

Inspection of a good school: Coleman Primary School

Gwendolen Road, Leicester, Leicestershire LE5 5FS

Inspection dates: 25–26 May 2021

Outcome

Coleman Primary 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 large, friendly school with a close-knit, caring ethos. Pupils are keen to learn. The atmosphere in lessons is calm and purposeful. Pupils are generally well behaved and polite, in lessons and around school.

Pupils told inspectors that, 'The teaching is fun. If you don't understand something the teachers explain it.' It was clear to see, in lesson visits, that pupils enjoy a challenge in their work, especially in mathematics. In other subjects, pupils are less clear about the important knowledge they should remember.

Pupils stated that they feel safe in school. They have been taught about bullying and know how to stay safe online. Pupils know what to do if they suspect bullying may happen. They know they can tell a trusted adult.

Older pupils spoke enthusiastically about reading, especially the whole-class reading sessions. However, pupils in the early years and key stage 1 do not make a strong enough start in learning to read.

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

The mathematics curriculum is strong. The curriculum plans set out the key knowledge and skills that pupils should learn, from the early years to Year 6. The work in pupils' books shows that lessons flow in a logical sequence. This means that pupils know more and remember more as they progress through the school. Pupils spoke positively about mathematics. Some told inspectors that, 'Maths is fun and challenging and makes my brain work'. Others said that they enjoy it when they need to 'think out of the box'.

Leaders are in the process of reviewing the curriculum in all other subjects. Leaders noted that the pace of this work has slowed, as a result of COVID-19 (coronavirus). Currently,

the curriculum focuses on Years 1 to 6. There are no clear links to how pupils will build on what they learned in the early years foundation stage, other than in mathematics. Leaders have begun to identify what pupils should know in subjects such as history, geography, science and art. Other subjects are less developed.

Currently, the school's approach to the teaching of early reading and phonics does not ensure that pupils quickly become fluent readers. When an inspector listened to pupils reading, most could not apply phonics knowledge accurately when reading unfamiliar words. In most cases, the books are not well matched to pupils' needs. Adults do not consistently encourage pupils to use phonics knowledge systematically when reading.

Leaders and staff promote pupils' personal and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Through the curriculum and in assemblies, they ensure that pupils understand the importance of respect and tolerance. Staff are careful to adapt the curriculum so that it is relevant to the local community context. They encourage all pupils to be proud of their cultural heritage. Pupils are well prepared as future citizens.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive well-planned support for their additional needs. Leaders and staff actively encourage pupils with SEND to take a full part in the life of the school. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) liaises regularly with staff and parents to ensure that she has an up-to-date overview of pupils' needs. This helps her to work effectively with staff to adapt the curriculum for pupils' needs.

Leaders and governors place a high priority on monitoring staff workload and well-being. For example, staff told inspectors that the recent revisions to the school's marking policy have had a positive impact on their workload and on the quality of pupils' work. Staff described school leaders as 'a caring presence'.

In discussion with the headteacher, we agreed that curriculum development and the teaching of early reading and phonics may usefully serve as a focus for the next inspection.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff make safeguarding a high priority. Pupils told inspectors that they feel happy and safe at school. Governors receive and discuss safeguarding updates at every meeting. Leaders have strong systems for raising and following up concerns. They liaise regularly with external agencies. Employment checks are complete and meet statutory requirements.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum does not consistently identify the subject-specific knowledge that pupils should learn in subjects other than mathematics. Curriculum plans do not take account of what pupils have learned in the early years. Plans are not clearly sequenced. Consequently, pupils do not receive precisely focused teaching that enables them to know more and remember more as they progress through the school. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum sets out what pupils should know in all subjects, and in what order, from the early years to Year 6.
- Leaders have not established an effective approach to the teaching of early reading and phonics. Books do not consistently match the sounds that pupils know. Staff do not consistently encourage pupils to use their phonics knowledge when reading unfamiliar words. As a result, pupils do not quickly develop the knowledge and skills to become successful readers. Leaders should ensure that the teaching of early reading and phonics enables pupils to become confident, accurate readers.

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 outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that a good 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 first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 28–29 April 2016.

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	120095
Local authority	Leicester
Inspection number	10195960
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	662
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Nick Devonport
Headteacher	Nigel Bruen
Website	www.colemanprimary.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	28–29 April 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- No relevant changes since the previous inspection.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the 2020-21 COVID-19 pandemic began. We discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school's leaders and have taken that into account in our evaluation of the school.
- We met with the headteacher, other senior leaders, the SENCo, curriculum leaders and a range of staff and pupils. We spoke with the chair of governors and a representative of the local authority.
- We looked closely at the quality of education in early reading, mathematics and history. This involved speaking with leaders, pupils and staff, visiting lessons, listening to pupils read and reviewing samples of pupils' work.

- We inspected safeguarding by reviewing the school's record of pre-employment checks and by holding a meeting with the designated senior leader for safeguarding to discuss the school's policies and procedures. We spoke with a range of pupils and staff to evaluate the school's safeguarding culture.
- We observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school.

Inspection team

Christine Watkins, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Shaheen Hussain

Seconded Inspector of schools

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