

Inspection of a good school: Moons Moat First School

Cleeve Close, Church Hill, Redditch, Worcestershire B98 9HR

Inspection dates:

15 and 16 March 2022

Outcome

Moons Moat First School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy at school and enjoy their lessons. Teachers do not accept any poor behaviour. If it happens, then they sort it out quickly. This means that lessons are calm and purposeful, and pupils can get on with their work. It also means that pupils feel safe at school.

Pupils are taught how to spot bullying. It does not happen often, but pupils and adults know what to do if it does.

In class, pupils do lots of different subjects. They read, write, and do mathematics every day. Most do well with this. Recent changes to early reading are helping pupils to do even better. Pupils also do a lot in other subjects, such as science and history. However, at times, lessons try to cover too much, which can be confusing.

The school actively promotes acceptance and friendship. Staff are fair and kind to pupils. They make sure pupils follow the school's rules and that they understand why rules and values are important.

At Moons Moat First School pupils know how the school's values guide their behaviour. For example, pupils understand the meaning and importance of honesty and how this helps them to do the right thing.

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

The school has a solid track record of successfully teaching pupils to read. Even so, leaders have recently changed the school's approach to early reading. The changes made so far are a step in the right direction and are strengthening the teaching of early reading. Phonics lessons happen every day and there are established expectations for classroom routines. From the start, Nursery leaders focus on language and improving vocabulary. In all classes, staff read to pupils and introduce them to different authors and books. During their time at school, pupils read a lot and develop their enjoyment of reading. However,

leaders are still building up the school's stock of decodable books and staff are still getting to grips with the new approach. Currently, there is still more to do to make sure all pupils can make the most of every reading lesson.

The school's attention to early number ensures that pupils learn and practise what they need to know. Curriculum guidance is well sequenced. Pupils' new learning builds logically on earlier lessons.

In most subjects, leaders have set out clearly what pupils should learn. There is plenty of curriculum guidance for staff, which they all use. However, in some subjects, such as history and science, leaders have not specifically identified the key knowledge that pupils need to know and remember. This does not help them build on prior learning well enough.

Teachers put a lot of thought and imagination into lessons. Sometimes this works exceptionally well and ensures that pupils learn about and remember the right things. On the other hand, staff sometimes overcomplicate lessons or try to cover too much. This can lead to one-off interesting lessons but does not help pupils to focus on the really important knowledge and skills that they need to practise and remember.

Teachers organise activities that engage pupils and enrich the topics they are studying. In Year 3, for example, pupils begin a topic about castles with a visit to the local Moon's Moat. This is followed later in the term with a trip to Warwick Castle. The COVID-19 pandemic has meant that some visits have been postponed. However, staff have found alternative activities online. A recent history workshop about the Romans, for example, was delivered via an internet link.

In the main, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well. For instance, in the early years, leaders are quick to provide extra language and communication support from trained professionals, if needed. However, support for early reading relies too much on extra catch-up sessions rather than keeping up in class.

Pupils' efforts and achievements are noticed, celebrated and rewarded throughout the school. Pupils receive certificates and rewards for positive actions. Pupils talk enthusiastically about playtime rewards for good behaviour, such as earning marbles that add up and can be exchanged for treats.

The school runs a variety of after-school clubs. These include choir, gardening, cookery, art and sports, such as hockey. Pupils are encouraged to take part. The school also organises committees that enable pupils to take responsibility for leading events or making changes to the school day. Pupils learn how voting works when they select school council members. Through this process, they learn about democracy and the importance of making informed choices.

The school's governors know and support the school well. They ask the right questions and follow the correct procedures. Staff feel supported by leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have put effective safeguarding systems and procedures in place. Staff understand them and use them in an efficient and timely way. Consequently, concerns and incidents are dealt with quickly and correctly. Staff check where pupils are if they do not turn up for school.

Staff teach pupils about how to spot and manage everyday risks. They also teach them about healthy relationships and how to look after themselves. Pupils know what to do if something worries them.

The school keeps an up-to-date record of suitability checks on staff.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Staff are still getting to grips with the school's new approach to early reading. In some classes, resources and routines are not used or followed with sufficient consistency. Currently, some pupils who need extra help with phonics do not get enough repetition and practise during normal lessons. Instead, staff arrange short catch-up sessions during assemblies or other times. These have some positive impact, but not as much as regular practise in class every day. Leaders should make sure that all staff organise daily activities in phonics lessons that enable all pupils to get the early reading practise they need.
- In some subjects, leaders have not yet identified the key knowledge that pupils need to know and remember. This does not help pupils build on their previous learning. However, it is clear from the actions that leaders have already taken in planning next year's curriculum and training staff, that they are in the process of bringing this about. For this reason, the transitional arrangements have been applied in this case.
- In some subjects, staff overcomplicate learning by bringing in lots of extra information. This distracts pupils from the essential knowledge that they need to focus on and remember. Leaders should make sure that all staff are following the school's curriculum guidance in the right way, so that they cover the right things in enough depth.

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 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 second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in January 2013.

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	116765
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10212506
Type of school	First
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	250
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Roger Hill
Headteacher	Sara Fisher
Website	www.moonsmoat.worcs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	14 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The lead inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken this into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, science and history. In these subjects, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, pupils and staff, visited lessons and looked at pupils' work. She also looked at some other subjects in less detail and spoke with staff and pupils about them.
- The lead inspector examined school documents. These included information about behaviour, school improvement planning, the curriculum and attendance. She also looked at the school's website.
- The lead inspector asked pupils, staff, leaders and governors about the school's safeguarding arrangements. She examined the record of employment checks on school staff, looked at other school records, and checked safety procedures at the school. She

watched pupils' behaviour in class, assembly, at lunchtime, on the playground and at other times during the day.

- During the inspection, the lead inspector had formal meetings with the headteacher, other leaders, staff and governors. She spoke on the telephone with a local authority adviser and an external consultant. She talked informally with pupils and staff to gather information about school life. She considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaires for parents, pupils and staff.

Inspection team

Diane Pye, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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