

Inspection of Dean CofE School

Dean, Workington CA14 4TH

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 June 2023

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to Dean CofE School. Leaders' vision of 'loving to learn, learning to love' is realised in pupils' positive attitudes to learning and in the way that they treat others. Pupils are kind, caring and considerate. They value the strong relationships that they have with the adults in school, and know who they can talk to if they are worried about something. Pupils, including children in the early years, are happy and safe.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils' learning. Pupils rise to these expectations. They work hard in their lessons and try their best. Pupils listen to their teachers and concentrate on their learning. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well.

Pupils take full advantage of the wide range of activities that leaders provide for them outside the academic curriculum. Leaders have ensured that these opportunities are relevant for pupils living in this area. For example, pupils enjoy outdoor activities such as sailing, tubing, swimming and paddle boarding. These experiences help pupils to develop confidence and resilience. Pupils also have the opportunity to visit cities such as London and Manchester. These visits include trips to the Houses of Parliament and to the theatre. This helps pupils to broaden their horizons.

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

Leaders have constructed a broad and ambitious curriculum from the early years to the end of Year 6. They have identified the essential knowledge for pupils to learn and the order in which this should be taught. Pupils achieve well.

Most teachers have a secure knowledge of the subjects that they teach. They choose activities and resources that interest and enthuse pupils. However, in some subjects, teachers are not sufficiently clear about the important knowledge that pupils should learn. This means that some pupils do not build and retain knowledge as securely as they could and are not as well prepared for new learning as they should be in a few subjects.

In some areas of the curriculum in the early years, teaching staff have not thought carefully enough about what they want children to learn in some activities and how that learning links to leaders' curriculum. This means that some children do not learn some of the important knowledge and skills that they need to prepare them for new learning.

Leaders identify pupils who may have additional needs quickly. They ensure that these pupils have the support that they need to successfully learn the curriculum. Staff are skilled at meeting the individual needs of pupils with SEND.

Leaders have prioritised reading from the early years through to key stage 2. Pupils read often, both in and out of school. They enjoy the books that they read and talk enthusiastically about them. Teachers and pupils recommend books to each other. This encourages pupils to read a wide variety of books, including those from a diverse range of authors and cultures. Staff have the confidence and expertise to teach the phonics curriculum consistently well. Children in the early years and pupils in key stage 1 learn sounds in a logical order. Leaders ensure that pupils who find it hard to learn and remember the letters and sounds get appropriate help to keep up with their peers. This helps pupils to become confident and fluent readers.

Pupils, including children in the early years, behave well. Some children join the school when they are two years old. They learn what behaviours are expected of them and they respond positively to the well-established routines. For example, they take turns, share and help to tidy up. Pupils are respectful, courteous, articulate and polite. They value breaktimes when they play happily together with pupils from other classes. Pupils know that adults will help them to resolve any issues quickly.

Leaders have developed a successful curriculum that supports pupils' personal development. Some pupils are members of the school council. These school councillors are proactive in helping to further improve the experiences of pupils in school. For example, they recently worked with leaders to raise funds for a new canopy for the playground to provide a sheltered space for pupils to play under. Pupils also worked with a local business to develop and create a wildlife and nature garden. These different experiences help pupils to develop a sense of responsibility and independence. Leaders support pupils' well-being effectively. For example, pupils have had mindfulness sessions and have painted pebbles with positive messages on them.

Members of the trust have supported leaders and governors effectively to drive forward school improvement. Leaders and members of the local governing body have benefited from the knowledge and expertise within the trust. Governors understand their roles and carry them out well. They hold leaders to account for the quality of education. Leaders at all levels are mindful of staff's workload and well-being. Staff enjoy working at the school and appreciate the actions that leaders take to help them to feel valued.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders, including governors and trustees, have established a culture of safeguarding across the school. They have also ensured that there are robust safeguarding monitoring procedures in place. Staff have the training that they need to identify pupils who may be at risk of harm. They understand their safeguarding responsibilities. Staff know how to report and record any concerns that they may have. Leaders act on such concerns swiftly. Specially trained staff support vulnerable pupils in school. Leaders also work with other agencies to secure additional help for pupils and their families.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including when online. Leaders work with agencies, such as the police and drug and alcohol services, to teach pupils about possible risks and dangers that they may face in society.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, teachers are not sufficiently clear about what important knowledge pupils should learn. This means that some pupils' previous learning is not as secure as it could be and they are not as well prepared for new learning. Leaders should ensure that there are further opportunities for pupils to revisit prior learning before moving on to new learning.
- In some areas of the early years curriculum, staff have not thought carefully enough about the important knowledge that they want children to acquire when devising learning activities. This means that some children do not learn some of the important knowledge and skills that they need to prepare them for new learning. Leaders should ensure that activity choices help children to learn the knowledge that they need to be better prepared for their next stage of education.

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	146756
Local authority	Cumberland
Inspection number	10267790
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	97
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Peter Ballard
Executive headteacher	Joanne Laker
Website	www.dean.cumbria.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Dean CofE School converted to become an academy school in February 2019. When its predecessor school was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be inadequate.
- This school is part of The Good Shepherd multi-academy trust.
- This Church of England school is in the Diocese of Carlisle. The most recent section 48 inspection was in November 2016.
- Leaders do not use any alternative provision.
- This school has provision for two-year-old children.

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.

- During this inspection, inspectors met with the executive headteacher, the head of school and other leaders in school. They also spoke with a range of staff.
- The lead inspector spoke with a director, the chief executive officer and a school improvement officer for the trust. She met with four governors, including the chair of the local governing body. She also spoke with representatives of the local authority and the diocese.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also considered the responses to Ofsted surveys for staff and pupils.
- The lead inspector examined a range of safeguarding documentation. She also checked records of staff's safeguarding training. Inspectors spoke to staff to check how well they understand safeguarding procedures.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktimes, in lessons and around school. They also spoke to pupils about their experiences at school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and geography. They met leaders and teachers and visited a sample of lessons. Inspectors spoke with pupils about their learning in these subjects. They also looked at examples of pupils' work. The lead inspector also considered the curriculum across some other subject areas.
- The lead inspector observed pupils reading to a trusted adult.

Inspection team

Sally Timmons, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Paul Edmondson

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023