

Inspection of a good school: Witherley Church of England Primary School

Church Road, Witherley, Atherstone, Warwickshire CV9 3NA

Inspection date: 16 March 2022

Outcome

Witherley Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils feel that Witherley Primary is a 'great place to come to school'. They say, 'I know when I come to school I will be cheered up by my friends and teachers.' Witherley is a small school where everyone counts. It is a safe and welcoming place to learn.

Pupils know that all staff care about them and want the best for them. Pupils say that bullying is rare. If bullying does occur, staff deal with it well. They know that adults will always listen to them if they have any worries.

Pupils behave well in lessons. If any get distracted, adults get them back on track. Learning time is not lost. Behaviour is good because lessons are interesting. Pupils listen well, work hard and help each other. They play happily together during breaks and 'Happy Lunchtimes'. They are considerate and polite. Good behaviour is recognised and rewarded.

Learning takes place outside of the classroom too. Pupils are looking forward to the after-school clubs that are soon to restart. Pupils enjoy educational and residential visits. They undertake a range of roles and responsibilities. These include being school council members or worship leaders.

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

The school's vision, 'Let your light shine', aims to encourage all pupils to do their best. All staff know what pupils need to learn to achieve their potential, and work well to support them.

Leaders have introduced a new curriculum approach. They have redesigned the curriculum from the early years to Year 6. What pupils need to know and remember is clear. Curriculum leaders know their subjects well. Some have provided training to make sure that teachers deliver the curriculum effectively. They have begun to check the curriculum is working. This is most evident in English and mathematics. Leaders are

beginning to check other subjects. These checks are in the early stages. Leaders do not have the evidence to reassure them that the curriculum is effective across all subjects.

Teachers assess pupils to ensure they understand and remember what is being taught. Pupils are reminded about the important knowledge that they have previously learned. Pupils are then able to use what they have learned in the past to help them complete more challenging work.

Leaders want to make sure that all pupils can read well. Pupils start to learn phonics as soon as they enter the Reception Year. Staff follow the recently introduced programme. Daily phonics sessions help pupils to match letters and sounds. Pupils can decode unfamiliar words. Pupils remember 'tricky' words. Extra help is provided for pupils who find reading more difficult. In some cases, pupils' reading books do not always match the sounds they know. This means these pupils do not always read with fluency. Older pupils spoken to by inspectors love reading. They enjoy the stories their teachers share and the books they recommend.

The mathematics curriculum is generally well sequenced. Learning gets more complex over time. Teachers check to make sure that pupils understand what they are being taught. Teachers move pupils on once their knowledge is secure. Pupils enjoy their learning in mathematics. They feel it challenges them.

Leaders want to ensure that all pupils can access the curriculum. This includes those pupils who are disadvantaged or those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils with SEND are identified quickly and extra help is provided. As a consequence, these pupils catch up rapidly.

All staff make sure that pupils are clear about the need to behave well. Expectations and routines are clear. These expectations are supported by the systems that are in place. Pupils receive rewards for good behaviour. These include stickers and certificates, or afternoon tea with the headteacher when they have behaved particularly well.

Leaders are committed to developing pupils' wider understanding of the world. They want pupils to understand the diverse society that they live in. This includes learning about different faiths and cultures. However, pupils' understanding of fundamental British values is limited. Nonetheless, pupils are respectful and tolerant of others.

Governors are dedicated. They know the school well. They want to make the right decisions, not the easy ones. They are determined to make the school even better. Governors work with staff to make sure that what is provided is making a difference. Leaders and governors have established a positive working environment. Staff say that leaders take account of their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that all staff receive appropriate safeguarding training. This training is updated regularly. All staff recognise that it is their responsibility to keep pupils safe. Staff are quick to spot signs that might indicate a pupil may need support. They follow procedures to raise any concerns they may have. If necessary, leaders are quick to act and involve external agencies. Leaders keep clear records.

Leaders also have good systems in place regarding, for instance, safer recruitment.

The curriculum is well designed to enable pupils to know how to keep themselves safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have introduced a new scheme to support teaching in phonics. This is not fully embedded. On occasions, pupils are provided with books that do not match the sounds that they know. Leaders need to make sure that the new scheme is effectively implemented and having the desired impact. They should also ensure that all pupils have books that allow them to practise, with fluency, the sounds they know.
- Revised curriculum plans have only recently been introduced. As a result, some curriculum leaders have not had the opportunity to monitor their subjects effectively. Leaders should ensure that curriculum leaders are provided with opportunities to monitor their subject area so that they can ensure the new approach is having the desired impact and bring about further improvement if necessary.

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 as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 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 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	120172
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10211589
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	102
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Mark Weaver
Headteacher	Debbie Middleton
Website	www.witherley.leics.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	9 November 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Witherley Primary School is a Church of England faith school located in the Diocese of Leicester.
- The religious character of the school was inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 in November 2016.
- The headteacher was appointed in November 2020.
- Several class teachers have been appointed since the previous inspection.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During this inspection, the inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, curriculum leaders, the special educational needs coordinator and the office manager.

- The lead inspector held a meeting with the chair of the governing body and four other governors.
- The inspectors did deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and art. The inspectors met with curriculum leaders for these subjects, visited lessons, looked at a range of pupils' work and met with teachers and pupils. The lead inspector observed some pupils reading to staff and talked to pupils about their reading. The inspectors also checked pupils' learning in other subject areas.
- The inspectors met with several groups of pupils to seek their views about the school. The inspectors also spoke to pupils informally in class and around the school at breaktimes.
- To check leaders' management of safeguarding, the lead inspector spoke with the headteacher, who is also the designated safeguarding lead, and her deputy safeguarding lead. The inspector reviewed the single central record and records related to behaviour and safeguarding incidents. The inspector considered the school's processes for reporting safeguarding concerns. Both inspectors spoke with pupils, staff and governors to check their views on safeguarding.
- The inspectors checked the school's website and a range of school documents, including the school's improvement plans and self-evaluation document.
- The inspectors considered the 32 responses made by parents to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and the 32 responses to Ofsted's free-text system. Staff and pupil survey responses were also considered.

Inspection team

Ged Philbin, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Jackie Stirland

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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