

Inspection of a good school: Halwill Community Primary School

Dreybury Lane, Halwill, Beaworthy, Devon EX21 5XU

Inspection dates:

10 December 2019

Outcome

Halwill Community Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Everyone is proud of their village school. Staff and pupils have caring relationships with each other. Parents and carers have nothing but praise for the school. Pupils enjoy sharing their learning through the celebration assemblies. Teachers expect the best from all pupils and want them to achieve well. So, pupils work hard in lessons and do not disturb the learning of others. Pupils are respectful, polite and well-mannered.

The executive headteacher wants pupils to develop an understanding of their local community as well as their role as global citizens. There is a strong emphasis on world religions and how to be healthy. Pupils enjoy the many opportunities that the school provides beyond their usual lessons. A good example is the outdoor learning experiences pupils enjoy through 'wild tribes' and yoga sessions.

Pupils feel safe in school and know how to stay safe when they use the internet because they are taught well in school. They are not concerned about bullying because staff deal with any signs of poor behaviour quickly.

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

Governors know the school well. They are highly skilled and committed to supporting leaders to move the school from strength to strength.

The executive headteacher has involved all staff in developing a well-designed curriculum. Pupils get a good all-round experience of the different subjects. The school's motto of 'aim high; be resilient; take care of each other' is at the centre of all learning.

Subjects such as history are well planned and taught. In the Reception year, children learn about changes in transport through reading the Christmas story. Pupils in key stage 1 enjoy learning about toys from the past and present. Pupils are enthusiastic about their visits to local places of historical interest, such as the Winsford Cottage Hospital. Pupils in

key stage 2 can understand and explain the differences between primary and secondary sources of information.

The teaching of reading has a high priority. In the Reception class, children follow a structured phonics programme. Staff who deliver the reading programme check pupils' phonics knowledge regularly. This good work continues in key stage 1. Staff support parents well to help their children read at home. The teacher keeps a close eye on pupils' reading skills and acts quickly when pupils occasionally fall behind. Weaker readers are given daily support to catch up. This strong reading focus continues in key stage 2.

Teachers' planning for writing is comprehensive. In key stage 1, pupils who need to catch up are well-supported. For example, they spend extra time with staff to focus on improving their vocabulary. However, for some of the most able pupils in Year 2, writing activities are occasionally too easy. Pupils' handwriting in key stage 2 is neat and legible. Written work is consistently well-presented. However, pupils' handwriting in key stage 1 is not as good. This is because letters are not formed correctly. Teachers do not insist that they pay careful attention to handwriting in their exercise books.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) achieve well. Leaders work with other education and health professionals, such as speech and language therapists, to make sure that this is the case. Staff know individual pupils well. They adapt planning and provide effective support to meet pupils' additional needs.

Reception children quickly adapt to new routines. They listen with concentration. This continues throughout the school. Pupils behave well during lessons and are enthusiastic learners. They are polite and articulate and respond well to questions. Pupils' positive attitudes and behaviour help them to learn well.

Pupils' learning is enriched beyond the national curriculum in a range of ways. This supports their broader development. A wide variety of clubs run throughout the year. For example, pupils are able to attend gardening club and art and craft workshops. Teachers plan educational outings to local towns and cities. Visitors come into school to speak to pupils about life in other countries. This encourages pupils to learn about their own local area and the wider world. Pupils take part in a wide range of festivals throughout the year. World religions, music and dance are all celebrated and enjoyed by parents, carers and pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. Procedures for protecting pupils are clear and understood by staff. All staff receive regular training. Staff are confident in taking the right actions should a safeguarding issue arise. All pupils learn about online safety and staff remind pupils about this regularly. The school works well with other agencies to make sure that the pupils and families get the support they need.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In key stage 1, pupils are not taught to form their letters well enough. This means that pupils' handwriting is sometimes hard to read. Leaders need to ensure that the teaching of handwriting in key stage 1 is well planned and prioritised. The teaching of letter formation needs to be consistent and embedded across all areas of the key stage 1 curriculum.
- Teachers do not use their writing assessments precisely enough to plan challenging activities for the most able pupils in Year 2. This means that pupils are occasionally doing work that is too easy. Teachers need to ensure that they have higher expectations of what the most able pupils could and should achieve in writing.

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 a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 4 November 2010.

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're 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

Unique reference number	113151
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10058417
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	88
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Mr John Lawlor
Headteacher	Mrs Ruh Alford
Website	www.thecareyfederation.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	19 January 2016

Information about this school

- The school is one of two schools in the Carey Federation.
- The school works in partnership with the Dartmoor Teaching Alliance.
- The school has seven year groups arranged in four classrooms as: Reception, Year 1 with Year 2, Year 3 with Year 4, and Year 5 with Year 6.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is below the national average.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds.

Information about this inspection

- Meetings were held with the executive headteacher, the joint head of teaching and learning, the leader for special educational needs and a group of staff.
- The lead inspector held a meeting with two members of the governing body and had a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority.
- We considered the quality of education by looking in detail at the teaching of reading, writing and history. We visited several lessons with the executive headteacher. We met

with groups of pupils to talk about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work over time.

- The lead inspector listened to a group of pupils read to a teaching assistant.
- We examined a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation, improvement planning, the executive headteacher's monitoring notes and documents related to pupils' behaviour and safety.
- The single central record was checked to ensure that recruitment and vetting procedures are thorough.
- We spoke with pupils formally and informally during their breaktimes and in class.
- We considered the responses to the staff survey.
- The lead inspector also considered the responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View.

Inspection team

Susan Costello, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Martin Greenwood

Ofsted Inspector

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