

Wheatley Church of England Primary School

Littleworth Road, Wheatley, Oxford, Oxfordshire OX33 1NN

Inspection dates

19–20 June 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Following a period of turbulence at the school, the two co-headteachers have secured strong teaching and learning leading to improved outcomes for pupils in every key stage.
- Leaders' and governors' high expectations and aspirations for the academic, social and emotional success of pupils are shared by every member of staff.
- Leaders have addressed weaknesses in the teaching and learning of reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, current pupils make much stronger progress than in previous years.
- Governors bring a breadth of expertise to their roles which enables them to hold leaders sharply to account.
- Children in Reception achieve well, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics. Children thrive in the stimulating early years learning environment. Consequently, children are well prepared for study in Year 1.
- From their differing starting points, pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, make strong progress in many areas of the curriculum.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make good progress in most areas of the curriculum. Through a well-structured combination of personalised support and whole-class teaching, these pupils thrive academically and socially.
- Safeguarding arrangements at the school are fit for purpose. Pupils feel safe and are well cared for by adults.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are respectful, welcoming and kind, both towards each other and to adults.
- The school makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils learn to respect the views of others. Pupils are highly sensitive to the different needs of other pupils, which prepares them well for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils develop strong skills, knowledge and understanding of music in every key stage. Pupils have many opportunities to experiment with music, enabling them to compose their own interpretations.
- Although the teaching of reading, writing, mathematics and music is strong, history and science are not as strong.
- The most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, do not consistently extend their understanding, knowledge and skills in reading, writing and mathematics at key stage 1 and key stage 2.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop the support and challenge for the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, so that:
 - they deepen and consolidate their learning across the curriculum
 - their attainment is significantly higher than the national average in reading, writing, mathematics and science.
- Ensure that pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, develop strong skills, understanding and knowledge in science and history.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The co-headteachers, staff and governors are deeply committed to improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment at the school. A breadth of effective professional development is provided to teachers and teaching assistants. Consequently, staff feel well prepared to deliver high-quality lessons that meet the needs of all pupils. In the Ofsted survey, staff unanimously agreed that the school has improved since the last inspection.
- Since the last inspection, leaders have markedly improved communications with parents. Parents and carers value the care and education provided to their children. In the online questionnaire, Parent View, parents were overwhelmingly positive about the improvements that leaders and staff have embedded at the school. One parent's view that, 'the improvements have been considerable under the co-heads', was voiced by many others.
- The senior leadership team has good oversight of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Through a well-structured cycle of monitoring activities, leaders are able to identify strengths and areas for development with precision. Consequently, leaders provide relevant training where needed to strengthen the quality of teaching and the curriculum.
- Leaders' incisive and knowledgeable evaluations of the impact of professional development and adaptations to the curriculum inform leaders' core priorities for improvement. Leaders of reading and writing, for example, have drawn on evidence-based research to inform the English curriculum. Embedding high-quality texts at the heart of the curriculum has enabled pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding of how writers use language to shape characters, settings and ideas. Consequently, pupils employ many of the language features they identify in their reading texts in their own writing. As a result, pupils' progress in reading and writing has improved markedly in both key stage 1 and key stage 2.
- The leadership of mathematics is effective. Pupils make strong progress through a revised mathematics curriculum that addresses gaps in pupils' knowledge and strengthens their fluency in solving mathematical problems.
- Leaders and staff have focused pertinently on reducing the difference in the progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally. Governors and senior leaders have accurately identified the barriers encountered by these pupils. For example, pupils receive additional social and emotional support to strengthen their resilience and self-esteem. Additional support enables these pupils to catch up and achieve well in many areas of the curriculum.
- The use of the primary physical education (PE) and sport premium has been effective in enabling pupils to engage in a breadth of sports. The school works hard to ensure that every pupil learns to swim well, and monitors their progress closely.
- The leadership of music is particularly effective. Through well-sequenced teaching, pupils learn how to play instruments, compose music and articulate their appreciation and understanding of different genres of music very well.

- The Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust (ODST) has provided tailored support to the school, resulting in significant improvements to the quality of leadership, teaching, learning and assessment.
- Phase leaders for the different key stages, together with subject leaders, have driven improvements in the wider curriculum. As a result, pupils learn well and make good progress in subjects such as music, religious studies and PE. However, leadership of science and history does not ensure the same level of challenge.
- Leaders have established accurate assessment systems in all year groups. Leaders support staff to use this information to plan challenging lessons that meet the needs and interests of all pupils. However, the most able pupils do not receive consistently strong challenge in some areas of the curriculum. As a result, the most able pupils do not make strong progress across the curriculum.

Governance of the school

- Following the previous inspection, a transitional governance committee was established by ODST to strengthen the governance of the school. The committee has an impressive breadth of expertise which informs their work. Consequently, governors have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement.
- Governors are frequent visitors to the school and their work complements the school's improvement priorities well.
- Minutes of the transitional governance committee meetings demonstrate that they ask challenging questions to focus school leaders on the areas for improvement.
- Governors review the expenditure for disadvantaged pupils and the PE and sport premium funding effectively to ensure that pupils gain appropriate additional support and make strong progress.
- Governors review the school's safeguarding arrangements regularly to ensure the physical and emotional well-being of pupils.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders, staff and governors are vigilant and alert to the safeguarding needs of pupils. They make sure that the school is a safe, happy and harmonious place where they can thrive.
- Staff recruitment and vetting procedures are rigorous and effective. Staff are knowledgeable about their safeguarding responsibilities. Staff have received appropriate training to keep pupils safe and to refer concerns they may have about pupils swiftly to safeguarding leaders.
- Leaders are tenacious in ensuring that pupils who may be at risk receive prompt and appropriate external support. Leaders challenge the decisions of external agencies when they have concerns about the well-being of pupils.

- Safeguarding documentation is securely maintained and reviewed regularly. In collaboration with the home–school link worker, leaders work hard to ensure the physical and emotional well-being of pupils.
- In the Ofsted survey, staff were unanimous in agreeing that pupils were safe at the school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching and learning has improved significantly in most areas of the curriculum. Teachers use accurate information about pupils' starting points to plan well-structured activities that enable pupils to make strong progress. Inspection evidence demonstrates that pupils engage well with their lessons and are ambitious to do well.
- The teaching of reading and writing has improved markedly at the school. Through the study of high-quality literary texts, pupils develop strong understanding of language and authorial voice. Pupils draw on their analysis of language to inform their writing for a range of audiences, purposes and text types. For example, pupils in a mixed Year 3 and Year 4 class drew on their reading of 'Escape from Pompeii' by Christina Ballit to shape their empathic writing.
- The teaching of mathematics is effective. Using concrete resources, pictures and symbols, pupils develop strong knowledge about abstract mathematical concepts. As a result, pupils enjoy learning mathematics and make strong progress.
- Teaching assistants receive high-quality professional development. Through targeted questioning, well-selected resources and structured discussions, teaching assistants enable pupils, including pupils with SEND, to develop strong knowledge, understanding and skills in a range of subjects.
- Pupils enjoy learning and are keen to achieve well. They are attentive and use collaborative talk very well to extend their understanding of a range of subjects. This was seen in a mixed Year 1 and Year 2 English lesson where pupils were discussing the language features in a persuasive text.
- The teaching of music is a strength in the school. Pupils relish the opportunities to create their own musical compositions. Pupils in all year groups draw skilfully on prior knowledge to analyse the structure of musical compositions. For example, an inspector observed pupils in a mixed Year 1 and Year 2 class conscientiously composing music for the xylophone. In addition, pupils learn to sing accurately and effectively with strong understanding of rhythm, pitch and tone.
- Leaders have an accurate understanding of the quality of teaching and learning across the school. Leaders, including phase leaders and subject leaders, gather information about the effectiveness of teaching and learning through a breadth of monitoring activities. Bespoke feedback is provided to staff with relevant training if required.
- Pupils show pride in their work. Their handwriting is neat and well presented.
- The teaching and learning of phonics are systematic and sequenced well. Pupils develop strong understanding of the links between letters and sounds.

- Science and history are not as well taught as other subjects in the curriculum. Pupils do not have many opportunities to deepen their understanding, knowledge and skills.
- Although the most able pupils make strong progress and achieve well across the curriculum, teachers do not consistently embed sufficient challenge in lessons to enable the most able pupils to accelerate their understanding.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils have good opportunities to influence the work of the school. For example, pupils in Year 6 act as 'buddies' to children in Reception and operate the doors at break- and lunchtime. Through the eco-council, pupils have collaboratively put forward plans to improve the recycling of rubbish at the school.
- Pupils are very articulate and confident learners. They told inspectors that they feel well cared for at the school and said that if they had a problem, staff would help them.
- The curriculum enables pupils to strengthen their physical and emotional well-being. An inspector observed pupils in a mixed Year 1 and Year 2 class discussing knowledgeably the people at home and at school whom they could depend on for help.
- Pupils' social and emotional well-being is supported through bespoke nurture groups and play therapies. Staff are well trained to enable pupils to access school life with confidence and success.
- The school is highly inclusive. For example, many pupils learn British sign language to be able to communicate with deaf pupils both at the school and the neighbouring school for pupils with SEND. Pupils were observed confidently using sign language during assemblies.
- Through the curriculum, pupils learn about the importance of behaving kindly towards others and the value of friendship. Consequently, pupils are highly supportive of each other.
- Pupils learn about different religions such as Judaism and Christianity. The weekly assembly conducted by the local vicar enables pupils to reflect on their values and behaviour.
- Pupils are well prepared for life as 21st-century British citizens through the process of elections for the school council.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils behave well both in lessons and around the school. They are keen, attentive learners. Pupils cooperate well in lessons by listening carefully to instructions and the views of others.

- The revised behaviour policy is reinforced throughout the school, and incidents of poor behaviour have fallen markedly as a result.
- Leaders and staff have worked diligently with families to emphasise the link between attendance and achievement. Pupils' attendance is rewarded regularly. Leaders also monitor and track the attendance of pupils very closely. This has resulted in a significant improvement in overall attendance, which is currently in line with the national average.
- Pupils can define the concept of bullying. Pupils state that it happens at the school, but that staff resolve the issues quickly.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Having established accurate assessment systems and analysed the issues that have underpinned underperformance in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 in 2017 and 2018, leaders have taken swift and effective action. Scrutiny of pupils' books, visits to lessons and in-school data provide evidence that pupils are currently making good progress and achieving well. Consequently, pupils' outcomes in these subjects are improving quickly.
- As a result of improved approaches to teaching and learning, pupils at the end of key stage 1 attained above the national average in reading and writing in 2018, and in line with the national average in mathematics. Current pupils continue to make strong progress in their reading, writing and mathematics at key stage 1.
- Revisions to the reading and writing curriculum have enabled pupils to make better progress than previously. Pupils are immersed in reading a range of high-quality texts in every year group. Pupils' current understanding of the ideas conveyed in texts is effective. Additionally, the ways in which pupils select language, sentence types and punctuation to match the needs of different audiences, purposes and text types are very effective. Consequently, pupils' current outcomes in reading and writing are strong.
- Owing to the revision of the mathematics curriculum, pupils currently make better progress than previously. Pupils have a breadth of opportunities to develop and extend their understanding and to ensure that they are fluent in their use of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division.
- The progress and attainment in many areas of the curriculum have improved due to closer monitoring and tracking by leaders. As a result, pupils receive personalised academic and social and emotional support to enable them to make effective progress.
- Leaders track and monitor the progress of pupils with SEND closely. Consequently, leaders use this information to personalise the support for pupils with SEND, resulting in them making strong progress from their different starting points.
- Year 1 pupils' phonics achievements were above the national average in 2017 and 2018. Current pupils apply their phonics knowledge well to texts, enabling them to access the curriculum with success.

- Pupils do not make as strong progress in science and history. The curriculum aspects for these subjects do not sequence knowledge and skills effectively to enable pupils to develop strong understanding.
- Although the most able pupils make good progress in most areas of the curriculum, they do not consistently have opportunities to accelerate their understanding across the curriculum.

Early years provision

Good

- Leaders and staff have established a stimulating, enriching and challenging curriculum that develops children’s knowledge, skills and understanding of the world around them. Consequently, children are well prepared for study in Year 1.
- Leaders and staff structure activities and tasks very well to extend children’s knowledge in a breadth of areas. For example, children develop their understanding of communities and the ways in which people live through creating their own miniature villages.
- Leaders and staff have embedded a range of well-structured opportunities to develop children’s reading, writing and mathematics throughout the curriculum. For example, children hypothesise and measure the velocity of toy cars on ramps. Children listen to staff reading engaging stories and respond articulately and with enjoyment. Children also practise writing in a range of real-life situations, such as creating stickers for a hospital waiting room.
- Through bespoke support, children are provided with many opportunities to extend their learning. For example, an inspector observed children using complex subject-specific vocabulary to articulate their understanding of a non-fiction text.
- Staff support children’s language development very well through targeted questions, prompts and engaging discussions. The activities and tasks facilitate children in engaging in socially appropriate talk. Children use talking very well to forge positive relationships with each other and adults.
- Children maintain their concentration well and do not flit between activities and tasks. They enjoy learning and respond very well to staff expectations. They take turns well and listen to each other.
- Children have impressive opportunities to develop their musical knowledge, skills and understanding. Children have access to a range of instruments, and delight in making and listening to music. Children were observed composing music together through listening to each other and considering the harmony created by different instruments.
- Staff liaise well with parents, ensuring that children’s experiences at home inform their learning at school. Staff maintain children’s learning journals very well, ensuring that bespoke support is provided where necessary.
- The indoor and outdoor learning environments provide a breadth of engaging and challenging learning opportunities for children.

School details

Unique reference number	140344
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10058122

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	255
Appropriate authority	The board of trustees
Chair	Liz Wickens and Lou Golding
Headteachers	Gillian Standing and Anneka Fisher
Telephone number	01865 872366
Website	www.wheatley.oxon.sch.uk
Email address	office.3165@wheatley.oxon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	7 February 2017

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than most primary schools.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and supported by the pupil premium funding is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils in receipt of education, health and care plans is below the national average.
- Most pupils are White British.
- Wheatley Church of England Primary School received a section 48 inspection on 18 November 2015. It received a judgement of 'good'.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited classrooms, some with the co-headteachers, to observe learning and to talk to pupils about their work.
- Inspectors met formally with the co-headteachers, chief executive of the Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust and other leaders, including the special educational needs coordinator and the leader of early years.
- Meetings were held with four governors, 18 pupils, the student council, the eco-council, and parents.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and discussed reading with a range of pupils.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work across the curriculum and across all year groups to determine the accuracy of assessment and the sustainability of pupils' progress.
- The lead inspector checked the school's documentation regarding the school's approach to, and systems for, safeguarding, behaviour, attendance and the quality of teaching. She also considered the school's self-evaluation and school improvement plans.
- Inspectors took into consideration 54 responses to Parent View and 43 free-text responses, 26 staff responses and eight pupil responses.

Inspection team

Susan Aykin, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Robert Howell

Ofsted Inspector

Peter Barnes

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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