

Inspection of a good school: Oldswinford C of E Primary School

Field Lane, Oldswinford, Stourbridge, West Midlands DY8 2JQ

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 March 2023

Outcome

Oldswinford C of E Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils' behaviour is excellent. They show consideration for others, often without any prompting. If someone is upset or worried, other pupils and staff are quick to listen and help. Pupils and staff know that bullying is wrong, and they take any allegations seriously. If anyone breaks the rules, then staff notice and act fairly. Consequently, pupils and parents are very confident that the school is a well-led, safe place to be.

The school's Christian foundation drives many of the school's values. Staff are positive role models, and pupils respond very well to the example they set. They respect their teachers and work hard in lessons.

Different subjects are taught regularly, and are often supported by school trips and special days. In many subjects, the curriculum is well organised. Reading, for example, is taught very well, and standards have risen over time.

All pupils have opportunities to shoulder responsibility. They take on jobs such as junior leaders, librarians and anti-bullying ambassadors. They do these jobs well and help other pupils. Because pupils have a voice and leadership roles in school, staff know how they are feeling. This helps everyone to get on well and be happy at school.

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

The headteacher provides visible and caring leadership that inspires confidence from staff and parents. She has created a leadership team that looks out for staff and pupils and thinks carefully about how leadership decisions affect them. For instance, leaders place a high value on good conduct, consideration and manners. Pupils live up to these high expectations. This allows learning to proceed in a calm and orderly way. It also gives pupils the confidence to speak up and share their ideas.

Reading is taught well. The school has a structured phonics scheme that starts early in the Reception Year. Throughout this year, and across key stage 1, staff make sure pupils

have books that match the letter sounds being taught. They also read stories and poems to pupils to build their knowledge of language and books. If anyone falls behind, then staff provide extra phonics practice to help them catch up.

Once pupils have learned to read, staff select books carefully to broaden pupils' knowledge of authors and literature. Leaders have established reliable systems that encourage pupils to read often, both in school and at home.

This well-organised and purposeful approach to reading leads to strong achievement, both in reading and across several other subjects. Where leaders have provided informed guidance for staff to follow, such as in modern foreign languages and physical education, lessons build sequentially. Pupils learn and remember more over time, and become increasingly competent in the subjects. In a few subjects, the school's new curriculum does not provide enough guidance about what to teach and why. While national curriculum topics, for example in history, are covered, individual teachers select the content to teach within them. This has mixed results. Pupils learn facts, but do not necessarily see how new learning relates to previous learning.

As with reading, the approach to early mathematics in the Reception Year is very effective. Early years staff use a rigorous and structured approach that gives children a firm grounding in number. As pupils move up through the school, the mathematics curriculum supports pupils' steady progress, and achievement is on the up. The strong subject leadership indicates that this trend is set to continue. That said, while leaders have ensured that the curriculum includes regular problem-solving, some pupils do not always get enough practice.

In both reading and mathematics, for example, teachers use assessment well to plan next steps in learning. Assessment in some other subjects is developing as leaders refine and revise curriculum guidance.

Support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is carefully thought through. Leaders identify needs quickly and are proactive at seeking support and advice from other professionals, including for mental health and well-being. They support pupils so they can access the same curriculum and experiences as their peers.

As well as the academic curriculum, pupils get many opportunities to attend after-school clubs and to carry out leadership roles in school. This helps to widen their interests, and builds their character and people skills. Staff ask pupils for their ideas about school life and events. They listen to what they say and make changes in response. For example, pupil school councillors recently arranged for the playground equipment shed to be improved. They also get involved in charity fundraising.

Staff enjoy working at the school and appreciate the way leaders consider their work-life balance.

Governors are well informed. They value the work of leaders and staff and, together, they ensure that children always come first.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established reliable routines for staff training. They check that staff know what to look out for, and have rigorous systems for reporting concerns. When concerns arise, leaders respond in the right ways.

Staff teach pupils how to look after themselves and respect others. Pupils learn about the features of healthy relationships and how to report any worries.

Leaders keep staff, pupils and parents informed about local risks and safety matters. They share information with other professionals when necessary.

All the required checks on adults in school are carried out and recorded correctly.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The mathematics curriculum is well organised but does not provide all pupils with sufficient practice in solving problems of the same type. This means that some pupils do not build a fluent understanding of which facts and methods to use in different situations. Leaders should review the mathematics curriculum so that all pupils become more confident and successful in problem-solving.
- In a few foundation subjects, the curriculum does not identify clearly enough the important content to be taught and revisited so that pupils know and remember it. This means that pupils find it hard to make connections between new and earlier learning. Leaders should continue to review curriculum design in some foundation subjects, and provide more guidance for staff to follow, to ensure all the necessary content is taught and learned.

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 June 2014.

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	103839
Local authority	Dudley
Inspection number	10257024
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	420
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Sue Hodson
Headteacher	Elena Game
Website	www.oldswinford.dudley.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	18 January 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a Church of England voluntary-controlled school within the Diocese of Worcester. The most recent section 48 diocesan school inspection took place in October 2022.
- The school provides before- and after-school childcare. Leaders do not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics and languages. In these subjects, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at pupils' work.
- The inspector also looked at the curriculum in other subjects in less detail to check how they were organised and taught. She also observed some pupils reading.

- The inspector looked at published performance data about the school and a range of school documents. These included information about pupils' behaviour, attendance, the curriculum, extra-curricular activities and school improvement planning. She checked the school's website.
- The inspector asked school leaders, governors, staff and pupils about safeguarding arrangements and safety routines. She examined the record of employment checks on school staff and looked at other school records.
- The inspector talked informally with pupils, staff and parents to gather general information about school life. She took account of the responses to Ofsted's surveys of staff's, pupils' and parents' views.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in class, on the playground and at other times during the day.
- During the inspection, the inspector had formal meetings with the headteacher, other leaders, governors, school staff and pupils. She spoke on the telephone with a local authority representative and the director of education for the Diocese of Worcester.

Inspection team

Diane Pye, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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