

Inspection of a good school: Coton-in-the-Elms Church of England Primary School

Elmslea Avenue, Coton-in-the-Elms, Swadlincote, Derbyshire DE12 8HE

Inspection date:

9 February 2022

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this initial (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a full inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a full (section 5) inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to this small and friendly school. They are rewarded with 'golden time' and receive 'golden dove awards' for working and behaving well. Pupils say that bullying is rare. They say that they feel safe. They trust the adults to sort out any disagreements quickly and fairly. Pupils behave well. Low-level disruption is rare. Pupils have a good attitude to school and to their learning. They are polite and respectful towards visitors. The school has a busy and purposeful atmosphere.

Staff have high expectations for all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive appropriate support. This helps them to access the full curriculum. However, leaders have not given sufficient thought to the knowledge that they want pupils to learn in some subjects. Leaders have not ensured that there is a consistent approach to the teaching of phonics. The outdoor area for children in early years is not fit for purpose.

Most parents and carers have positive views of the school. One parent said, 'The staff are caring and supportive. My children love this school and enjoy learning a range of subjects in a safe environment.'

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

There is a consistent approach to the teaching of mathematics that starts in early years. Pupils' workbooks show that they are following a curriculum that is taught in a way that enables them to build up their knowledge over time. Teachers have good subject knowledge. They are constantly checking what pupils know and can remember. They pick up on pupils' mathematical errors and misconceptions quickly. Pupils have frequent

opportunities to practise and repeat work. They like the 'pre-teach' lessons. These help to prepare pupils for learning the new mathematical knowledge that is to come.

Leaders' thinking around what they want pupils to learn in other subjects is not so well considered. The knowledge that leaders want pupils to learn and when is not clear. There is not yet a consistent approach to assessment in these subjects.

The teaching of phonics and early reading is a work in progress. There is an inconsistent approach to the teaching of phonics. This is because elements from three different phonics schemes are being used at once. Staff have varying degrees of confidence when delivering the phonics lessons. The pupils' reading books do not always match the letter sounds they are learning. Staff are developing the pupils' love of reading. However, there is not yet a consistent approach to the use of the school library, nor to teachers reading stories to their classes. Some classes are experiencing these activities, while others are not.

There is strong provision for pupils' broader development. They are prepared well for life in modern Britain. The curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to learn about democracy and respect. There have been visits to the Houses of Parliament and visits to school by the local member of parliament. There are links with the local multi-faith centre. Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe when online. Pupils enjoy putting on lavish productions at a local theatre. There are many opportunities for them to sing, act and learn a musical instrument. Pupils are learning to be responsible citizens. They are visible in the local community through 'random acts of kindness', car-washing and litter-picking, for example.

Staff identify pupils with SEND promptly through frequent assessment and daily observations. When required, these pupils receive effective extra help. There are good links with the speech and language team, autism spectrum disorder outreach and an educational psychologist.

Children follow well-established routines in early years. There is a good range of activities for them to complete. For example, children enjoyed the challenge of counting out and then sharing 20 'pancakes'. Relationships between adults and children are warm and positive. However, the outdoor area is not fit for purpose. Children have not been able to use it for far too long. This is preventing them from fully developing their knowledge and skills.

Staff say that leaders are mindful of their workload and sensitive to their well-being. Staff appreciate the training they receive.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding leads and staff are well trained. They know about the latest statutory guidance. They know about the 'Prevent' duty and the dangers of peer-on-peer abuse. Staff know what to do should they be concerned about an adult working at the school.

They know the signs to look for should a child be at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation. Safeguarding records are detailed. Leaders seek outside support promptly should the need arise. There are strong procedures in place concerning the recruitment of staff.

Pupils are taught to be safe when they are online. They are aware of age limits on films and console games, for example.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not given sufficient thought to the knowledge they want pupils to learn and when in some subjects. Consequently, pupils do not develop their depth of understanding in a logical way so that they build their knowledge and understanding over time. Leaders should ensure that there is clarity around the core knowledge that they want pupils to learn and when across all subjects.
- There is an inconsistent approach to the teaching of phonics and early reading. Pupils do not have reading books that match the sounds they are learning. Staff are using a mixture of different phonics schemes. This is confusing for pupils. Staff have varying degrees of confidence when delivering phonics lessons. This lack of consistency and staff training is preventing some pupils from becoming confident and fluent readers. Leaders should ensure that a rigorous and sequential approach to the teaching of phonics and early reading is in place and that staff know how best to support pupils to become confident and fluent readers.
- The outdoor area for children in early years is not fit for purpose. It has been like this for far too long. Children are not receiving their full entitlement and are not developing their physical skills as well as they could. Leaders should ensure that the outdoor area is safe and effective in developing children's knowledge and skills across the seven areas of learning.

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 evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, 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 deem the section 8 inspection a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in January 2017.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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	112812
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10211643
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	142
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Matthew Evans
Headteacher	Ian Robson
Website	www.coton-in-the-elms.derbyshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 January 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher took up the role in January 2022.
- The school is a Church of England primary school. It underwent a section 48 Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) in February 2017. In March 2020, SIAMS inspections were suspended as part of COVID-19 restrictions.
- The school does not use the services of any alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the leaders, and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- The inspectors held various meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders and the leaders responsible for different curriculum subjects, for phonics and early reading, for early years and for pupils with SEND. A meeting was held with three members of the governing body, including the chair, and with a representative from the local authority.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in mathematics, phonics and early reading and art. For each deep dive, inspectors looked at curriculum plans, visited lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at a sample of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about some other subjects.
- To inspect safeguarding, the lead inspector checked the single central record. Checks were made on staff training and staff's knowledge of the school's safeguarding procedures. The lead inspector scrutinised safeguarding records.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's parent, pupil and staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Peter Stonier, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Stephanie Innes-Taylor

Her Majesty's Inspector

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