

Inspection of Betley C of E VC Primary School

Church Lane, Betley, Crewe, Cheshire CW3 9AX

Inspection dates:	15 and 16 October 2024
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?

Pupils enjoy attending this welcoming and happy school. The school wants the very best for everyone and pupils are at the heart of all it does. Staff have high expectations of all pupils, and pupils respond well to these. Pupils from Nursery to Year 6 enjoy an exciting and engaging curriculum. Pupils love to read. They develop and achieve well during their time in school.

Pupils have very positive attitudes to school. They behave well. They arrive at school punctually, with confidence, and are eager to learn. The curriculum helps all pupils to develop personally. Pupils are proud of their achievements. They told inspectors, 'This is a school where we are all a family and care for each other.' Pupils fully understand and respect each other's differences. They make friends because they enjoy learning together. They play respectfully and happily with their peers on the playground and work well together in lessons.

Pupils feel safe in school because all staff swiftly address any worries or concerns they may have. Pupils enjoy the range of responsibilities and rewards they receive. These include being on the school council and being ambassadors across the school. Pupils engage in and enjoy a wide range of curriculum enrichment activities, including visitors to school, residential trips and a range of clubs.

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

The school ensures that staff are well trained to teach the early reading programme and to deliver the reading curriculum. Staff use regular checks on pupils' phonics knowledge effectively to understand the knowledge they have gained. They support pupils who need extra help with their reading to enable them to keep up with their peers. As a result, more pupils are progressing well with their reading. Pupils read with increasing confidence, accuracy and fluency. Teachers take many opportunities to develop pupils' love of books and to enhance their communication and language skills. Pupils are keen readers. One pupil stated, 'Reading takes us to a world of fantasies and dreams.'

The school has established a wide and ambitious curriculum. Pupils enjoy their learning and have opportunities to revisit and reinforce concepts and skills in lessons. In mathematics, for example, teachers use modelling and resources well to help all pupils make good gains in their skills and knowledge. However, pupils do not yet have sufficient opportunities to develop, practise and apply their grammar, punctuation and spelling skills in a range of subjects. As a result, pupils do not develop the knowledge, determination and fluency they need to become more confident and skilled readers and writers by the end of Year 6.

In lessons, teachers revisit prior learning and introduce new learning well. Pupils benefit from working together and sharing ideas. They are proud to share their work across the curriculum. However, expectations for the teaching of handwriting and the presentation of work are not high enough, and inconsistencies in teaching mean that the quality of work is often variable.

Staff identify and support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. Staff have high expectations of all pupils. Pupils with SEND access the curriculum alongside their peers. Staff use their very secure knowledge of pupils to adapt the curriculum where necessary for pupils.

The quality of education in early years enables all pupils to make gains in their learning. Children get off to a good start in Nursery and progress well in Reception. The curriculum in early years is carefully designed, enabling pupils to be well prepared for Year 1. Children show curiosity and independence in their learning. Opportunities that help children to develop their communication and language skills are prioritised.

The school has high expectations for behaviour and attitudes. This begins as soon as pupils start school. Pupils understand the behaviour systems, have respect for each other and respond well to the rewards they receive from staff. The school works tirelessly to ensure pupils attend school regularly.

Provision for pupils' personal development is strong. It is well embedded across the curriculum. For example, pupils learn how to stay safe, be healthy and show respect for each other. The school has positive relationships with parents and carers. Parents are positive about the school and value the support, care and guidance given to their children.

The school is led and managed well. Governors know the school and are committed to their roles. They are aware of what the school does well and what it needs to do to improve. They have high ambitions for all pupils and make checks on many aspects of school life. Leaders are mindful of the workload and well-being of staff.

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 ensured that pupils have sufficient opportunities to learn, practise and apply their knowledge of spelling, punctuation and grammar in their reading and writing activities in all subjects. This hampers pupils' development of their literacy skills. The school should ensure that there are high-quality opportunities for pupils to practise these aspects of reading and writing across the curriculum to enable them to become more confident and capable readers and writers.
- The school has not ensured that teachers' expectations of pupils' recorded work are consistently high, and there are weaknesses in the teaching of handwriting and presentation. Consequently, the quality of pupils' work is often variable. The school should ensure that the teaching of handwriting and presentation is implemented

consistently well and that all teachers have high expectations for handwriting and presentation.

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	124235
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10343880
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	114
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Helen Finn and Antony Sutcliffe (co-chairs)
Headteacher	Sam Ray (Executive headteacher) Gemma Whittingham (Head of school)
Website	www.betley.staffs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	6 June 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Great Oak C of E Learning Federation, which consists of two primary schools. The executive headteacher leads both 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. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors held meetings with the executive headteacher and other leaders.
- The lead inspector spoke to representatives from the governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils work.
- The lead inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- The inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documents, including those related to safeguarding arrangements, behaviour and attendance. The inspectors also reviewed the school's development plans.
- The inspectors held informal and formal discussions with pupils.
- The inspectors reviewed responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including additional free-text comments. They also took account of responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff.
- 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.

Inspection team

Rob Johnstone, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Darryl Asbury

Ofsted Inspector

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