

Inspection of Ilmington CofE Primary School

Back Street, Ilmington, Shipston-on-Stour, Warwickshire CV36 4LJ

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 February 2024

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	Outstanding

This school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 11 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between graded inspections under section 5 of the Act. 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 graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Ilmington CofE Primary school is a caring school at the heart of its community. Pupils enjoy attending. They know the school rules and values. The school motto, 'believe in being better' shines through.

Pupils behave very well around school and in lessons. Older pupils 'buddy' with younger pupils to help them settle quickly into school life. Pupils say that they can always be honest with the adults in school. They value opportunities to talk if they have a worry. As a result, they feel safe and listened to. Many love to spend time with Albi, the school's therapy dog.

The school has high expectations for all, both academically and for personal development. Pupils enjoy living up to these expectations. They are well supported in their mixed-age classrooms and achieve well.

Pupils enjoy taking on a range of responsibilities. For example, they can be school librarians, mental health ambassadors or eco-councillors. Pupils enjoy working towards badges as part of the 'Ilmington 11' challenges. For example, pupils can achieve badges for being 'church mice' or 'international friends'. Pupils value the life-long skills they build up through the 'learning toolkit'. Through these, and other opportunities, pupils learn to become positive, active citizens in their local community and the world beyond.

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

The school is determined that every pupil will thrive. There is a very well-considered and cohesive offer for all, which goes beyond the academic curriculum.

The school's personal development work, rooted in the early years, is a real strength. Relationships between adults and pupils are strong and built on mutual respect. Pupils build skills in their 'learner toolkit' such as 'pondering' and 'perseverance'. Children in Reception know not to give up if they do not succeed the first time and older pupils understand that these skills will help them in later life. Pupils are aspirational and the school ensures that they learn about different career paths.

Very carefully thought-out transition into Reception means that children settle into school quickly and are ready to learn. Children in Reception enjoy activities such as visits to the seaside, blackberry picking in the village and making crumble. All pupils benefit from trips to the local theatre. Established links with local secondary school music groups and sporting competitions broaden pupils' interests and talents.

The school has developed an ambitious curriculum. The important knowledge that pupils need to learn has been clearly identified and carefully sequenced. Pupils learn the right things at the right time. This starts in Reception. For example, children

delight in problem solving when building dragons to help them celebrate Chinese New Year. They use their knowledge of numbers and measures to compare different dragons they have drawn and made.

The school is developing how it checks that pupils have learned what is laid out in the curriculum. For example, in history, 'sticky knowledge' quizzes and other low-stakes tasks help pupils to recall learning, so they know and remember more. In mathematics, pupils in Year 5 recall previous learning about times tables and connect it to new learning about fractions.

As soon as children start in Reception, they begin learning to read. All pupils spoken to delight in reading and thoroughly enjoy the wide range of books and authors planned across the curriculum and available for them to read themselves. Well-trained staff deliver the phonics scheme. Regular assessments check the sounds that pupils know and any pupils at risk of falling behind are quickly identified. Very effective support is put in place so that they can achieve well.

The school ensures that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) learn happily alongside their classmates. However, their individual targets, which outline what they are expected to achieve each term, are sometimes not set or reviewed in line with the school's own policy. That said, strong classroom practice means that staff know pupils' needs well. They are skilful in making any necessary adaptations so that all pupils can achieve.

Leaders and governors have made many very positive changes since the previous inspection, which have benefited pupils and staff. However, there are some small instances where intended actions are not carried out or checked as thoroughly as they could be.

The school has strong links with the local community. Pupils learn that they can make a difference. For example, pupils have designed a village calendar which is sold in the community shop. They make scones and serve afternoon tea to elderly 'village friends'. School 'houses' vote for charities to fundraise for. Visiting paramedics teach first aid skills and pupils in Years 5 and 6 make links with pen-pals in France. These opportunities, and a wealth of others, mean that pupils are being incredibly well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school knows pupils and their families well. There is an established culture of safeguarding to keep pupils safe from harm. Staff have received appropriate training and there are systems in place to report any concerns they may have. However, some actions relating to ensuring that the most vulnerable pupils are kept as safe and supported as well as they could be have sometimes been missed. In addition, some aspects relating to the administration of safer recruitment checks have not

been overseen carefully enough by those responsible for leadership, including governance. These concerns were resolved before the end of the inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Although the culture of safeguarding means that pupils are kept safe, in a few instances, safeguarding arrangements lack some rigour and oversight. Because of this, there is the potential for some safeguarding actions to be missed. The school needs to ensure that all those responsible for carrying out and overseeing safeguarding understand and fulfil their roles effectively and that there are suitably rigorous and systematic arrangements to maintain the culture of safeguarding.
- The school does not always check that all of the actions it intends to take are followed through well enough, for example in terms of setting and checking the targets and provision for pupils with SEND. This means that some intended processes are not always followed carefully to bring about the best outcomes. Leaders at all levels should ensure that where they identify an action that they need to take or a process that they want to put in place they ensure that these are carried out as intended.

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	125637
Local authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	10294554
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	117
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Andrew Trotman
Headteacher	Paul Crouch
Website	www.ilmingtonschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	November 2012, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school uses no alternative provision.
- The school runs on-site before-school provision.
- The school received its last section 48 inspection of church schools in September 2017. The next inspection is scheduled for the academic year 2024/2025.

Information about this inspection

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

- 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 lead inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspectors carried out deep dives into these subjects: reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector met with

subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans where they were available, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector also listened to pupils read to a familiar adult.

- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher other senior leaders.
- The lead inspector met with the chair and representatives of the governing body and spoke to representatives of the local authority and Coventry diocese.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lessons, around the school and at lunchtime. The inspectors spoke to pupils about pupils' behaviour.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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.
- The inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including parent free-text responses. The inspectors also took account of responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.
- The inspectors talked to parents and families at the school gate.

Inspection team

Rachel Henrick, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Sara Arkle

Ofsted Inspector

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