

Inspection of a good school: Whitnash Primary School

Langley Road, Whitnash, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire CV31 2EX

Inspection dates:

18 and 19 June 2024

Outcome

Whitnash Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a school that places the 'Whitnash family' at the heart of what they do. Enabling pupils to thrive is a priority for the school. The school achieves this because of the wider opportunities they provide pupils and the chosen curriculum in place. This is an inclusive school. The school has high academic ambitions for all pupils. Most pupils achieve well, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Pupils are happy in school and enjoy their time there. They are willing to share their feelings and experiences openly with visitors to the school. Whitnash is a calm and orderly place. Pupils are friendly and polite. They know the importance of keeping themselves mentally and physically well. They learn about risks they face online and know to seek the support of trusted adults should they feel vulnerable.

Opportunities to learn in the school's 'forest school' and outdoor learning activities help bring lessons to life. Other activities, such as trips and visitors into school, enrich pupils' experiences. They benefit from the opportunity to learn how to cook and consider the importance of a healthy diet and lifestyle.

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

The curriculum has been redesigned and the school has trained staff well to deliver it effectively. Learning in most subjects is logically sequenced to enable pupils to deepen their learning by successfully building on existing knowledge. Some subjects are more developed than others due to the school taking time to implement changes in a considered way. Most pupils achieve well. Staff ensure that prior learning is revised before new learning takes place. This supports pupils to make useful connections to what they already know. However, there is some variability in how consistently staff plan learning tasks that reflect and address pupils' misconceptions. Consequently some groups of pupils, including those most disadvantaged, do not achieve as well as they could.

The curriculum is successfully adapted to meet the needs of pupils with SEND. Clearly understood systems ensure that pupils' needs are identified accurately. Individual targets are created which outline how best to remove barriers to learning. External agencies provide specialist support and training, as well as engaging with parents and carers. A small number of pupils receive an adapted curriculum and are well supported to learn this by well-trained staff.

Children learn to read as soon as they start school. A highly structured phonics programme supports pupils to learn the sounds they need to know. Books are well matched to their current stages of reading. Some pupils who require additional support receive targeted interventions to help them catch up. Despite such support, some pupils do not read fluently and this affects their understanding.

A well-planned curriculum and purposeful learning opportunities provide the youngest children with a strong start. Well-trained staff support children in the key areas of learning within early reading, writing and mathematics. Routines are quickly established. Children form positive relationships.

Most pupils behave well in classrooms and around school. They display positive attitudes to learning and want to do well at school. Positive behaviour in lessons means pupils are not distracted from their learning. Some pupils need extra support to follow the school's high behavioural expectations. This is effective and leads to positive improvements. Promoting regular attendance is a key priority in school. While some pupils still miss school too often, many are now attending more regularly than they were previously.

The broader development of pupils is a key strength at Whitnash. Pupils love taking part in 'bucket list' activities, such as space camp, experiencing Shakespeare Week and having the chance to participate in the school's rock band and choir. Pupils visit places of worship, compete in sporting events and perform in community events.

The school has invested in developing leaders at all levels. This has enabled staff to become advocates for their areas of responsibility. Staff value working at this school. They appreciate how well leaders support them and consider their well-being and workload. Parents hold the school in high regard. They appreciate the kindness and support provided for their children. Governors carry out their statutory roles effectively. They have an accurate awareness of the school's strengths and areas to develop further.

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 some pupils receive the support they need to read with fluency. This affects the pace of their reading and their ability to understand what they have read. The school should ensure all pupils are supported to read with the level of fluency required to support their understanding.
- There are inconsistencies in the delivery of the planned curriculum, as some learning tasks do not reflect and address pupils' misconceptions. This means that some pupils, including the disadvantaged, do not achieve as well as they could. The school needs to ensure that staff plan and direct pupils to learning that supports all pupils to achieve as well as they should.

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 2018.

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	125560
Local authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	10322790
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	385
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Kevin Mullis
Headteacher	Donna Ellison
Website	www.whitnashprimaryschool.com
Date of previous inspection	18 December 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has a 'wraparound' before- and after-school club.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspector carried out this graded inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and deputy headteacher as well as leaders responsible for pupils with SEND and personal development.
- The inspector met with a group of governors. They also spoke to a representative from the local authority and the school improvement adviser.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, and design and technology. They also visited a number of English and mathematics lessons across the school. For each deep dive, the inspector held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector listened to a sample of pupils read to a familiar adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector reviewed the single central record, the school's safeguarding records plus a sample of case files for pupils receiving support from external agencies. The inspector 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.
- The inspector examined a range of school documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation, improvement plans, records of governance and documentation relating to attendance and pupils' behaviour.
- The inspector took account of responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments, and spoke with parents at the start of the school day. The inspector also considered responses to the staff survey.
- During the inspection, the inspector met with groups of pupils, both formally and informally, during different parts of the day.

Inspection team

Donna O'Toole, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024