

Inspection of Colehill First School

Pilford Heath Road, Colehill, Wimborne, Dorset BH21 2LZ

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 March 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Ofsted has not previously inspected Colehill First School as an academy school under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 as, until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections.

Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect the changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection of the predecessor school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy an impressive range of experiences that enrich their personal development. Leaders' work to develop pupils' character is exceptional.

At the heart of daily life are the school's values of respect, reflection and resilience. Pupils know these values and what they mean well. They understand that they apply to them as individuals, as a community and globally. For example, they are very proud of their beach clean, which they see as a way of showing respect for the environment.

Pupils learn to recognise and describe their feelings through stories, assemblies and the curriculum. This is a strong feature of school life. Pupils are clear that staff help them to remain positive about their learning. Consequently, pupils understand what it means to be a good learner. Pupils of all ages collaborate well. They support one another in discussions and tasks.

Pupils enjoy coming to school and, consequently, attendance is high. Parents value the care and nurturing pupils receive.

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

Leaders have designed a coherent curriculum for pupils across the school. They are ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They have ensured that the curriculum gives pupils lots of experiences and knowledge that build their cultural capital. This prepares pupils well for future life.

In many subjects, leaders have identified and sequenced the detailed knowledge they want pupils to learn. This is particularly effective in reading and mathematics. Pupils learn well in these subjects because teaching is closely matched to the small steps of knowledge pupils need to learn. Pupils in Reception make a strong start to their phonics learning. They quickly become confident at segmenting words and blending sounds. Teaching in Year 1 builds on this knowledge. Learning is checked regularly so that any misconceptions or gaps can be addressed quickly. For example, pupils who struggle to learn certain sounds get immediate support, with a sharp focus on these specific sounds. This helps them to keep up.

In a few subjects, however, leaders have not broken down the knowledge into small enough steps. Teaching often focuses on completing the final task rather than the specific knowledge. This means that pupils learn less well in these subjects. For example, in physical education (PE), pupils learn how to represent machines through dance. They enjoy this but do not develop an understanding of dance techniques, such as timing and linking movements together.

Leadership in many subjects develops teachers' expertise well. Consequently, teaching is confident and precise. Pupils learn to read well because teachers have a secure subject knowledge. Teachers are keen to hone their skills. They work collaboratively with each other and colleagues across the trust. This supports their professional development, as well as reducing their workload.

In a few subjects, leaders do not check how well the intended curriculum is being delivered. This means that, in these subjects, pupils are not developing the same depth of knowledge as they are in other subjects.

Right from the start, in early years, this is an inclusive school. Leaders ensure that all staff understand the different needs that pupils have. Teachers work well with leaders and parents to identify the barriers for pupils with SEND. These pupils learn well alongside their peers. This is because teaching is well matched to their needs.

Pupils have a good understanding of discrimination. They know some of the reasons that people might experience this. They understand that everyone is different. They are adamant that everyone should be respected for who they are. Pupils credit this for being why bullying is so rare at the school. They have an exceptional understanding of fundamental British values. Pupils can explain why these values are so important for life in modern Britain.

The trust and local academy committee have good strategic oversight of leaders' work. They put the quality of education that pupils receive at the centre of their discussions. They accurately evaluate the impact of leaders' actions. They are committed to staff well-being at all levels. As a result, staff feel valued and proud to work at the school. Morale is high.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders are committed to keeping pupils safe. They ensure a culture of vigilance and responsibility from all staff. Staff use agreed systems to record concerns. Recent training ensures that staff records are detailed. Leaders have strong oversight of this, which enables them to act swiftly to resolve concerns.

Work with external agencies secures appropriate support for pupils and families. Staff recruitment procedures are secure. Safeguarding procedures are regularly checked by trust officers to ensure they are robust.

Pupils have a good understanding of measures in school to keep them safe. They know how to keep themselves safe online. They trust adults to listen to any worries.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, leaders have not broken the subject knowledge they want pupils to learn into small enough steps. As a result, teaching does not focus on the specific knowledge pupils need to secure. Leaders should ensure that, in all subjects, the curriculum is appropriately sequenced so that pupils know more and remember more over time.
- In some subjects, leadership does not accurately evaluate how well the intended curriculum is implemented. Consequently, pupils do not learn as well in these subjects. Leaders must ensure that they have an accurate view of how well pupils are learning in all areas of the curriculum.

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	141768
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	10242383
Type of school	First
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	5 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	154
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	John Kingston
Headteacher	Sharon Staddon
Website	www.colehillfirst.dorset.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Colehill First School converted to become an academy school in March 2015. When its predecessor school, Colehill First School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding overall.
- The school joined Wimborne Academy Trust in March 2015. The trust has recently merged to become Initio Learning Trust.
- The executive headteacher was appointed in September 2022.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

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

- 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.

- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and PE. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors held meetings with the executive headteacher, deputy headteacher, assistant headteacher, early years leader, special educational needs coordinator, curriculum leaders, and teaching and support staff.
- The lead inspector met with members of the local academy committee. She also spoke with the chief executive officer, the director of education and a trustee from the trust.
- The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding leads to discuss how pupils are kept safe in school. Inspectors considered the school's recruitment procedures, staff induction and training, records of concerns and their engagement with external agencies. The inspectors also spoke with staff and pupils throughout the inspection.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils read to an adult.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. In addition, they met with pupils, formally and informally, to hear their views.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including free-text responses. Inspectors also took into consideration responses to the staff and pupil surveys.
- Inspectors examined a range of documentation provided by the school, including documentation relating to safeguarding and school improvement.

Inspection team

Angela Folland, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Carl Thornton

Ofsted Inspector

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