

Inspection of a good school: Donnington Wood C of E Voluntary Controlled Junior School

Leonard Close, Winifred's Drive, Donnington, Telford, Shropshire TF2 8BH

Inspection dates:

18 and 19 April 2023

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. Inspectors are recommending the next inspection to be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school's values of 'building friendships, encouraging perseverance, and inspiring hope' permeate through the school. Staff and pupils are proud of their school. Parents and carers receive lots of support to make sure that pupils attend school regularly; this is a real success. Pupils feel safe and well supported. Staff provide a warm welcome to parents and pupils at the start of each day. Families are appreciative of the wide-ranging support that staff provide.

Staff share leaders' high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Pupils behave well in lessons and at playtimes. If any bullying occurs, leaders take prompt action to make sure that it stops and ensure that pupils are well supported.

This year, pupils have taken part in history-themed visitor days and an outdoor education day where they took part in archery, kayaking and paddle boarding lessons. Pupils take on leadership roles such as a playground buddy or a values ambassador, working on projects related to reducing waste and improving sustainability.

Pupils experience a broad and balanced curriculum. However, in some subjects, leaders have not ensured that what pupils learn is sequenced well enough so that pupils know, remember and can do more.

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

Governors know the school well and hold leaders to account. They are committed to improving the school. Staff feel well supported by leaders who take their workload and well-being in account.

Pupils' outcomes in 2022, at the end of Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics were low in comparison with national averages. Leaders have made some improvements to the curriculum, but it is too early to see the full impact of this work. They ensure that the curriculum covers the aims of the national curriculum. Leaders have identified the important concepts and knowledge that they want pupils to learn in each subject and how this knowledge will build over time. However, in some subjects, the sequence of learning is not well planned. Some staff do not have the expertise needed to teach all aspects of the curriculum effectively. As a result, pupils do not remember important knowledge and struggle to link concepts between different subjects. Consequently, pupils do not achieve as well as they should in these subjects.

Leaders have made sure that reading is a high priority. They promote it through fun events, including inviting pupils into school in their pyjamas to 'curl up with a good book'. Most pupils enjoy reading both at school and at home. Some staff, but not all, have been trained in how to teach phonics. Consequently, the teaching of phonics is inconsistent and not always effective. Leaders know this and are already taking steps to address it. A consistent approach to teaching reading comprehension has been introduced and this is taught well. Pupils receive extra support to catch up in reading when needed. This is having a positive impact. Leaders introduced a new reading scheme to encourage pupils to read at home. Due to improvements in the teaching of reading, pupils are reading with increasing confidence, accuracy and fluency.

The mathematics curriculum has been redeveloped recently. Leaders have carefully considered the important knowledge and skills they want pupils to learn and when. Most teachers possess the necessary subject knowledge to teach mathematics. It is usually taught well, but there are some inconsistencies in practice. Leaders are aware and have begun addressing this. This work is having a positive impact.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified swiftly. Leaders ensure that the right provision is in place to support pupils with SEND. Most staff have the expertise to meet the needs of pupils with SEND and modify the curriculum successfully, when necessary. Staff adopt the advice of external agencies. As a result, most pupils with SEND achieve well.

Pupils learn about healthy lifestyles and relationships. They take part in extra-curricular clubs, including basketball, football and dodgeball. Pupils value learning to play musical instruments, such as the guitar and keyboard. They take part in a range of class and whole-school performances each year. Pupils understand that others may have different beliefs and opinions to their own, and they respect these differences.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff are well trained in identifying any pupils at risk of harm. They understand the importance of safeguarding and take this role very seriously. They report any worries they have, and leaders respond to their concerns swiftly. Leaders are unafraid to challenge

other professionals when necessary if they do not receive a swift or appropriate response to the issues they have raised. They work closely with external agencies to make sure that pupils receive the support they need.

Pupils learn how to stay safe online and in the local community. They have a range of strategies to stay safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum has recently been redeveloped. In some subjects, the sequence of learning is not well planned. Some staff do not have the expertise needed to teach all aspects of the curriculum effectively. Leaders should ensure that important concepts and knowledge are organised and taught in a clear sequence over time for all subjects. They should ensure that staff have the necessary expertise to teach the whole curriculum as they intend so that pupils, including those with SEND, achieve well.

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 inspection since we judged the school to be good in January 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	123473
Local authority	Telford & Wrekin
Inspection number	10256904
Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	222
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Lynne McGuire
Headteacher	Robert Fox
Website	www.donningtonwood.com
Date of previous inspection	7 November 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school's last section 48 inspection was in March 2016. Section 48 inspections were suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. They restarted in September 2021. The next inspection will be within eight years of the last section 48 inspection.
- Leaders do not 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 her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector reviewed documents on the school's website, as well as published information about the school's performance.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, subject leaders, governors including the chair of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and a representative of the Lichfield Diocese.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, spoke to teachers,

visited lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector listened to pupils read to a familiar adult.

- The inspector met with the headteacher, who is the designated safeguarding leader. Pupils' case files were reviewed. The single central record of checks on staff's suitability to work with children was scrutinised.
- The inspector met with staff to discuss their workload and the support they receive to carry out their roles.
- The inspector spoke to pupils about how safe they feel in school and how they learn to keep themselves safe.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, and to the staff and pupil questionnaires.

Inspection team

Emma Titchener, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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