

Inspection of a good school: Cheselbourne Village School

Cheselbourne, Dorchester, Dorset DT2 7NT

Inspection dates:

8 and 9 March 2023

Outcome

Cheselbourne Village School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are at the heart of this inclusive and caring school. The values of 'respect, challenge and nurture' are central to school life. Leaders have high expectations and are determined that all pupils will succeed. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the education the school provides. One commented that staff are 'dedicated and enthusiastic and always go above and beyond in creating a fun and nurturing learning environment.'

Pupils enjoy coming to school and feel safe. Staff know pupils well. They provide strong pastoral support. Pupils are polite and confident. They understand that they need to 'treat others as they would like to be treated'.

Pupils develop positive attitudes to each other and adults. They behave well in lessons and around the school site. Low-level disruption is rare. Pupils understand what bullying is. They are adamant that it does not happen. Pupils know staff would deal with it quickly if it did.

Pupils appreciate the wider opportunities the school provides to develop them as individuals. They know how to be physically and mentally healthy. Pupils make the most of the outdoor education provision, as well as the range of clubs and trips that support their learning.

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

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils. Staff talk in high regard about the leadership of the headteacher. They share his passion and drive to ensure all pupils are the best they can be. Staff appreciate the support they receive. Morale is high.

Leaders place reading at the centre of the curriculum. Staff choose interesting texts to encourage pupils' love of reading. Younger pupils learn to read well through a consistent approach to the teaching of phonics. Staff provide pupils with a range of stories, rhymes, songs and games to develop their communication skills. Careful use of assessment means teachers are clear about which sounds pupils know and what they need to learn next. Books are matched to the letters and sounds pupils are learning. Staff ensure that those pupils who are in danger of falling behind have the support to catch up quickly.

Pupils like reading. They talk with confidence about the range of books they read and enjoy. One pupil said that reading allows you to 'see the story happen as pictures in your mind.' Pupils understand the importance of being able to read. They enjoy listening to stories that link to their wider curriculum learning.

Leaders have ensured that a carefully designed and sequenced curriculum is in place for mathematics. Staff provide pupils in the early years with engaging learning opportunities to develop their mathematical understanding of number. Adults model mathematical language to build on what pupils know and can do. In science, pupils talk knowledgeably about how their learning in mathematics supports them when thinking scientifically. Pupils can recall their prior knowledge to support new learning.

Some subjects within the wider curriculum are not as well designed or sequenced as others. Pupils are not always able to recall prior learning in order to make connections with new learning. For example, in music, pupils can talk about their current learning with enthusiasm and enjoyment. However, they struggle to use what they already know and can do to develop their understanding of musical terms, such as rhythm and tempo, effectively.

Staff adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders ensure that they are fully included in the life of the school. They work effectively with external agencies. Pupils with SEND follow the same curriculum as their peers.

Staff have high expectations of behaviour. As a result, the school is a calm and purposeful place to learn. Pupils enjoy the positive approach to behaviour, including earning certificates and house points. They engage and play well together during social times.

Leaders have prioritised the personal development of pupils. They create links with the local community, including the church. Pupils understand difference and that it is alright to be different. They understand that people might have opposing views to them but that these should be respected.

Governors share the determined vision of the headteacher for all pupils to do well. Although some are still relatively new to role, they provide effective support and challenge in the core subjects of English and mathematics. However, their understanding of the quality of education in wider curriculum subjects is less secure.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff act in the best interests of pupils. Leaders ensure that all staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities through regular and up-to-date training. Systems for recording concerns are effective. Staff are confident in reporting when they are worried about a child. They know leaders take their concerns seriously. The school completes the necessary checks to ensure staff are safe to work with children.

Pupils learn to stay safe through the curriculum. They know how to stay safe on the roads and when online. Pupils and parents agree that the school is a safe place to be.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects across the wider curriculum, leaders have not clearly identified the knowledge they want pupils to know and remember. As a result, some pupils have gaps in subject-specific knowledge. Leaders should ensure that all teachers explicitly highlight the knowledge they want pupils to learn so that all pupils know more and remember more over time.
- Governors do not have a detailed understanding of the quality of education pupils receive across some subjects in the wider curriculum. As a result, they do not challenge leaders rigorously enough or with the same consistency as core areas of the curriculum. Governors need to ensure that they gain a clear view of the impact of these subjects on pupils to hold leaders fully to account.

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 April 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.

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	113663
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	10227183
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	56
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Dave Riddell
Headteacher	Chris Perry
Website	www.cheselbourne.dorset.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	16 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average community first school. Pupils are organised into three mixed-age classes. The Caterpillar's Pre-school is now part of the early years base developed this academic year.
- The current headteacher took up his post in September 2021.
- The school does not use 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.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, groups of staff, a representative from the local authority and the chair of the local governing body.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, science and music. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited samples of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also talked to leaders and pupils about their learning in mathematics and religious education.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils in Years 1, 2 and 4 read to a known adult.
- Inspectors looked at how the school keeps pupils safe. The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead to evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, including the checks carried out on staff working at the school.
- Inspectors considered the 26 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, including 25 free-text responses. They also considered 12 responses to the staff survey and 18 responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

Heather Barraclough, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Marcia Northeast

Ofsted Inspector

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