

Inspection of a good school: Wherwell Primary School

Wherwell, Andover, Hampshire SP11 7JP

Inspection date: 11 May 2023

Outcome

Wherwell Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

There is a strong sense of community at Wherwell Primary School. Pupils and parents like coming to this friendly school. The school's ethos of 'Care, Respect, Responsibility and Resilience' helps pupils to feel valued and secure. One pupil, reflecting the thoughts of others, commented, 'I know I can trust the staff.'

Pupils behave well in class and focus on their learning. Expectations of their behaviour are high, clear and easy to understand. Teachers and support staff demonstrate these expectations and help pupils to meet them. If there is any bullying, leaders deal with it promptly and effectively.

Staff have high aspirations of what pupils can do, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils rise to the challenge and achieve. This is because leaders have thought carefully about what they want pupils to learn in different subjects.

Pupils benefit from a wide range of opportunities. Pupils relish leadership roles, such as writing for the parish magazine and being part of the 'Green Team'. As part of this team pupils help everyone play a part in looking after the environment. Pupils attend and benefit from a range of sporting and craft clubs, including dance and pottery.

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

Senior leaders' ongoing development work has been focused on creating and implementing an ambitious curriculum for all pupils, including pupils with SEND. There has been a focus on making improvements to individual subjects. This includes seeking external support to improve the mathematics curriculum in light of lower-than-expected key stage 2 outcomes last year. This work has now helped to ensure that many subject curriculums are now carefully ordered to prepare pupils well for the next stage of their learning. In a small number of subjects, leaders are finalising this work. In these examples, there is not always the precise clarity about what knowledge pupils should be taught and when.

Learning to read is a priority. Staff deliver the phonics programme well. They excite pupils about reading and books. Teachers seize regular opportunities to read high-quality texts to their classes. Children learn to read as soon as they start in the Reception Year. Leaders identified that, previously, some pupils had gaps in their phonics knowledge, resulting in them not learning to read as quickly as they should. Action has now been taken to ensure staff have the expertise to spot and support pupils if they fall behind. The support is well focused and enables those who fall behind the programme's expectations to catch up. This means that pupils are now becoming more confident readers by the end of Year 2.

Teachers and teaching assistants support pupils' learning well. They use a range of effective strategies, including clear demonstrations and careful questioning. However, teachers' subject knowledge is not sufficiently strong in some areas of the curriculum and their checks on pupils' knowledge are not always effective. This means pupils do not learn and remember what they have been taught as well as they could. Children in the early years enjoy learning. Staff make sure that children learn to communicate using a wide range of vocabulary. The teaching of early mathematics is effective. This is because staff use resources to illustrate different mathematical ideas clearly.

Pupils with SEND and those who speak English as an additional language (EAL) are well provided for. Leaders and the staff team identify their needs accurately. Pupils' needs are communicated well to all staff. This ensures that teachers have the specific knowledge needed to carefully adapt learning. Teachers' expectations for pupils with SEND and those who speak EAL are as aspirational as they are for other pupils.

Staff have positive relationships with pupils. This helps children in the early years quickly settle into school life when they start school. Pupils are respectful of one another and are polite and thoughtful. Most pupils have positive attitudes to learning. The staff use the school's system well to record, manage and understand pupils' behaviour. Those pupils who struggle to manage their own behaviour receive appropriate support. Consequently, pupils' learning is rarely disrupted during lessons.

The curriculum for pupils' wider development prepares pupils for the challenges they may face now and in later life. Pupils learn about responsibility through their role as a librarian and school ambassador. This curriculum also helps pupils to understand and manage their emotions. The personal, social and health education programme ensures that pupils learn about right and wrong. One parent, echoing other parents' thoughts, said: 'The school has a very strong moral compass, which it tries hard to encourage the children to follow.'

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established a strong safeguarding culture. Staff are well trained and know the safeguarding risks to look out for. They are regularly briefed about safeguarding matters, including any current concerns about pupils. Leaders are knowledgeable about safeguarding and know pupils and their families well. This helps them to identify any

concerns early and support pupils and their families quickly. The safeguarding leaders and staff use the school's safeguarding systems well. Leaders record their concerns in detail and involve wider professionals and partners when needed. Safety is part of the curriculum. Pupils learn how to keep safe, including when online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, leaders have not identified the precise knowledge pupils should be learning and when. This means pupils do not gain the depth of knowledge and understanding that they should. Leaders should continue their ongoing curriculum improvements in the subjects that need further improvements.
- Not all teachers have sufficient subject-specific knowledge and expertise in some subjects. As a result, pupils do not learn and remember as much as they could across the curriculum. Leaders need to identify where teachers needed additional support and training to support their implementation of the curriculum.

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 February 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

Unique reference number	115960
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10256503
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	137
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Sean Hutton
Headteacher	Amanda Ovenden
Website	www.wherwellprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	22 October 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher started in her role in September 2022.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

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 school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, subject leaders and the special educational needs coordinator. An inspector had a meeting with six governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- The lead inspector had a telephone call with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke with staff to discuss workload and safeguarding.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and physical education. 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.

- The inspectors also looked at curriculum information and pupils' work in other subjects.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils about their views on their learning and safety.
- Documentation relating to safeguarding was evaluated by inspectors.
- Inspectors took account of the 54 responses to Parent View, including the 34 free-text comments. Inspectors also reviewed the 16 staff survey responses.

Inspection team

Richard Blackmore, lead inspector Ofsted Inspector

Jon Hills Ofsted Inspector

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