

Inspection of Malvern Wells CofE Primary School

263 Wells Road, Malvern Wells, Worcestershire WR14 4HF

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 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	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders at Malvern Wells CofE Primary School welcome everyone. Pupils feel safe, enjoy life at school and thrive. Parents and carers share their children's enthusiasm for the education provided. They value how well staff treat pupils as individuals.

Leaders have high expectations for staff and pupils alike. They have planned an ambitious curriculum for all pupils, including for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The curriculum vision is to be 'Malvern centric, globally expansive'. School trips, such as visits to places of worship, enrich pupils' learning and help them to understand the wider world. Pupils develop their reading widely and fluently.

Leaders encourage pupils to consider the effect of what they do on the school community. Pupils understand the behaviour policy and think that it is fair. As a result, they behave well in lessons and at social times. Pupils know that there are always adults to talk to and that teachers deal with any bullying straight away. They learn to debate differing points of view, and they become articulate, enthusiastic learners.

Pupils enjoy a very wide range of extra-curricular activities, including in sport and music. They have planned opportunities to serve others in the wider community and to raise money for charity.

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

Leaders ensure that learning to read is an absolute priority. From the early years onwards, pupils follow a structured phonics programme. This programme ensures that pupils learn about letters and their sounds in a logical order. Adults pronounce sounds accurately and expect pupils to do likewise. They check effectively on how pupils are learning. Staff work closely with parents and pupils to read frequently to an adult. They provide effective support for any pupils at risk of falling behind. Books are well matched to pupils' knowledge of phonics. Pupils quickly become fluent readers.

Across the school, pupils enjoy a good range of fiction and non-fiction texts. Teachers pay due attention to different reading skills. This helps pupils to develop a strong appreciation of the purposes and joys of reading.

Pupils study all the subjects in the national curriculum. Leaders have designed learning well so that it builds on what pupils already know. Teachers plan the day-to-day activities for pupils so that they meet leaders' longer-term learning aims. Pupils enjoy the links between different subjects and how they relate to their own experience. For example, in geography, learners in upper key stage 2 were able to draw on their recent residential visit to Eryri National Park. Children's learning moves easily from one key stage to the next.

Teachers know their subjects well. From Reception, staff identify an ambitious vocabulary for pupils to learn. Staff present knowledge clearly. Teachers make good use of resources and encourage pupils to become independent learners. Teachers check on what pupils know and remember. For example, pupils use mini whiteboards to show what they know. In lessons, discussion helps pupils to deepen their understanding. Pupils learn well, in part because the work truly interests them, and they want to learn more.

Leaders have identified the needs of pupils with SEND effectively. They make sure that teachers know how best to meet these additional needs. As a result, these pupils follow the full curriculum and learn well.

The relationships between staff and pupils are strong. Staff develop pupils' positive behaviours consistently from the start of the early years. As a result, pupils behave well, and disruption to learning is rare. Pupils show consideration for each other and courtesy to adults. Staff quickly build relationships with pupils who join the school, including those with challenging behaviour. When it is necessary, pupils are supported with their behavioural needs and soon meet the school's high expectations.

Staff provide a high quality of pastoral care. Pupils follow a planned programme of personal, social and health education (PSHE). This teaches pupils about healthy relationships and how to treat others. Leaders know the importance of teaching about different traditions and cultures. Pupils learn about this, predominantly in religious education.

The headteacher has tackled the issues identified in the previous inspection report with great energy and good judgement. She has secured the confidence and commitment of staff. Leaders have made good use of support provided by the local authority. To date, however, there has been little opportunity for other staff in the school to receive the training they need to develop leadership roles. Governors are highly focused and provide an effective oversight of the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that staff are well trained in safeguarding. All staff understand the procedures for reporting concerns. When appropriate, leaders have provided additional guidance for parents.

Leaders take effective and appropriate action to help children. When necessary, they take appropriate steps to involve other agencies. The school keeps accurate records of all safeguarding concerns. Leaders make the required checks on the staff who join the school.

Teachers make sure that pupils learn about potential risks they may face, including when using the internet. Pupils have the confidence to talk to adults if they are worried.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some staff, especially in subject leadership roles, have not had enough opportunity to develop their leadership skills. As a result, too much responsibility has fallen to the headteacher. Leaders should identify and train the leadership skills that all staff require to contribute effectively to the school.

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	116902
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10268266
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	86
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Karen Surrall
Headteacher	Jen Alford
Website	www.malvern-wells.worcs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	9 and 10 July 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Malvern Wells CofE Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school. Pupils are taught in mixed-age classes. There is considerable variation in the number of pupils in each year group.
- The school is a Church of England faith school within the Diocese of Worcester. The religious character of the school was last inspected in November 2019. The next section 48 inspection will take place before November 2027.
- The headteacher took up her post in September 2022.
- A significant number of pupils join the school other than at normal points of transfer. A high proportion of these are pupils with SEND.
- The school runs a breakfast club and an after-school club.
- Leaders do not make use of any alternative provision.

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.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher. Meetings were held with curriculum leaders and the special educational needs coordinator.
- The chair, vice chair and one other governor met with the lead inspector. The lead inspector spoke over the telephone with a representative of the local authority, and with a representative of the diocese.
- The inspectors spoke with pupils at social times, and with groups of pupils more formally.
- The lead inspector looked at the school's procedures for recruiting and checking on staff suitability to work with children when inspecting safeguarding. He also considered the effectiveness of staff training and the procedures to keep pupils safe.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including leaders' plans to improve the school and records of governing body meetings. They also reviewed the school's attendance and behaviour records.
- The inspectors took account of responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's questionnaire for parents. An inspector met with parents outside the school on the second day of the inspection. The inspectors also considered responses to Ofsted's surveys for pupils.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, art, and geography. For each deep dive, an inspector discussed the curriculum with the subject leader, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to staff, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- An inspector listened to a sample of pupils from Years 1, 2 and 3 reading.

Inspection team

Martin Spoor, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Susan Hughes

Ofsted Inspector

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