

Whiteshill Primary School

Main Road, Whiteshill, Stroud, Gloucestershire GL6 6AT

Inspection dates

1–2 May 2018

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	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher, ably supported by other leaders, provides ambitious leadership. Leaders work tirelessly to create a welcoming school where pupils flourish.
- Leaders have developed a strong and cohesive teaching team. They have taken determined action to ensure that teaching and achievement have rapidly improved and are now good.
- Leaders make regular checks on teaching and pupils' progress. As a result, leaders and governors have an accurate view of the school's strengths and what needs to improve.
- Teachers know their pupils very well and make learning challenging and interesting. As a result, attainment in English and mathematics is improving rapidly across the school and all groups of pupils now make good progress.
- The most able pupils reach increasingly high standards. However, at times, they are not fully challenged to develop their understanding or extend their skills.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress, because their needs are accurately assessed and they are supported effectively.
- The needs of disadvantaged pupils are well catered for, enabling them to make progress similar to, and sometimes better than, their peers.
- The provision in the early years is good. Children make a positive start to school and make good progress because of effective teaching.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They feel safe in school, because staff provide a secure environment in which to learn.
- The interesting curriculum motivates pupils to achieve well. Subject leaders have made effective improvements to the curriculum. However, they do not make a full contribution to monitoring and developing teaching in their areas of responsibility.
- Governors give good support to the school. Nevertheless, they do not hold leaders to account for standards in the school robustly enough.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teaching consistently challenges the most able pupils' thinking in mathematics and enables them to extend their skills further in writing.
- Further improve leadership and management by:
 - extending the skills of subject leaders so that they make a fuller contribution to the monitoring and development of teaching in their areas of responsibility
 - developing the role of governors so that they contribute more to the leadership of the school and hold school leaders to account for the quality of education.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The school has improved rapidly over the past year. Leaders and governors have taken firm action to ensure that teaching has improved and that pupils now achieve well. Trust leaders have helped to establish a clear direction for the school and set high expectations.
- With her drive and determination, the headteacher has inspired staff, governors and pupils to believe in themselves and aim high. Her thorough and systematic approach has ensured that rapid improvements in teaching and outcomes for pupils are being secured and sustained.
- Leaders, including governors, have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They use the expertise from the trust and other external partnerships to validate their judgements and check on the accuracy of teachers' assessments. Consequently, development plans are clearly focused on the correct priorities and have the capacity to bring about further improvements.
- Leaders track pupils' achievement carefully, ensuring that any help that is needed is put in place without delay. They provide a wide range of support and training to improve teachers' effectiveness. Systems for holding staff to account are rigorous and have resulted in rapid improvements in pupils' progress and attainment across the school.
- Subject leaders' initiatives to improve teaching, particularly in English and mathematics, are effective. Expertise from external consultants, the trust and the local authority is being drawn on well. Strategies have been successful in raising pupils' achievement. However, these leaders are not yet fully involved in monitoring teaching, limiting their ability to make further improvements.
- Leaders have designed a broad and balanced curriculum which follows pupils' interests and ideas. Leaders ensure that there are purposeful opportunities for writing across subjects. This is having a positive impact on standards of writing across the school.
- The wide variety of extra-curricular and enrichment activities contributes strongly to pupils' enjoyment of school. The recent visit to the Imperial War Museum in London and working with an expert art teacher provide pupils with life-enhancing experiences they might not otherwise have the chance to enjoy.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. British values such as tolerance and respect are deeply embedded in the curriculum. The school's work using the 'philosophy for children' programme helps pupils to understand democracy and appreciate the views of others, preparing them well for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders make effective use of pupil-premium funding to support disadvantaged pupils, not only in their academic progress but also to develop their emotional well-being and personal skills.

- The positive culture set by the headteacher, staff and pupils ensures that there is equality of opportunity and that any discriminatory behaviour is not tolerated. Support for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is well targeted to help them progress well. The strong provision for pupils with emotional needs ensures that these pupils are successfully included in school life.
- Leaders use the sport premium well to increase pupils' participation in a wider range of sports and physical activities, as well as increase the number of competitive events on offer. In addition, staff train alongside specialist teachers and coaches to improve their skills and confidence in teaching this subject.
- Parents and carers are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. They appreciate the approachability of staff and the encouragement children receive to broaden their horizons and achieve well.

Governance of the school

- Governors are ambitious for the school. They fully share the headteacher's high aspirations for pupils' achievement and provide her with unwavering support. They have accessed useful training from advisers from the trust and the local authority to improve their effectiveness. They are knowledgeable about the school because they seek relevant information from the headteacher. They ask some challenging questions about the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. However, overall they are not yet contributing strongly enough to the overall leadership of the school.
- Governors monitor the school budget effectively and manage funds well. They know how additional funds are spent to help disadvantaged pupils and to develop sport in the school.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders have created a culture where safety and support for pupils' welfare are of the highest priority. They are diligent in making sure that staff training is up to date, that staff understand their roles and responsibilities, and that policy guidelines are followed. Leaders ensure that recruitment and vetting procedures for appointing staff follow the statutory guidance stringently. Staff are well trained in identifying possible signs of risk and harm, including how to keep pupils safe from extremism and radicalisation. They are clear about how to report any concerns about pupils. Risk assessments are thorough and regularly updated, for example with regard to fire safety and educational visits.
- Leaders know the families of children who attend Whiteshill very well. They are vigilant about children's welfare, especially any pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable. The school works closely with other agencies to make sure pupils receive the care and support needed. Parents appreciate the lengths gone to by leaders to provide an inclusive and welcoming environment where every child thrives.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Improvements made to teaching, particularly in the past year, ensure that teaching is typically good. Pupils are now making strong progress, because teachers set purposeful work that develop pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding.
- Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and of their behaviour. They plan work that is both challenging and enjoyable, building on pupils' prior knowledge well. They give clear explanations and check pupils' understanding frequently, swiftly addressing any misconceptions to aid progress.
- Staff are proud to work at this school and are keen to improve their effectiveness through regular training activities. Wider opportunities to work across local schools and those in the trust help teachers to assess pupils' achievement accurately. They are skilled in pinpointing where pupils need to improve and give useful feedback to pupils to help them improve their work.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work together extremely well to enable pupils who have SEN and or/disabilities to make good progress. The 'mop up' sessions provide valuable support for any pupils in need of extra teaching or additional practice, enabling them to catch up quickly.
- Disadvantaged pupils, including the most able, benefit from carefully tailored support that ensures that their emotional needs are met, increasing their confidence as learners.
- Reading, including phonics, is well taught. Teachers encourage pupils to read widely and often, through the bronze, silver and gold 'challenges'. Regular sessions with opportunities to read and discuss high-quality texts develop pupils' comprehension skills effectively.
- New strategies for teaching writing, such as the 'exciting sentences' initiative, ensure that pupils use rich vocabulary, underpinned by correct grammar, spelling and punctuation. Teachers ensure that pupils have good opportunities to practise their writing skills across other subjects. For example, Year 6 pupils wrote high-quality biographies of Mary Anning, using facts from their research in history. The new handwriting scheme has improved pupils' fluency, and standards of presentation are much improved.
- Effective teaching in mathematics is evident in the improving standards of achievement across the school. Number skills are taught thoroughly, with frequent opportunities for pupils to apply their reasoning skills to solve problems and discuss their findings.
- On occasion, the most able pupils are not challenged to the full, because work does not deepen their understanding sufficiently in mathematics or extend their skills in writing.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, benefit from breakfast and after-school clubs that help to improve attendance and attitudes to school. Initiatives such as the 'cabin', a place to talk through any worries and find respite, enable pupils with emotional needs to overcome problems of anxiety or lack of confidence.
- Warm and effective relationships between staff and pupils contribute significantly to pupils' enjoyment and success in the school. Pupils are very clear that they feel safe and happy in the school. Parents praise the pastoral support that always puts their children and their well-being first.
- Pupils undertake a range of roles with a strong sense of responsibility. For example, Year 6 pupils act as 'buddies' for younger ones when they start school. Activities such as 'mini marines' promote healthy lifestyles and personal skills well, preparing pupils to become responsible citizens of the future.
- Pupils are positive that bullying and derogatory or aggressive language are rare and not tolerated in the school. They are knowledgeable about what constitutes bullying and its different forms, such as online bullying. They are confident that any such behaviour would be dealt with promptly by staff.
- Pupils receive good training for maintaining personal safety, such as road safety and e-safety. Regular evacuation drills ensure that pupils are prepared well to deal with any emergency.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are friendly, polite and confident when talking about their work to visitors.
- Pupils move around the school buildings sensibly, cooperate well in class and settle quickly to work without any fuss. They are well motivated and keen to learn because they find their tasks interesting. They hold their school in high regard, making comments such as, 'There is nothing I would change about this school; it's perfect'.
- Pupils concentrate hard in lessons and persevere with their tasks. They take an increasing pride in their work, which contributes to the higher standards being achieved across the school.
- Pupils appreciate the systems for acknowledging good behaviour. They strive to earn 'merit points' for effort and showing respect to each other. School records show there are very few incidents of poor behaviour.
- Occasionally, pupils say that a small minority of pupils lose concentration and are inattentive in lessons, slowing progress. This is why behaviour has been judged good rather than outstanding.
- Attendance has improved over the past year and is currently just above average. Leaders have taken firm action to eradicate any unnecessary absence, especially for a small minority of pupils whose attendance gave rise to concern.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Historically published data is not reflective of current pupils' achievement at the school. Improvements to teaching during the last year are resulting in pupils' rapidly improving progress, particularly in key stage 2. Consequently, attainment is also rising quickly.
- Pupils' good progress is evident in the school's own assessment data, the learning observed in lessons and the work in pupils' books. By the end of each key stage, more pupils than previously are on track to achieve the expected standard for their age and higher. This prepares them well for the next stage of their education.
- Phonics skills are strong, and most pupils meet the expected standard in the year 1 phonics screening check. This enables pupils to become capable, fluent readers, and standards have been above national figures, especially in key stage 1. Pupils read widely across a range of literature, with good levels of understanding.
- Pupils' writing becomes more accomplished as they move through the school, using increasingly sophisticated vocabulary. They write to good effect in a range of styles across different subjects, from descriptions of the climate zones in Brazil to 'diary' entries by Captain Scott of the Antarctic.
- Pupils' greater than previous fluency and accuracy in calculation skills are raising their attainment in mathematics and improving their progress. They are able to apply these skills to other aspects of mathematics to solve problems and give reasons for their answers with increasing competence.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points, because the work is carefully structured to meet their needs. Extra help to improve their self-confidence and resilience as learners is speeding up academic progress.
- Effective use of the pupil-premium funding enables disadvantaged pupils, including the few who are most able, to achieve as well as others from similar starting points. This is diminishing any differences in their attainment.
- The most able pupils make good progress, as their work usually requires them to apply their knowledge well. Sometimes, they are not stretched to the full in their thinking and reasoning about mathematics or required to extend their skills sufficiently in writing tasks. This limits their progress.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years provision is well led and managed. The leader has an accurate view of the strengths of the provision and where further improvement is needed to ensure that all children make rapid progress. Staff have regular opportunities to develop their skills through training and working with consultants from the trust and external agencies.
- Good attention is paid to safeguarding and welfare, so that children are kept safe both in class and outdoors. Staff ensure that children who have SEN and/or disabilities and

others considered vulnerable receive well-targeted teaching to maximise progress. Disadvantaged children develop their speaking and listening skills well by working with a specialist consultant, followed by good support from school staff.

- Parents enjoy positive relationships with staff and are closely involved in the life of the school. They praise the effective arrangements for starting school that enable children to settle quickly and happily. They say they are well informed about how their children are doing and feel confident to ask staff questions about their child's learning at any time.
- Children's behaviour is calm and focused. They quickly develop positive attitudes to learning, because of the well-established routines. They enjoy warm relationships with staff and with each other, showing great curiosity and delight in their learning.
- Most children start the Reception Year with the knowledge and skills typical for their age. They make good progress in all areas of learning from their starting points. Consequently, they enter Year 1 as confident learners, with the skills and understanding typical for their age.
- Teaching is effective, and children benefit from well-planned activities that are based on the accurate assessment of their prior knowledge and understanding. Staff check children's progress carefully and adjust activities to meet individual needs.
- Teaching activities are designed to spark children's interests and imagination. For example, children are enthralled when finding 'dinosaur' eggs in the classroom, inspiring them to write imaginative stories about the event.
- Mathematics development is strong, and most children are challenged effectively. Children develop their understanding of patterns in shapes well when they have opportunities to build 'dinosaur caves'.
- Phonics teaching underpins the development of early reading and writing skills well. Handwriting is taught effectively, and children soon become proficient in forming letters correctly and spelling common words.
- Children also learn from following their own interests, and staff support them capably to develop their language skills as they play. However, sometimes the activities do not provide sufficient challenge for the most able children to extend their learning further.

School details

Unique reference number	142451
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10053494

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	97
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Claire Deacon
Headteacher	Diane Bainbridge
Telephone number	01453762949
Website	http://www.whiteshillschool.co.uk
Email address	admin@whiteshill.gloucs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Pupils are organised in four classes; a Reception class and three mixed-aged classes.
- An above-average proportion of pupils have SEN and/or disabilities.
- The school met the government's current floor standards in 2017. These set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school operates breakfast and after-school clubs.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed pupils' learning across the school. Most observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher. In addition, she made visits to classrooms, the dining hall and the playground, as well as attending an assembly.
- Meetings were held with pupils, governors and school leaders. The inspector also spoke with two advisers from the academy trust who support the school.
- The inspector spoke with parents at the start of the school day and took account of the 47 responses to the online questionnaire Parent View. She also took account of the eight responses to the Ofsted staff questionnaire and the 14 responses to the pupils' questionnaire.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including the school's improvement plans. She examined information on current pupils' progress, minutes of the governing body meetings, safeguarding procedures and the plans for the use of the sport premium.
- The inspector listened to pupils read, talked with them in classrooms and evaluated samples of their work.

Inspection team

Sandra Woodman

Ofsted Inspector

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