

Inspection of Malvern Wyche CofE Primary School

Lower Wyche Road, Malvern, Worcestershire WR14 4ET

Inspection dates: 26–27 February 2020

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

The previous 'outstanding' judgement reflected the school's overall effectiveness in May 2009 under the relevant inspection framework at that time.

The new judgement of 'good' reflects the current framework as well as any changes at the school since the last inspection.

The school has not been inspected for over 10 years, which is longer than the five-year maximum interval between inspections. Changes in school effectiveness may have happened at any point in that period. The long time between inspections is because the law changed in 2011; it made outstanding schools exempt from routine inspections.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils flourish socially, academically and emotionally in this small and caring school. This is due to the dedication, commitment and hard work of the headteacher and his staff.

Pupils thrive on the range of unique and exciting opportunities provided. They write and record their own songs in the school's recording station. They also present live broadcasts to audiences, such as Birmingham Children's Hospital, from the well-equipped school radio station.

Leaders and teachers are knowledgeable in many areas. They are ambitious for pupils. They deliver different subjects very well. These capture pupils' interests and help all pupils to achieve high standards. However, pupils do not achieve as well in phonics or spelling as they do in other subjects.

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. They appreciate the attention paid to developing pupils' self-esteem and confidence.

Pupils' conduct around school and their attitudes to learning are excellent. They work hard, are polite and respectful. Their attendance is above average as pupils enjoy school.

Pupils feel safe and state that bullying 'definitely' does not happen. Pupils maturely try to resolve minor disputes themselves in the first instance. If this is not successful, they are confident that staff will sort out any issues.

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

The headteacher and staff are a united and close-knit team. Together, they have created an innovative, exciting and effective curriculum. It centres on projects, known as 'vehicles', that put the personal and social development of pupils at the heart of learning. This is because leaders hold a resolute belief that these are the skills pupils need to be successful in life. Extensive research underpins the curriculum. It ensures that all pupils receive a rich and memorable education.

Strong links between subjects help pupils to remember their learning. Activities are often practical and linked to real life. For example, in learning about the circulatory system in science, pupils made 'blood cocktails'. Learning built successfully on previous work. Consequently, pupils could describe the functions of cells, platelets and plasma clearly. Historical links were made through discussion about the use of leeches. This clear sequencing of learning, coupled with skilled and dynamic teaching, is replicated in all subjects.

Reading is strongly promoted from the outset. Children are given book bags before joining school and take books home from day one. Pupils read regularly in school and at home. Events and activities help pupils develop a love of reading. However,

phonics lessons are not as well planned or structured as they could be. For example, early sounds are not taught well or in the right order. This means that pupils do not become fluent readers as soon as they could do because they cannot confidently break down unfamiliar words.

A good mix of computer and hand-written work is planned to develop pupils' writing skills. They write for a range of audiences and real purposes. They use effective vocabulary and edit their work meticulously. Nevertheless, too many pupils struggle with spelling. This reduces the quality and accuracy of their work.

Across the school, pupils achieve well in mathematics. They use a range of practical equipment to help them deepen their understanding. They become confident and accurate in their mental and written calculations.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are fully included in all aspects of school life. The additional support they receive from school staff and other professionals ensures that they achieve extremely well.

Pupils' behaviour is excellent. In lessons, pupils are keen to do their best. They take responsibility for their own behaviour and work closely with other pupils. Their team spirit is very strong. Older pupils readily take on school roles, including looking after younger pupils.

A strength of the school is the range of experiences that staff provide. Trips and clubs are planned in association with the projects which pupils study. Pupils often use their own ideas to extend their skills. For example, pupils created a pack about animal protection and adopted two leemars following their visit to Bristol Zoo. The link with a partner school in Tanzania helps pupils appreciate and learn about other cultures.

Learning in the early years is active and fun. Children achieve well. They quickly develop high levels of concentration and perseverance. Effective links are established with parents from the outset. The early years curriculum mirrors the strong approach to cross-curricular learning seen in other year groups. During our visit, children showed a keen interest in their work about castles. Communication and language are developed well, with all staff modelling language well and checking children's understanding. The seeds for excellent behaviour and independence are successfully sown in the early years.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and governors make sure that safeguarding is at the forefront of their work. Pupils are well looked after. Leaders have developed clear systems for checking that staff and governors have the training they need to take the right action to keep pupils safe. Recruitment checks are stringent and well organised. Pupils feel safe

and understand how to keep themselves safe. They talk confidently about staying safe online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The teaching of phonics, especially for those pupils who struggle to learn sounds, is not sequenced or delivered well enough. Pupils lack confidence to break down and blend unfamiliar words. Pupils also lack fluency in their reading. Leaders should ensure that a rigorous and sequential approach to teaching phonics is implemented and that all staff are trained to deliver this effectively.
- Weak spelling reduces the quality of pupils' written work, which is often otherwise very good. Teachers should equip pupils with spelling strategies to help improve the accuracy of their writing.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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 | 116830 |
| Local authority | Worcestershire |
| Inspection number | 10122612 |
| 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 | 141 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Mark Hughes |
| Headteacher | Geoffrey Rutherford |
| Website | www.wyche.worcs.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 13 May 2009, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- There have been no significant changes since the previous inspection.
- The date of the school's most recent Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) was 27 June 2019. The school was graded as good.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

- We met with the headteacher, curriculum leaders, teachers and pupils.
- The lead inspector met with members of the local governing body, including the chair of governors.
- The subjects considered as part of this inspection were reading, writing, mathematics and history. These deep dives entailed meeting with subject leaders and teachers, looking at curriculum plans, visiting lessons, speaking to pupils about their learning and scrutinising pupils' work.

- The lead inspector listened to pupils read and looked at other subjects with the headteacher. The headteacher and deputy headteacher joined us on lesson visits.
- The arrangements for safeguarding were checked. This included checks on the single central record, staff training and safeguarding records.
- We discussed behaviour with leaders and checked records. Records of attendance were also checked. We also observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, at breaktimes and as they moved around the school.
- Checks of the school's website were also made together with publicly available pupil performance information.
- We talked with pupils in lessons and during meetings about their work.
- We took account of the 68 responses to Ofsted's survey, Parent view.
- Staff and pupil views were considered through discussion over the two days of inspection.

Inspection team

Heather Simpson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Paul Whitcombe

Ofsted Inspector

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