

Inspection of a good school: Clifford Primary School

Hardwicke, Hay-on-Wye, Clifford, Herefordshire HR3 5HA

Inspection date: 28 February 2023

Outcome

Clifford Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Clifford Primary School is a happy, friendly school that pupils enjoy attending. Pupils and staff greet each other warmly every morning, showing the positive relationships that are in place. Pupils, staff and families talk about the 'family atmosphere'. This is a caring school, where everyone looks out for everyone else. As a result, pupils feel safe in school.

Leaders want the best for every pupil, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils live up to these expectations. They enjoy making a positive contribution to the life of the school and the local community. Pupils play a role in decision-making in school. For example, they all take part in 'Pupil Parliament'.

Pupils generally behave well. Around school, they are polite and respectful. Older pupils act as role models for younger pupils. For example, pupils enjoy eating lunch together sitting at mixed-age 'house' tables. Peer mediators are on hand to help solve any issues. If bullying ever happens, adults quickly step in.

Pupils enjoy the range of opportunities on offer. Leaders are keen to ensure that all pupils who want to join clubs can do so. From football to film club, there is something for everyone.

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

Leaders have thought carefully about what they want pupils to learn. Careful curriculum sequencing helps pupils to build on what they have learned before. For example, in geography, pupils in Years 1 and 2 enjoy learning the names of the continents through songs. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 recap this learning before moving on to identify mountains, using maps. In mathematics, pupils in Year 6 learning about scale factor explain how what they have learned before helps them to learn this new concept. However, teachers do not always check what pupils understand in lessons, or whether they have gaps in what they have learned before. This means that they cannot consistently adapt teaching to address any misconceptions or missing knowledge.

Leaders are passionate about ensuring that pupils learn to read. In each classroom, there are inviting reading areas. Leaders make sure that teachers read to pupils every day. They have introduced a phonics programme and children start learning to read as soon as they enter Reception. For example, children in Reception enjoy identifying objects whose names start with the same sound. Staff assess pupils' learning and identify those who are falling behind. Any pupils who need additional support have extra phonics lessons to help them catch up. However, the teaching of phonics is not always consistent with leaders' intentions. Sometimes, when pupils cannot read a word, staff do not use the right strategies to support them. Some pupils, including those who are falling behind with reading, practise reading using books which contain sounds they do not know. This means that they do not learn to read as well as they could.

Leaders are keen to ensure that all pupils are fully included in every aspect of the curriculum. They quickly identify pupils who might have SEND. Leaders ensure that they put in place skilled adult support to enable pupils to learn and play happily alongside their classmates. As a result, pupils with SEND achieve well.

Children in the early years quickly settle in and understand the school routines. For example, staff show children how to walk sensibly from the school to the community hall, ready for assembly. This continues as pupils move up through the school. In lessons, most pupils listen and behave well, so that learning is not disrupted. At breaktime and lunchtime, pupils of all ages play happily together and take care of each other.

Pupils experience a range of activities beyond the curriculum. For example, leaders plan residential trips for pupils in Years 3 and 4 and Years 5 and 6. All pupils take part in enrichment days, such as film-making or activities linked to apples for harvest. However, opportunities for pupils to experience cultural and religious diversity are limited. Pupils learn much about their local community but do not visit other places of worship, for example. They do not regularly read books or have experiences which enable them to deepen their understanding of other cultures or families. As a result, pupils have a limited knowledge of diversity in modern Britain.

Staff value leaders' support. They know that leaders take their well-being into consideration. They appreciate changes made to make their workload manageable.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that all staff understand the importance of safeguarding. Staff are trained to identify signs that pupils may be at risk. Concerns are recorded and leaders quickly take action. Leaders provide support for pupils and families that helps keep pupils safe. Leaders also engage external support, when needed.

Leaders ensure that, through the curriculum, pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, including online. Pupils are confident that there are trusted adults to talk to in school, if they have a worry.

Leaders ensure that all the pre-employment vetting checks are carried out on adults who work in school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There is some inconsistency in teaching the new phonics programme and in teachers' subject knowledge. Some staff do not use efficient strategies to help pupils read words and some pupils read books which contain sounds they do not know. As a result, some pupils do not learn to read as well as they could. Leaders should ensure that all staff teach phonics in the way that leaders intend, and that pupils read books that are well matched to their phonic knowledge.
- In some subjects, teachers do not use assessment well enough to check pupils' understanding or identify gaps in their learning. As a result, pupils do not always build on what they know, over time. Leaders should ensure that all teachers use assessment consistently well to identify and address any gaps in pupils' learning so pupils can progress well across the curriculum over time.
- Opportunities for pupils to experience cultural and religious diversity are currently limited. This means that some pupils have a limited understanding of cultures and families that are different to those in their immediate community. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum contains explicit opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge of diversity in order to better prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.

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 October 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	116668
Local authority	Herefordshire
Inspection number	10212433
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	98
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Nina Lyon
Headteacher	Sarah Scourfield
Website	www.clifford.hereford.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	22 February 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this ungraded inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspectors carried out deep dives into these subjects: reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans where they were available, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector also listened to pupils read to a familiar adult.
- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, curriculum leaders and the special educational needs coordinator.

- The inspectors held meetings with the chair and representatives of the local governing body and spoke to a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lessons, around the school and at lunchtime. The inspectors spoke to pupils about pupils' behaviour.
- To evaluate safeguarding, the inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead, looked at the single central record of recruitment checks, looked at safeguarding records and talked to pupils and staff.
- The inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including parents' free-text responses. The inspectors also took account of responses to Ofsted's staff survey and the pupil survey.
- The inspectors talked to parents at the school gate.

Inspection team

Rachel Henrick, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Stuart Clarkson

His Majesty's Inspector

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