

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

Church Green, Farway, Colyton, Devon EX24 6EQ

Inspection dates:

11 January 2023

Outcome

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud of their school. They value the strong relationships they have with adults and other pupils. They feel safe and nurtured. Pupils of different ages play happily together. They are kind, friendly and supportive of each other. Children in Reception and Nursery learn to take turns and share with others.

Pupils state that bullying is not an issue and that, if it were to occur, staff would resolve it immediately. Parents who spoke to inspectors or completed the Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View, are unanimous in stating that their children are happy, safe and well cared for. They value the quality of education at Farway.

Pupils and children in Reception follow the school rules. They are enthusiastic about learning and are rightly proud of their work. Pupils behave well, both in the classroom and around the school. At lunchtime, for instance, they listen respectfully to pupils reciting grace.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive effective, personalised support to learn the curriculum. Parents of children with SEND are particularly positive about the support their children receive.

Pupils enjoy after-school art and sports clubs. They explore the world beyond school, such as visiting the Axe Valley Wildlife Park.

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

Although the curriculum is largely well structured, a breakdown in communication between senior leaders and staff hampers the school's capacity to improve further. Governors and senior leaders have not managed staff workload and staff well-being effectively. Consequently, staff morale and confidence in senior leaders are low. Staff do not feel supported to continue to improve the quality of education at the school.

However, despite the difficulties faced by staff, they have ensured that pupils and children in the early years learn to read well. Reading is a priority across the curriculum. Through a well-planned programme, pupils learn about the link between letters and sounds. Pupils practise reading daily and apply their phonic knowledge well. Pupils learn to develop fluency and enjoy reading. Teachers use assessment regularly to identify gaps in pupils' reading ability and ensure that they catch up. Children in Reception Year are eager learners and relish listening to stories. There are strong links between home and school. This supports pupils and children in early years in their reading development. However, staff do not always ensure that pupils and children learn new vocabulary to help them to read. This sometimes hampers pupils' progress in reading.

Thoughtfully selected texts underpin the English curriculum. Pupils' wider reading supports them to learn to write well. They learn about the language and grammar of writing, which helps them to write for different purposes. For example, pupils in key stage 1 learn about the features of riddles and then write their own. However, pupils across key stages 1 and 2 do not have sufficient opportunity to improve and extend their vocabulary. As a result, they do not develop the more sophisticated language they need in order to articulate their ideas effectively. Leaders acknowledge this but have only very recently introduced training for staff on developing pupils' vocabulary.

Pupils develop mathematical knowledge securely. Staff use assessment effectively. They check what pupils know and identify areas where pupils struggle. In key stage 2, pupils have a secure knowledge of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. They apply this knowledge well to learn more complex mathematical concepts. Parents are particularly effusive about the support for pupils with SEND. Leaders and staff carefully identify the needs of pupils with SEND, a minority of whom have significant needs, for which staff provide appropriate support.

Children in early years learn well and enjoy coming to school. Through well-structured activities and routines, they develop strong social skills. Children develop their speech well and learn to communicate with other children. Children learn about the natural world through daily walks around the village and learning in the school garden.

Pupils and children in the early years behave well. They have strong attitudes to learning and strive to achieve. Pupils attend regularly. Visits and federation-wide experiences, such as sporting competitions, enrich the curriculum.

Governance is not effective. Governors do not know the school well enough. They have not ensured the physical and emotional well-being of staff. They have not held the senior

leadership to account for this. Staff are passionate about the pupils they teach and, despite extremely low morale, strive to do their best.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders are vigilant of pupils' safety. They provide timely support for pupils at risk of harm. They work well with external agencies to ensure pupils' physical and emotional safety.

Staff receive regular and appropriate safeguarding training. They know how to identify the signs that a child may be in danger and how to refer their concerns. Leaders make appropriate checks on adults working at the school.

Pupils learn how to keep safe when on the internet. Pupils feel safe and protected. They state that they have a trusted adult they can talk to if they have a problem.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There has been a breakdown in communication between senior leaders, governors and staff. Many staff do not feel that their workload and well-being are managed effectively. Staff morale is very low, and they have lost confidence in the senior leadership team. As a result, the capacity of the school to make continued improvements to the curriculum is hampered. Leaders and governors must strive to understand the reasons that underpin staff disaffection and take speedy action to resolve this situation.
- Pupils in key stages 1 and 2 do not develop and extend their vocabulary well enough. This hampers their reading development and also means that they are not able to articulate their ideas well. Leaders must continue to develop pupils' vocabulary so that they are better able to read more complex texts and communicate their ideas.

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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually, this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in January 2012.

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	113432
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10226894
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	33
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Vanessa Briggs
Executive headteacher	Katie Gray
Website	http://www.farway.devon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	23 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average primary school.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The school is part of the Jubilee with Pebblebed Federation of Schools.

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.
- Inspectors held discussions with the head of learning, the executive headteacher and members of the leadership team, including curriculum leaders.
- An inspector held a telephone discussion with the chair of governors.
- An inspector held a telephone discussion with an education officer from the local authority.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, English, geography and mathematics. This meant that, in each subject, inspectors met with senior and curriculum leaders, talked to pupils, visited lessons, spoke to teachers and looked at pupils' books.
- Inspectors met with staff to consider their views.
- Inspectors reviewed safeguarding records, including the single central record of recruitment checks on staff.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents who responded to the confidential questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Susan Aykin, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Lizzy Meadows

Ofsted Inspector

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