

Inspection of Clifton C of E Primary School

Cross Side, Clifton Village, Ashbourne, Derbyshire DE6 2GJ

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 November 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils say that they feel happy and safe at school. They are proud of the many roles they can have. For example, older pupils act as school council and eco committee members, prefects and 'sports crew'. They enjoy being positive role models for younger pupils.

Pupils' behaviour is good. They understand that bullying is wrong. They are certain that staff deal with any issues quickly and fairly. Pupils say that everyone is treated equally at the school. They happily celebrate differences.

The school is well regarded in the local community. Pupils, staff and parents and carers spoke warmly about occasions such as the recent Remembrance Day event. All agree that the staff are kind and caring.

Leaders have not ensured that the curriculum enables pupils to achieve as well as they should. Pupils do not develop secure knowledge and skills across the full range of subjects. There has been a high rate of staff turnover at the school in recent years. This has affected the pace of improvement.

Children in the early years do not get off to a strong enough start, especially in early reading. The curriculum is not yet suitably designed to meet their needs.

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

Since the last inspection, the school has faced several challenges. There have been considerable staffing changes, affecting both leadership and teaching roles. Other staffing difficulties have arisen due to the impact of the pandemic. Consequently, leaders have not addressed the recommendations from the last inspection as urgently as they should. They have not yet brought about the necessary improvements, including to the early reading curriculum. Leaders have not yet ensured that the curriculum is sufficiently planned and sequenced in all subjects. The curriculum does not take account of the early years foundation stage. Currently, the curriculum does not enable pupils to know and remember more as they progress through the school.

The members of the new leadership team have accurately identified what needs to improve. They have now begun to review and revise the curriculum in all subjects. There is a plan to train all staff in how to deliver the revised curriculum. These actions are in their infancy. Leaders have not yet begun to check the impact of the revised curriculum.

In mathematics and history, the curriculum is well planned and sequenced. Staff support pupils to develop increasingly secure knowledge and skills. They step in quickly to address pupils' misunderstandings. Pupils enjoy these subjects.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to achieve well. Leaders and staff quickly identify these pupils' needs. Leaders liaise regularly with parents and external agencies. Pupils with SEND receive well-planned support.

Leaders promote pupils' wider development well. Through the curriculum, and in assemblies, pupils learn how to stay healthy and safe. Pupils understand the meaning of important values such as respect and democracy. These British values closely align with the school's Christian values. This coherent approach supports all pupils to develop as thoughtful, caring young citizens.

Staff say that they value leaders' support for their workload and well-being. They are a close team who work well together. Staff welcome the improvements that are being introduced across the school.

The school's approach to early reading and phonics is not systematic enough. Teachers do not apply a consistent approach in the daily phonics sessions. Pupils do not always read from books that match their phonics knowledge. As a result, too many pupils do not become capable readers as quickly as they should. Recently, leaders have developed plans to address these issues. They plan to introduce a more systematic reading programme in spring 2023, when more suitable reading books will be available.

Leaders have not ensured that there is a sufficiently ambitious early years curriculum in place. They have not provided teachers with the guidance they need to plan well enough for these very young children. The curriculum does not support children's developing knowledge and skills as well as it should. Until recently, children in the early years did not begin to learn phonics as soon as they joined the school. They do not develop quickly enough as fluent, confident readers.

Governors have not held leaders to account as effectively as they should. They do not carry out the checks they should so that they have an accurate overview of the school. Governors did not ensure that parents were consulted about the school's policy for relationships, sex and health education (RSHE). The policy is not available on the school's website.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff prioritise pupils' safety and well-being. Leaders provide regular staff training and briefings. This ensures that all staff are confident in what to do if they have a concern about pupils' welfare. Records show that staff log concerns quickly and precisely. Leaders act appropriately to follow up on any concern, however minor. They work effectively with a range of external agencies.

Leaders have provided good pastoral support for pupils and families. This includes access to counselling and family support services.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. For example, they learn about the dangers of online bullying.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not ensured that the curriculum is fully planned and sequenced in all subjects, from early years to Year 6. Leaders have recently begun to review and revise the curriculum. This work is in the early stages. Leaders do not currently have a plan for how and when they will monitor the impact of the curriculum. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum is coherently planned and sequenced from early years to Year 6, and that they know the impact it is having on pupils' ability to know and remember more in all subjects.
- Currently, the school's approach to early reading and phonics does not support pupils to become capable readers as effectively as it should. Too many pupils have fallen behind in reading. Leaders should ensure that a systematic approach to the teaching of early reading and phonics is in place across the school, enabling pupils to become fluent, confident readers.
- Leaders have not ensured that there is a suitable curriculum for the early years foundation stage. Staff in the early years do not receive the guidance necessary to provide meaningful learning activities across the different areas of learning. Leaders should ensure that an ambitious early years curriculum is in place that enables children to develop a strong foundation of suitable knowledge and skills to prepare them for future learning.
- Governors do not hold leaders to account for the school's performance as effectively as they should. They do not systematically check for themselves the school's curriculum, policies and procedures. Governors should ensure that they have an accurate, precise strategic overview of the school's strengths and weaknesses so that they can ensure the necessary improvements occur.
- Governors should ensure that the required parental consultation for RSHE takes place, and that the school's RSHE policy is available online.

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.

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	112811
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10227938
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	102
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	David Stock
Executive headteacher	Jeanette Hart
Website	www.clifton.derbyshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	9 July 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Dove Valley Federation, which is formed of two schools. The executive headteacher holds her post across both schools.
- The deputy headteacher and other senior leaders started in their role in September 2022.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the second routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the executive headteacher, the deputy headteachers and curriculum leaders.

- The lead inspector met with the two members of the governing body and held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading; mathematics; and history. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders to discuss the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector observed some pupils read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum, reviewed curriculum planning and samples of pupils' work in some other subjects.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at other times around school.
- Inspectors evaluated the effectiveness of safeguarding by reviewing the school's record of pre-employment checks and holding discussions with leaders, staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Christine Watkins, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Sarah Fielding

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022