

Inspection of Coton-in-the-Elms C of E Primary School

Elmslea Avenue, Coton-in-the-Elms, Swadlincote, Derbyshire DE12 8HE

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 June 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Coton-in-the-Elms C of E Primary School are keen to learn. They show positive attitudes to all aspects of school life. They like the new behaviour system leaders have established and say that it is fair. Pupils are motivated to work hard and keep to the school rules by the many rewards on offer. Everyone wants to have hot chocolate with the headteacher. Pupils know that the 'golden dove' award is given to the pupils who are shining lights in the school.

The new leadership team has raised the expectations of what pupils can achieve, both academically and personally. Pupils' personal development is exceptional. Leaders have a clear vision for the characteristics they want pupils to develop. Staff make sure that pupils have the support they need to succeed. They regularly go above and beyond to make sure that every pupil is safe, happy and ready to learn.

Relationships between adults and pupils are based on trust and respect. Pupils are kind to each other. They know that staff expect them to have good manners at all times. Pupils are proud of their school. They talk enthusiastically about their learning and the exciting opportunities they are given.

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

Leaders have worked at speed to improve the curriculum. Across the range of subjects taught, plans now define what pupils need to know and remember. Clear consideration has been given to the order in which new learning is taught. Most of these curriculum plans were implemented at the start of this academic year.

Leaders provide staff with training opportunities to develop the knowledge and skills they need to deliver the curriculum effectively. Teachers provide activities that engage pupils in their learning. In geography, Year 2 pupils use a pirate map to learn about direction by using four points of the compass. Year 3 pupils use globes and atlases to locate countries in the northern and southern hemispheres. Teachers routinely check that pupils remember prior learning. 'Can you still?' activities identify pupils who have not retained the intended learning.

Leaders have introduced a new phonics programme. Teachers now use a consistent approach to teach pupils the sounds they need to know to learn to read. Pupils who struggle to remember new sounds receive extra help. Pupils have regular opportunities to develop their reading fluency and comprehension skills. Teachers read to pupils. Texts are chosen with care to include a wide range of authors and to promote a greater understanding of diversity. Pupils enjoy using the well-resourced library. School librarians take great pride in keeping the library tidy for others to use.

Children in the Reception class are enthusiastic learners. Teachers provide children with engaging activities across the seven areas of learning. In the classroom, children use their knowledge of phonics to write their own version of 'Goldilocks and

the Three Bears'. In the much-improved outdoor area, children use bricks to build castles for the bears in the story. While teachers have clear goals for what they want pupils to learn, these are not precisely broken down for every aspect of the early years curriculum plans.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils with SEND are identified quickly. Appropriate support is put in place so that they can succeed. Their targets are reviewed regularly so that further adaptations can be made where needed. Pupils with SEND are included in all aspects of school life.

Pupils have many thoughtfully planned experiences beyond the academic curriculum. There are lots of clubs and activities on offer. Year 4 and Year 6 pupils go on residential trips to experience outdoor pursuits and to develop their team-building skills. Year 5 pupils take part in an overnight 'space camp' in the school hall. Some clubs are targeted to support the emotional and social needs of pupils. Pupils can join the gardening and mindfulness club. Pupils are invited to go on a 'well-being' walk around the village at lunchtime so that they have a chance to talk to a member of staff. Pupils learn about the faiths and beliefs of others. They show a genuine interest in, and respect for, how others choose to live their lives.

Governors and staff appreciate leaders' clear vision to improve the school. Governors check that the changes leaders make are the right ones. They have offered support and robust challenge as this vital work has been completed. The vast majority of staff agree that leaders have considered their workload and well-being along the way.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that keeping pupils safe is everyone's responsibility. Staff know pupils and their families well. They are well trained to identify the signs that pupils may be at risk of harm or need support for their well-being. Staff waste no time in passing their concerns on. They keep detailed records. Safeguarding leaders take the right action. They secure help for pupils and their families. They seek advice from external agencies when it is needed. Governors take an active interest in the school's safeguarding arrangements. They hold leaders to account for the effectiveness of this aspect of the school's work.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a large majority of subjects, the curriculum is very new. It was implemented in September 2022. It is not yet clear that its design is helping pupils to remember the intended learning in the longer term so that they can make connections

between new learning and prior learning. Leaders should continue their determined work to closely monitor the impact of the curriculum and make further adaptations to the curriculum, where they are needed, so that pupils' knowledge deepens over time.

- Some aspects of the early years curriculum do not identify precisely what children need to know and remember. It is not clear how learning in this key stage provides a foundation for what pupils will learn in later years. Leaders must ensure that this key knowledge is specifically identified and included in curriculum plans for every subject.

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	112812
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10254767
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	137
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Leila Ainge and Stephanie Marbrow
Headteacher	Lisa McIntosh
Website	www.coton-in-the-elms.derbyshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	9 February 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, there have been significant changes to the school's senior leadership team. A new headteacher, deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher were appointed in September 2022.
- Co-chairs of the governing body took up position in September 2022.
- The school is a Church of England school in the Diocese of Derby. The school received its last section 48 inspection under the Education Act for schools of a religious character in February 2017, when this aspect of the school's work was graded outstanding.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher. The lead inspector met with the co-chairs of the governing body and held a telephone conversation with the school's senior education adviser for the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics, geography and computing. For each deep dive, inspectors 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. An inspector also listened to some pupils reading to a member of staff.
- Inspectors considered the effectiveness of safeguarding through discussions with designated safeguarding leaders, staff, governors and pupils. The lead inspector reviewed records relating to safeguarding, including pre-employment checks on staff.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, around the school and at lunchtime. They spoke with pupils and members of staff about expectations of behaviour.
- Inspectors considered responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. An inspector spoke with parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors also reviewed responses to the staff survey. There were no responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

Caroline Poole, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Clive Lawrence

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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