils. They have begun to design a curriculum to help pupils know more and remember more. There is still more work to do, but leaders are aware of this. Curriculum plans have not yet been sufficiently developed in all subjects. This means that in some areas, learning does not always build on what pupils have learned in the past.

Teachers assess pupils well in some subjects, for example phonics. They usually plan lessons that interest and meet the needs of all pupils. Teachers encourage pupils to try their best. However, at times, work set by teachers is too easy and this can affect pupils' attitudes to learning. Sometimes this has an impact on pupils' behaviour and the quality of presentation in their books.

Leaders and staff make reading a high priority. The school's well-planned programme for the teaching of phonics gets pupils off to a good start in reading. Sounds are taught in the right order. The books that pupils read are well matched to the sounds they are learning. Staff identify any gaps in learning quickly and put support in place. Pupils use their knowledge of letters and sounds well to help them

to read and write. Classrooms have lots of appropriate books to choose from. Pupils also enjoy choosing books from the school library and listening to stories read by their teachers. During their time in school, most pupils become fluent and confident readers. They gain a good understanding of what they read. This leads to pupils achieving well by the end of Year 2.

Staff plan well for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) so that they reach their full potential. Leaders make sure that these pupils receive good support when required. Pupils with SEND achieve as well as their classmates and have the same opportunities.

Children make a good start to learning in the early years. The staff get to know the children and their families before they start school. Adults make sure children settle quickly. Adults plan activities thoughtfully to support children's learning and progress. Children develop the knowledge and skills needed for learning in Year 1. They demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. Children are curious and enjoy lessons. Staff nurture the children and encourage them to work and play well together. Staff work hard to help children improve their vocabulary and communication skills at every opportunity.

Leaders and governors are broadening pupils' horizons through lessons, trips and visitors to the school. Pupils learn about other places, people and religions. They enjoyed, and could remember, the visits from a poet and a Paralympian. These experiences add to pupils' personal development.

The school provides high-quality pastoral support. Pupils know how to eat healthily and maintain an active lifestyle. They have an age-appropriate understanding of healthy relationships. School leaders work closely with children and families that need the most help and support.

Despite the best efforts of leaders, pupils' attendance has been below average in the past and continues to be so. This is particularly the case for disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND. The evaluation of pupils' attendance is not related to the current challenge schools face because of COVID-19 (coronavirus).

Staff find school leaders supportive. Leaders ensure that teachers are well trained, especially in the teaching of early reading. Staff speak highly of the support they receive. Leaders help staff to manage their workload so that it is manageable.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The culture of safeguarding is strong. Leaders and staff are well trained and knowledgeable about keeping pupils safe. Leaders make sure that all staff understand and follow procedures well. They act on concerns about pupils' welfare effectively. The school works well with other agencies to offer extra support to those families who need it. Leaders ensure that careful checks are carried out when new staff join the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's work to develop plans in some subjects is not yet complete. This means that work does not always build on pupils' prior learning well enough. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum is coherently planned and sequenced so that teachers know exactly what to teach and when to teach it. The school needs to build on the work already started to ensure that the planned curriculum enables pupils to know more and remember more in all subjects.
- Behaviour is not yet consistently good across the school. This means that learning is sometimes interrupted. Leaders and staff need to continue to focus on improving behaviour and be consistent in their approach so that all pupils can learn and play well together.
- Attendance is below the national average. This means that some pupils miss important schooling. Leaders need to improve the attendance of all pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils and 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	130898
Local authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	10122496
Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	195
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Ann Johnson
Headteacher	Sharon Hillyard
Website	www.exhallcedars.org
Date of previous inspection	16 October 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The pre-school has recently become part of Exhall Cedars Infant School.
- The school includes a nursery.

Information about this inspection

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

- Ofsted is aware of the challenges that COVID-19 is currently posing to those we inspect. During this visit, the inspectors took into consideration the impact of any measures being taken to slow the spread of Coronavirus by the school. This has included the effect these measures have had on the current attendance of the pupils and staffing arrangements.
- We held discussions with school leaders, subject leaders, teachers and governors.
- We visited lessons throughout the school, including the pre-school and nursery, and also observed playtimes.
- We spoke to pupils and looked at examples of their work.

- We spoke to parents at the beginning of each day and looked at the responses to Ofsted’s online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View.
- As part of the inspection, we carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, physical education and personal, social and health education.

Inspection team

Vanessa Payne, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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