

# Inspection of a good school: Cotford St Luke Primary School

Bethell Mead, Cotford St Luke, Taunton, Somerset TA4 1HZ

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Inspection dates:

3 and 4 October 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. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and proud of their school. They view Cotford St Luke Primary School as a place where staff care about them and know them well. All pupils are included in all aspects of school life. Older pupils value helping younger pupils at lunchtimes as well as during 'buddy reading' sessions.

Pupils are polite and respectful. They feel safe and know adults will help them if they have any concerns. Bullying is well understood by pupils. Peer mediators are trained to help support any conflict. Incidents are rare. However, some pupils and parents think issues could be resolved more swiftly.

The school has worked on the design of the curriculum to promote high expectations for all pupils. However, this work is in the early stages. The curriculum does not yet support pupils to build their knowledge well enough across all subjects.

Pupils enjoy a range of opportunities to develop their talents, such as gymnastics and football club. They appreciate pupil leadership roles, including house captains and school council members. They know they make a difference to their school. For example, school council members are currently raising money for new playground equipment.

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

The school is determined for pupils to succeed. It has worked on developing the curriculum to identify and sequence the knowledge it wants pupils to learn. In some subjects, such as mathematics, the precise knowledge the school wants pupils to know and remember is mapped out clearly. This starts in the early years. For example, the children in Nursery enjoy listening to 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears' to deepen their understanding of numbers up to three. However, in some other subjects, the curriculum

design does not make clear the precise knowledge pupils need to learn. It does not yet help pupils deepen their understanding over time. As a result, pupils do not learn as well across all subjects.

Teachers use strategies to help pupils learn. These include opportunities for pupils to practise new learning that builds on prior learning. For example, in mathematics, pupils have an 'initial task' that recaps what they have learned before. This helps pupils to embed new knowledge. However, teachers do not use assessment across all subjects well enough to check what pupils know and remember. As a result, some pupils have gaps in their knowledge. This stalls progress for pupils.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are included in all aspects of school life. However, these pupils and their needs are not identified quickly enough. Adaptations to learning are not always in place to enable these pupils to learn well alongside their peers. As a result, some pupils with SEND do not get all the support they need to keep up or catch up.

The school promotes a culture of reading. This starts in the early years, where children enjoy a range of books. They choose books with their parents from the class library to take home and read together. The new phonics scheme is helping pupils learn to read. Staff receive the training they need to teach the scheme effectively. Pupils read books that match the sounds they know. This helps them to become confident readers. However, a small group of older pupils do not get all the support they need to grasp the basics of reading. Gaps in the phonics code are not addressed quickly enough. Consequently, these pupils find it harder to access the curriculum.

Pupils know the school routines well. This begins in the early years, where children settle in well. Most pupils across the school show positive attitudes to their learning. The school is starting to put support in place to help pupils with the most challenging behaviour. However, it is still early days and the number of suspensions remain high.

Pupils are supported well to develop beyond the academic curriculum. They are taught how to keep themselves safe both online and in the wider world. Pupils know the importance of keeping healthy and eating a balanced diet. They learn about differences and protected characteristics. As a result, they are inclusive of each other, and they know the importance of treating people fairly.

All staff are proud to work at this school. They value the consideration of well-being and workload from leaders and governors. Staff benefit from training, such as from the English hub, to support the teaching of the curriculum.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school has not identified and sequenced the essential knowledge it wants pupils to know and remember over time in some subjects. As a result, pupils have gaps in their knowledge and find it hard to remember their learning. The school must ensure that the precise knowledge it wants pupils to learn is identified and sequenced and that assessment is used effectively to check that pupils are learning the curriculum well.
- The school has not ensured that pupils with SEND are identified swiftly enough. As a result, these pupils do not benefit from the early support they need to help them catch up, including when learning to read. The school must ensure that pupils' needs are identified and check that they receive the support they need to learn.
- Support for those pupils with challenging behaviour has not been effective in reducing the number of suspensions. As a result, these remain too high and pupils are not getting the support they need. The school needs to analyse the cause of poor behaviour and put effective support in place to reduce suspensions.

## 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in April 2018.

## 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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and](#)

[protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	133560
<b>Local authority</b>	Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	10297963
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	255
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Ruth Evans
<b>Headteacher</b>	Michael Wright
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.cotfordstlukeprimary.co.uk">www.cotfordstlukeprimary.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	17 and 18 April 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, there has been a change in headteacher. The headteacher joined the school in September 2023.
- Cotford St Luke Primary School is an average-sized primary school. Pupils are taught in a variety of single- and mixed-age classes.
- The school has nursery provision for two-year-olds. This provision has opened since the previous inspection.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school provides a before- and after-school club.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.

- The inspector spoke with school leaders, subject leaders, parents, pupils, governors and representatives from local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector 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.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspector listened to pupils read to a trusted adult.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. Additionally, the inspector spoke to pupils to discuss their views about the school.
- The inspector considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online survey for parents. The inspector considered comments made by parents online during the inspection and met with some parents at the start of the second day. The inspector also considered responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils and staff.

### **Inspection team**

Esther Best, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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