

Inspection of Lovington Church of England Primary School

Lovington, Castle Cary, Somerset BA7 7PX

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 October 2023

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Inadequate

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are not receiving an acceptable standard of education. The curriculum they follow lacks ambition and teaching is poorly planned. Pupils do not learn and remember more over time because the curriculum does not take into account their starting points or level of understanding. It does not support pupils to build the essential knowledge they need to be successful.

Despite the poor quality of education that pupils experience, they enjoy coming to school. Pupils enjoy their social times and participate in a range of play activities. They share equipment and take turns. Pupils interact positively with each other and incidents of derogatory language are rare. Staff, most of whom are new to the school, have quickly formed positive relationships with pupils. However, staff do not have high enough expectations of pupils' attitudes to their learning. As a result, some pupils disrupt the learning of others.

The school organises events where pupils give back to their community. For example, they often serve refreshments to parents and visitors. The school's values are reflected in the strong links it has with the local church. Pupils enjoy attending seasonal services, such as the Harvest Festival.

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

In many subjects, the important knowledge that pupils need to know has not been identified. Some staff do not have the subject expertise they need to plan and teach the curriculum in a way that supports all pupils to learn it successfully. They do not use assessment to check what pupils have learned and remembered. Therefore, teaching does not take account of pupils' misconceptions or where gaps exist in their subject knowledge. Therefore, these persist.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) follow a limited curriculum. They do not develop their knowledge in a broad range of subjects in the depth they require for future learning. Additionally, staff are not well informed about the needs of such pupils. Therefore, they do not plan or adapt their teaching to meet these needs.

From Reception Year, children learn how to read through an agreed phonics curriculum. However, pupils do not have sufficient opportunity to practise and consolidate their understanding of phonics. The books pupils read do not always match the sounds they know. Some staff do not know how best to support pupils to read with fluency and confidence. Therefore, when pupils fall behind, they do not receive focused, specific support to help them to catch up. Consequently, some pupils do not learn to read well.

Pupils are encouraged to read for pleasure outside of school. Staff regularly share stories with pupils. However, the school does not ensure that pupils consistently read a range of rich and diverse texts.

Pupils consider topics that are beneficial to their wider development. For example, they learn how to form positive relationships with others and know how to keep themselves safe, including when online. They know what it means to be a responsible citizen and why it is important to treat others with respect. However, the school does not check how well this curriculum is taught and whether pupils develop a secure understanding of all the issues relevant to their personal development.

Some pupils take on leadership roles by becoming worship leaders or members of the school council, for example. This gives them the confidence to express their views and represent their peers. Pupils also benefit from residential visits and educational trips. However, there are few extra-curricular opportunities for pupils to develop their talents and interests.

Governors do not have a strong oversight of the school. They have not held leaders to account or taken effective action to support staff well-being. Most staff, including senior leaders, are new this academic year. They are motivated to make the required improvements and are beginning to tackle the weaknesses in the quality of education. However, as this is at a very early stage, there has been little impact on pupils' experiences of learning.

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's curriculum has limited ambition. The school has not identified the most important knowledge that pupils need to learn and the order in which they do so. As a result, pupils do not build their subject knowledge over time. The school must ensure that there is a well-planned, ambitious curriculum in place and that assessment is used to check how successfully pupils learn it.
- Some staff do not have the expertise they need to teach the different subjects of the curriculum well. They are not well equipped to identify and remedy the gaps in pupils' knowledge or their misconceptions. The school must ensure that all staff have the subject knowledge they need to plan and teach the curriculum effectively.
- Staff are not well informed about the needs of pupils with SEND. Moreover, such pupils follow a limited curriculum. Therefore, pupils do not develop the depth and breadth of knowledge that they need in all subjects. The school must ensure that

staff know how to support pupils with SEND to learn a wide range of subjects in depth.

- Governors have not done enough to tackle the weaknesses that exist in the school. They have not held leaders to account or had sufficient oversight of the quality of education that pupils receive. Consequently, standards have continued to decline. Governors must ensure they have an accurate picture of the quality of provision that pupils experience, so that they can hold the school to account for it.
- The school may not appoint early career teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

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

Unique reference number	123766
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	10288157
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	38
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Tony Dalby-Welsh
Headteacher	Graeme Wilson
Website	www.fossefederation.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 July 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has an interim executive headteacher and a head of school who took up their roles in September 2023.
- Lovington Primary is a Church of England school. The last section 48 inspection took place in June 2017.
- The school is part of the Fosse Federation of Schools.
- 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.
- In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held discussions with the executive headteacher, head of school, the special educational needs coordinator, subject leaders, members of the local governing body, a representative from the local authority and a representative from Bath and Wells Diocese.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, and geography. 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.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: 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.
- Inspectors considered responses to the online survey for parents and carers, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. Inspectors also considered responses to the staff survey and responses to the survey for pupils.

Inspection team

Kelly Olive, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Kevin Martin

Ofsted Inspector

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