

Inspection of Old Cleeve CofE School, Washford

Washford, Watchet, Somerset TA23 0PB

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 July 2023

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

Ofsted has not previously inspected Old Cleeve CofE School, Washford as an academy school under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 as, until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections.

Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection of the predecessor school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils flourish at this friendly, family oriented school. They make a flying start from the moment they arrive to the school, in Nursery. Pupils go on to achieve well. Staff know each pupil as an individual. They use this knowledge to make learning relevant for each pupil's interests and starting points, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). As a result, pupils' experiences reflect the school's values to 'achieve, thrive, care and belong'.

Staff expect a lot of pupils. Pupils respond positively. They show strong attitudes to their learning and behave particularly well around the school. Occasionally, some pupils need reminding to try their hardest in lessons. Pupils and parents agree that bullying is exceptionally rare. Pupils say they are happy and that everyone looks out for one another. They recognise that staff swiftly resolve any issues on the rare occasions when this is necessary. Consequently, pupils enjoy playing, learning and growing together.

Parents are positive about the experiences their children have. They believe their children are safe and well looked after. They recognise that staff provide unique and targeted support for their children. Parents rightly say that their children are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

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

Old Cleeve is a strong and improving school. Trust and school leaders have worked together determinedly to turn around a previous decline in standards. Current leaders have raised expectations and improved the school systematically. Leaders have secured the support and enthusiasm of all. Staff feel, and are, valued. As a result, the curriculum has improved, pupils are learning more and there is strong engagement from all members of the school community.

Leaders have designed an effective curriculum. They have focused on developing effective subject leadership. Leaders have changed the way they plan the curriculum. This has raised expectations and ensured that learning is sequenced appropriately. Teachers utilise this planning to promote pupils' learning across subjects in meaningful ways. As a result, pupils, including those with SEND, remember relevant knowledge and achieve well.

Nevertheless, leaders know there is more to do. They recognise that subject planning now needs refinement so that pupils can learn more and with greater understanding. For example, in physical education (PE), pupils learn about techniques to improve their performance. However, they do not learn as much about tactics and how to make good decisions when under pressure in games.

Reading has the highest priority across all areas of school life. High-quality texts underpin planning in the early years, English and wider curriculum areas. Leaders

have established a robust programme for teaching reading. Pupils learn to read rapidly as a result. When pupils are at risk of falling behind, staff utilise strong assessment and targeted support to ensure they keep up. Pupils learn to love reading. They say they enjoy the books their teachers share with them, as well as the opportunity to meet authors in school and online.

Children flourish from the moment they start in the highly effective, nurturing early years provision. Early years leaders are highly ambitious. This is reflected in the carefully planned, rigorous curriculum. Staff deliver leaders' ambition consistently well and with skill and enthusiasm. Language and communication underpin precisely designed learning areas across the indoor and outdoor spaces. Staff promote high expectations through the positive relationships they establish with every child. Staff ensure that children make the most of every learning opportunity provided. Children love the chance to learn and explore through very well-planned activities. They develop mature attitudes to learning and are exceptionally well prepared for key stage 1.

Pupils' wider development is promoted well. Leaders ensure that all learning and extra-curricular activities are accessible to all pupils. For example, pupils appreciate the range of clubs and how they can learn about keeping healthy in PE. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is stimulated very effectively through regular school and church calendar events. Teachers help pupils reflect on big ideas and more complex concepts, either through 'thunks' or during lively collective worship. Pupils learn about different cultures, diversity and fundamental British values. Trips and visits are utilised, whenever possible, to enrich and enhance pupils' learning. For example, pupils talk positively about visiting varying places of worship, including Hindu temples and churches.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established a highly vigilant safeguarding culture. There are robust policies and procedures in place to safeguard pupils. Staff are well trained and know what they should do if they have a concern. Detailed records are kept and followed up. Leaders work effectively with other agencies.

Safer recruitment processes are effective. Appropriate checks are made on new staff and recorded diligently. Those in governance positions ensure that all statutory expectations are met and that policy is followed precisely.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have redesigned and replanned several elements of the school's curriculum. This has helped to raise expectations and improve pupils' learning.

However, some elements of the curriculum remain new or overly focused on specific elements of knowledge. Leaders should continue to embed and develop their new curriculum so that pupils' outcomes continue to improve across all subjects.

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

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| Unique reference number | 140636 |
| Local authority | Somerset |
| Inspection number | 10267907 |
| Type of school | Infant |
| School category | Academy converter |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 9 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 116 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of trust | Andrew Giles |
| Headteacher | Emma Murch |
| Website | www.oldcleevecofefirstschool.co.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 19 November 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection of the predecessor school, there have been three changes in headteacher. The current headteacher joined the school in June 2021.
- The school uses one unregistered alternative provider.
- Old Cleeve is a Church of England academy within the Diocese of Bath and Wells. The last section 48 inspection of the school's religious character was in January 2016. The school's next section 48 inspection is due in the next 6 months from the date of this inspection.
- The school became an academy in March 2014.

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 various leaders, including the headteacher and the special educational needs coordinator and the trust lead for reading. They also spoke to a range of staff.
- Inspectors met with the CEO of the Beacon Education Multi Academy Trust. They met with two representatives from the trust board and two members of the parent and community group, who provide local governance.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, geography and PE. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector also heard a selection of pupils read.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors checked the single central record of recruitment checks, talked to leaders responsible for safeguarding and checked records relating to safeguarding. Inspectors also talked to a range of staff and pupils informally.
- Inspectors took into account the responses to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire and free-text responses. They also reviewed responses to the staff and pupil surveys.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including leaders' evaluations, documents relating to the work of the trust, reports provided by external consultants and information about the school's curriculum.

Inspection team

Matthew Barnes, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Tom Brewer

Ofsted Inspector

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