

Inspection of Himbleton CofE Primary School and Nursery

Neight Hill, Himbleton, Droitwich, Worcestershire WR9 7LE

Inspection dates: 2 and 3 March 2023

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 Good

What is it like to attend this school?

The motto of this small village school is 'nurture, nature, knowledge.' Pupils make the most of the rural location of the school by experiencing valuable outdoor learning opportunities. Pupils enjoy and learn much from these opportunities. They enjoy the caring, family-like atmosphere of the school. Pupils feel safe at school because staff look after them well. The school started teaching pupils beyond Year 4 in September 2021. The provision is effective, and Years 5 and 6 pupils are pleased to have been able to continue their education at Himbleton.

Leaders and staff have a strong focus on ensuring that all pupils fulfil their potential. Pupils experience an effective recently redesigned curriculum. Leaders are continuing to refine approaches to maximise knowledge retention a few subjects. The new curriculum is well structured and supports pupils' progress effectively from Reception to Year 6.

Pupils respect staff and get on well with each other. They behave well in lessons and around school. Staff make pupils aware of what bullying is and why it is wrong. They deal with bullying well when it happens.

Parents were supportive of the school's conversion to full primary school. They appreciate the stability this change brings to their children's education.

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

The curriculum that leaders designed provides breadth, depth and coherence to pupils' learning. Subject leaders and teachers have developed their expertise through extensive training. Teachers are clear about what pupils need to learn across the curriculum. Learning is well organised to build up pupils' knowledge and skills from Reception to Year 6. The curriculum prepares pupils well for secondary education.

Children get off to a good start in the early years. They enjoy a stimulating learning environment and the attention of caring staff. They settle well into the routines of the school. There is a strong focus on early reading, phonics and mathematics in Nursery and Reception. The early years curriculum prepares children well for key stage 1.

Teachers plan learning to ensure that pupils build up their knowledge step by step. They provide pupils with frequent opportunities to revisit key areas of learning to make sure that they remember well what they have learned. For example, in mathematics pupils regularly apply what they have learned in problem-solving and reasoning activities. In history, timelines help pupils link historical periods with each other. In art, topics centre around themes that pupils explore in increasing depth as they progress through the years.

Pupils learn in mixed-age classes. Teachers manage these mixed-age classes effectively. Work matches pupils' ages and needs. Pupils collaborate with each other and focus well on their learning in lessons. They do not disrupt lessons.

Leaders identify effectively pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) early and with precision. The special educational needs coordinator works closely with families and staff to ensure that these pupils' needs are met. Staff adapt learning activities when required to ensure that pupils with SEND can access the full curriculum. They also ensure that pupils with SEND can enjoy all the activities the school offers.

Teachers use effective systems to check how well pupils are learning in most subjects. This allows teachers to identify gaps in learning and to adjust their teaching. However, in a few subjects, assessment is less consistent as leaders are still refining approaches to check pupils' progress over time.

Children follow a rigorous programme of phonics from the start of Reception. Staff identify quickly children who find learning to read difficult and help them to keep up. Almost all pupils become fluent readers by the end of Year 2. The few who are still not fluent enough in key stage 2 get effective support to catch up. There is a lot of enthusiasm for reading in the school. The after-school book club is very popular. Pupils and staff were celebrating their love of books in style during the inspection.

Pupils have many opportunities to develop as well-rounded individuals. Outdoor activities develop their resilience, teamwork and initiative. They learn about democracy, diversity, tolerance and healthy relationships through the curriculum and in assemblies. Pupils can become members of the school parliament or be appointed as pupil leaders. They can develop their talent and interests in sports, art or music at after-school clubs.

Governors provide effective support and challenge to leaders. They know the school well. They have a clear vision of how they can support the continuous improvement of the school. Relationships between leaders and staff are harmonious. Leaders are mindful of staff workload. Staff appreciate that leaders are approachable and supportive.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that all staff receive up-to-date training. Staff are vigilant. They follow the school's policy to identify and report concerns consistently. Leaders follow up all concerns. They take swift action, support families and work well with external agencies when pupils are at risk.

Leaders and governors have the required expertise to recruit staff safely and to address concerns about staff.

Through the curriculum and assemblies, pupils learn to recognise and manage risks. They also learn how to stay safe when using the internet and social media

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Subject leaders are still refining systems to assess pupils' progress over time in some subjects. As a result, teachers do not identify and address misconceptions and gaps in learning well enough. Leaders should ensure that, in all subjects, assessment opportunities allow teachers to adjust teaching to address any gaps in pupil's knowledge.

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

Unique reference number	116821
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10256840
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	87
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Claire Johnston
Headteacher	Gemma Martin
Website	www.himbleton.worcs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	30 January 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school became a primary school teaching pupils up to Year 6, rather than a first school teaching pupils up to Year 4, in September 2021.
- The school is a Church of England school, within the Diocese of Worcester. Its most recent section 48 inspection took place in May 2016. The next inspection will be within eight years of the last section 48 inspection.
- Leaders do not make use of any alternative provision.

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.

- The inspectors met with the headteacher, who is also the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and special educational needs coordinator, and the assistant headteacher, who is also the early years leader.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of the governing body and three other governors. The lead inspector also had conversations with a representative of the local authority and a representative of the diocese.
- The inspectors conducted deep dives in these subjects: early reading, art, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the 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.
- The inspectors checked safeguarding arrangements and school records. The inspectors discussed safeguarding policies and case studies with the DSL. They talked to teachers and other staff about the safeguarding training they had received and how they put this training into practice.
- The inspectors observed behaviour at break and lunchtime. The lead inspector talked to parents at the end of the school day.
- The inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including free text responses. They also considered responses from staff to the online inspection questionnaire.

Inspection team

Patrick Amieli, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Chris Ogden

Ofsted Inspector

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