

Inspection of a good school: Charford First School

Charford Road, Charford, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire B60 3NH

Inspection dates:

25 and 26 April 2023

Outcome

Charford First School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils attend a happy, caring and inspiring school. Staff, parents, carers and pupils are proud to be part of a school that is at the heart of the local community. Many describe this community as being a 'family'. Leaders have high expectations for pupils and strive to make a positive difference in their lives. Children from a very young age begin an educational journey that fosters curiosity and inspires them to learn.

Pupils learn a set of values that are deeply meaningful to them. The school enshrines these values in everything it does. Pupils learn how to be kind, caring and unique individuals who look after each other. This helps them to feel like they belong and that they matter. Many are full of enthusiasm and are eager to be fully involved in school life. Staff harness this enthusiasm and teach all pupils that their contribution is welcome and appreciated.

Pupils know who to talk to if they have worries. Adults are approachable and ready to listen. Pupils trust them to sort out any friendship issues or bullying quickly. Staff take such matters seriously and work hard to resolve issues. This helps pupils to feel safe and confident at school.

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

Leaders ensure that pupils study a broad range of subjects. They have identified the crucial knowledge and vocabulary they expect pupils to know and remember in each of these subjects. In addition, leaders ensure that pupils' knowledge builds logically. For example, staff teach children in the Nursery to be curious and to discover how things work. Children in the Reception Year build on this knowledge when using simple computer programmes. This logical development of knowledge then continues through the computing curriculum in other year groups. This helps them to achieve well.

Teachers explain concepts and ideas clearly. They use 'blasts from the past' to help pupils recap and remember key information they already know. Staff make adaptations so that all

pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), access the full curriculum. For instance, teachers help some pupils to keep pace with the curriculum by working with them in smaller groups. In addition, adults often provide useful resources to support pupils with SEND.

Staff make regular checks to find out what pupils know and remember. They ask lots of questions in lessons and explore pupils' understanding. This approach works particularly well in subjects such as mathematics and English. Teachers gather very precise information about pupils' knowledge in these subjects. However, the approach to assessment in some other subjects is less well developed. Sometimes, the checks that teachers make do not focus on the precise knowledge that they expect pupils to know and remember. This lack of precision makes it hard for teachers to identify how to help pupils make progress.

Adults instil a love of reading in pupils. The school's Jackanory Garden, Book Barn, Hobbit House, Reading Nooks and library are bustling with enthusiastic readers. Children hear stories, poems and rhymes from the beginning of their experiences at school. They learn to read through a well-organised phonics programme. Staff quickly identify any pupils who fall behind in learning to read and help them catch up. This leads to all pupils becoming better readers.

Leaders manage behaviour well. They have created a positive culture where adults routinely celebrate pupils' accomplishments. Pupils understand the school rules and stick to them. They make good choices and act responsibly. Classrooms are calm and purposeful places. This helps pupils to concentrate on their work and focus on tasks.

Staff's work to promote pupils' well-being, confidence and self-esteem is highly effective. Pupils particularly benefit from programmes of study on Well-being Wednesdays. These programmes of study teach pupils strategies to keep themselves healthy, including how to maintain positive mental health. The school's values encourage pupils to consider the well-being of others. They also help pupils to understand the importance of democratic processes and the place that rules play in school and society.

Governors maintain oversight of their statutory duties very well. They support leaders in fostering an engaging and enjoyable environment for staff to work in. Staff benefit from a range of training and development opportunities that they appreciate. They feel valued by leaders and morale is high. This benefits pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have put clear systems in place to manage concerns about pupils. Staff understand their roles and put policies into practice. Leaders are alert to any concerns about pupils and take swift action to support those who need help. They work well with external agencies and provide early help to families when necessary.

Leaders understand the requirements of the early years welfare arrangements. They ensure that provision for two- and three-year-olds is suitable and safe.

Pupils learn a broad range of information about potential risks to their well-being. This includes them learning a range of strategies for using the internet safely.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's approach to assessment is not fully developed in some subjects. Sometimes, teachers do not precisely check the knowledge that pupils know and remember. This makes it hard for staff to identify how to help pupils make progress. Leaders should ensure that teachers formatively assess pupils' knowledge of key content in lessons.

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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in December 2017.

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	116659
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10257009
Type of school	First
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	508
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Stephen Hart
Headteacher	Anita McLaren
Website	www.charford.worcs.sch.uk/
Dates of previous inspection	5 and 6 December 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school manages the Charford Children’s Centre. The children’s centre facilitates external agency work with families in the local community.
- The school offers provision for two- and three-year-olds.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The school runs a breakfast club and an after-school club.

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 his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held discussions with the headteacher and other senior leaders. He also met with representatives of those responsible for governance.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and computing. For each of these subjects, he 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 inspector also spoke to staff about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- Through discussions with leaders, pupils and staff, the inspector considered how effectively pupils are safeguarded. He also looked at documents related to safeguarding, including the school's single central record of checks on staff.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in a range of different classes and at different times of the day.
- The inspector considered responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View. This included free-text comments. He also took account of responses to Ofsted's online staff survey and responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.
- The inspector visited the before-school provision and spoke to pupils who attend.

Inspection team

Jonathan Leonard, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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