

Inspection of a good school: Farlow CofE Primary School

Farlow, Cleobury Mortimer, Kidderminster, Worcestershire DY14 0RQ

Inspection date: 8 March 2023

Outcome

Farlow CofE Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils' well-being and care are at the heart of this school. Leaders' motto of 'Love to Learn – Learn to Love' is threaded throughout the school. Children at this school are a delight. They are courteous, welcoming and friendly. They enjoy learning and coming to school. Warm and respectful relationships between teachers and pupils are commonplace.

Staff have high ambitions for every pupil, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). These expectations are frequently realised, and pupils do well. Staff know their pupils exceptionally well and regularly go above and beyond for them.

Pupils behave very well and work hard. Lessons are calm and orderly. Pupils play well together at play time. They understand the different types of bullying and have every confidence in their teachers to resolve any incidents. Pupils are and feel safe. They have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations, including online.

Leaders have planned a wide range of opportunities that develop pupils' personal interests. The many activities include trips, visits, external speakers and after-school clubs. Pupils speak with passion about their trips and clubs.

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

Leaders have created a broad curriculum that is ambitious for all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND. Leaders have carefully thought about what they want pupils to learn in most subjects. For example, in reading, there is now a new phonics curriculum in place. Over time, pupils become strong readers and enjoy writing.

However, in some foundation subjects, although leaders have a clear understanding of what pupils should learn, it is not as readily available for others. This means that other staff do not know as clearly the precise knowledge and skills pupils should learn and in what order.

Teachers have sound subject knowledge and plan learning tasks that are well matched to pupils' needs and abilities. Staff use assessment well to quickly spot any pupil who may have fallen behind. Teachers skilfully adapt their teaching or deploy additional adults to help anyone who may need extra support. Consequently, pupils do well. They enjoy lessons and routinely display resilience and independence in their learning. Because of this, pupils are well prepared for their next steps in learning.

Pupils with SEND are well supported. Teachers know their pupils very well and are quick to identify any pupils with additional needs. Pupils receive targeted support at every level. This includes in their lessons and through targeted one-to-one sessions and interventions at different times throughout the school day. As a result, pupils with SEND overcome many of their learning barriers and do well.

Leaders have prioritised reading. Effective delivery of the new phonics curriculum ensures that pupils become fluent readers. Most read at an age-appropriate level. Pupils enjoy reading and do so daily. Staff use assessment well to spot pupils who fall behind and put targeted support in place. As a result, weaker readers become more fluent readers. Pupils appreciate daily story time and being read to by adults.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. These expectations are frequently realised, and pupils' conduct is excellent. Everyone, including children in Reception, understand what is expected of them. Pupils are polite and show positive learning attitudes. Lessons are free from disruptions. Pupils play well together at social times. Pupils have learned to take responsibility for their behaviour. Relationships between pupils and staff are very positive and a joy to observe.

Children settle quickly into Reception. Strong care and nurture ensure that children swiftly learn the routines and structures of daily school life. Adults work well with children to help them improve their communication skills and enhance their personal development. Children start learning phonics as soon as they arrive. They are happy, safe and enjoy school. They have structured playtime, which links to their learning. As a result, children are well prepared for Year 1.

Leaders have planned a strong programme to promote pupils' wider development. The school's Christian ethos permeates school life and further supports this curriculum. Pupils talk keenly about values such as resilience and perseverance. The school's offer also includes a variety of trips, excursions, visits and guest speakers, as well as after-school clubs.

Staff are unanimous in their praise for leaders. They feel that leaders consider their well-being and workload implications when making changes. All staff are proud to work at this school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff understand that keeping pupils safe is their top priority. Teachers are well trained and know what to do if they have any concerns about a pupil. Staff report any concerns to the safeguarding team. They know their pupils well and use this information to ensure pupils are safe.

Leaders have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. They complete appropriate employment checks and keep accurate records. Staff follow up any concerns with outside agencies when appropriate. The school's curriculum also ensures that pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe in everyday situations.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some foundation subjects, the curriculum does not clearly lay out the precise knowledge and essential skills that pupils need to learn. Much of this knowledge lies with senior staff but is not yet shared effectively. This makes it hard to share information with any other colleagues in the absence of leaders. Leaders should ensure that all staff know the intention of the curriculum in all subjects.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually, this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in December 2013.

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

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| Unique reference number | 123475 |
| Local authority | Shropshire |
| Inspection number | 10257011 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Maintained |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 41 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Philip Engleheart |
| Headteacher | Alison Davies |
| Website | www.farlow.shropshire.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 6 December 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- The school is a smaller-than-average primary school.
- The school runs an after-school provision for some of its pupils.
- The school does not use any alternative providers for its pupils.

Information about this inspection

- 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.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher. The lead inspector held a meeting with governors, including the chair of governors. Meetings were held with curriculum leaders.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and music. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked

at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors visited the provision for early years for each of the deep dives.

- Inspectors listened to pupils read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour and interactions during lessons and at break and lunchtimes and spoke to many pupils during the inspection.
- Inspectors spoke to staff, including support staff, about safeguarding arrangements and scrutinised school documents relating to safeguarding.
- Inspectors took account of the parent free-text comments and the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. Inspectors also considered the responses to the pupil and staff surveys.

Inspection team

Bianka Zemke, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Martina Abbott

Ofsted Inspector

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