

Welford and Wickham C.E. Primary School

Welford Road, Newbury, Berkshire RG20 8HL

Inspection dates

8–9 January 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	Outstanding

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The executive headteacher provides strong leadership. She has ensured that improvements in teaching, learning and assessment have led to improving pupils' progress over the past three years.
- Strong teaching ensures that pupils enjoy learning and deepen their knowledge, skills and understanding, particularly in reading and mathematics. Consequently, pupils make strong progress.
- Safeguarding is effective. Pupils feel safe. Staff are well trained in this area.
- Pupils behave well. Their attitudes to learning are very positive. Pupils are well mannered and behave respectfully towards each other and staff.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make good progress. This is due to strong teaching and the able support provided by teaching assistants.
- Pupils in key stage 2 do not make as much progress in writing compared to reading and mathematics because leaders' improvement strategies are not yet fully embedded.
- Strong teaching in the early years, together with effective support by teaching assistants, prepares children well for key stage 1.
- Pupils are well cared for by committed staff. The school's nurturing atmosphere ensures that pupils develop well academically and socially.
- Governors are passionate and committed. They play an integral part in school life. They know the school's strengths and weaknesses well, and are astute in challenging the school's leaders.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. Pupils do not make as much progress in some other subjects as they do in English and mathematics.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve writing in key stage 2 so that pupils reach the high standards of which they are capable.
- Develop the wider curriculum so that pupils continue to deepen their understanding in a range of subjects besides English and mathematics.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The executive headteacher's personal vision is that all pupils should achieve highly, both academically and socially. Staff share her ambition. Since starting in 2015 she has made sure that teaching has become increasingly effective. As a result, rates of progress in reading, writing and mathematics have improved steadily over the past three years.
- The executive headteacher has ensured that close links with Stockcross Primary School have led to improvements in staff training, governance and assessment. Staff in both schools liaise with each other regularly. For example, comparisons of key stage 1 work between the schools have led to assessments being more accurate.
- Leaders have imbued a culture of effective self-evaluation. They have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. This allows them to allocate resources sensibly to the right places in order to promote further improvements.
- Parents appreciate the high-quality communications they have with staff. The availability of leaders and staff is highly valued by parents. All parents who were spoken to by the inspector spoke of the commitment of staff and the support their children receive. One parent commented on the staff's 'huge passion', while another said that the school was like a 'big family'.
- Leaders identified the need for improvements to their assessment systems. Rightly, they have introduced increasingly effective ways to monitor pupils' progress. These allow leaders to react quickly when pupils fall behind. Pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics is now closely monitored.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. Pupils experience a range of opportunities in areas such as science, the arts, humanities and languages. Their knowledge and understanding are enhanced by many enrichment opportunities. For example, the whole school was taken to a science exhibition so that they could learn about topics such as astronomy and physics.
- Leaders regularly check the quality of teaching. Staff are well trained because leaders listen to their needs and provide effective support when it is needed. Consequently, teaching has improved so that pupils make strong progress.
- Staff feel valued and well supported by leaders. Opportunities to visit other schools, including Stockcross Primary School, have ensured that staff learn from others and have a wider experience of primary school teaching.
- Extra funding to support disadvantaged pupils is wisely allocated. It is used to ensure that the small proportion of disadvantaged pupils make good progress, similar to that of other pupils nationally.

Governance of the school

- Governors are articulate and passionate about promoting high standards. Training is well thought through and appropriate. Governors understand their safeguarding responsibilities well.

- Governors play a large part in school life. They attend school events and parents' evenings, and have built positive relationships with parents and staff.
- Governors challenge leaders on the effectiveness of their actions and on school standards. Monitoring visits enable governors to speak to leaders and staff about school improvement priorities and how well pupils achieve. As a result, leaders are held to account well.
- Governors have a wide range of relevant experience. This helps them to support leaders effectively. Governors share experiences and effective strategies with their counterparts at Stockcross Primary School. This further strengthens governors' expertise.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Safeguarding procedures and practices are well organised. Checks on the suitability of staff are managed effectively.
- There is a strong safeguarding culture in school that supports pupils' safety. Parents contribute to this culture by working with leaders to ensure that pupils are safe when traveling to and from school. For example, in a recent parent-forum meeting, parents highlighted concerns about the safety of pupils when arriving at school. Parents were concerned that the area outside school in the mornings was becoming congested. In response to this, leaders introduced a 'meet and greet' system so that children can be met from their cars by staff. This had the added safety benefit of reducing the number of parked cars outside the school in the morning.
- Leaders ensure that staff receive appropriate and up-to-date safeguarding training. Staff are vigilant in spotting signs that children may be at risk of harm. Appropriate action is taken if pupils are thought to be at risk, and these concerns are recorded efficiently. The effectiveness of safeguarding actions is now clear.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Good-quality teaching enthuses and engages pupils. Teachers know their pupils well and ensure that activities meet their needs.
- Teachers plan imaginative resources so that pupils' enthusiasm is sustained. Pupils are eager learners, quickly responding to teachers' instructions so that they get the most out of tasks. Consequently, time is used productively in lessons and this leads to increasingly good progress.
- Pupils respond with interest to teachers' skilful questioning and are eager and confident to join in discussions. Pupils enjoy their learning and deepen their understanding of increasingly complicated subject matter.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils. Tasks are challenging and encourage pupils to think hard. For example, Year 6 pupils were seen working in pairs, accurately multiplying fractions to work out the resources needed for the number of passengers on a cruise ship.

- The teaching of reading and mathematics has improved over the past three years so that pupils make consistently strong progress in these areas. However, there is still some variability in the quality of writing in some year groups. Leaders are aware of this, and strategies to improve pupils' writing are becoming increasingly effective.
- In most subjects, strong teaching leads to pupils deepening their understanding. In religious education, for example, Year 2 pupils learn about other religions in addition to Christianity. They develop their knowledge of religious practices, listening to teachers' stories and writing their own descriptions of the stories. In some subjects, however, standards are not as high, and pupils do not benefit from opportunities to deepen their understanding or remember what they have learned.
- Teachers give well-thought-through feedback to pupils in accordance with the school's assessment policy. Pupils respond well to this and learn from their mistakes so that they further develop their understanding. This is particularly successful in English and mathematics.
- Pupils read widely and often. They have well-developed knowledge of different authors and are willing to move through increasingly challenging texts in their own reading. Positive attitudes to reading are reinforced by vibrant wall displays. Teachers and teaching assistants support pupils' reading well in class. Those pupils who need extra help in developing their reading are ably supported.
- Teaching assistants provide effective support for pupils with SEND. Relationships between support staff and pupils are strong. This, together with careful planning, ensures that pupils with SEND make good progress from their starting points.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Leaders ensure that a nurturing environment encourages pupils to develop their confidence. Pupils readily participate in class activities, answer questions and are enthusiastic about learning more.
- Pupils wear their uniforms smartly. They are proud of their school and enjoy learning. Pupils are keen to participate in leadership opportunities, such as becoming a 'house captain'.
- Pupils are well prepared for their entry to secondary school by the time they leave Year 6. They are confident and ambitious for their futures.
- There are many opportunities within the curriculum for pupils to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. For example, pupils developed their understanding of the sacrifices made by soldiers during the First World War. They also deepened their understanding of the impact of war by studying war poetry.
- Pupils feel safe. They said that they find staff approachable if they are worried about anything.
- Pupils appreciate how to eat healthily, and understand the elements involved in living a healthy lifestyle. For example, pupils in Year 2 were able to explain how vegetables are

good for you.

- E-safety is taught well. Pupils can describe how to keep themselves safe online and the importance of keeping personal details private.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils behave well around school. They move around school in an orderly way and socialise well together. Pupils from all year groups eat their lunch in the school hall. With minimal supervision, pupils are well mannered and polite. They talk to each other during lunchtime and ensure that the area is kept very clean.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are very positive. In lessons, pupils are considerate of one another and respectful towards teachers. Pupils respond quickly to teachers' instructions. This leads to smooth transitions between activities and a calm and purposeful atmosphere.
- Bullying is very rare. Pupils said that if they are unkind to one another then staff take firm action to ensure that the unkindness stops.
- Pupils attend school very frequently. Attendance in 2017 was above the national average for primary schools. Very few pupils are persistently absent, and leaders ensure that effective support is put in place for those who are. For example, the 'walking bus', where pupils are met by staff in the local area and accompanied to school by other pupils and staff, supports punctuality, and has been particularly successful in ensuring that vulnerable pupils attend school on time.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Since the executive headteacher's appointment, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics combined, at the end of key stage 2, has increased sharply. The proportion of pupils reaching age-related expectations, or higher, was above average in 2018. Similarly, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher standard in reading, writing and mathematics was above average in 2018.
- At the end of key stage 1, the proportion of pupils achieving age-related expectations in reading and writing was average in 2018. Achievement in mathematics was slightly below average. However, current pupils are now making strong progress in mathematics in all year groups.
- Current pupils are making strong progress in reading in all year groups because of effective teaching and well-targeted support.
- In writing, pupils are making improved progress. In key stage 2, however, pupils do not do as well in writing as in reading and mathematics. Leaders are aware of this and have put in place increasingly effective strategies to ensure that pupils do better in this area.
- Disadvantaged pupils make strong progress because of carefully planned interventions. They attain standards that are similar to other pupils nationally.
- Pupils with SEND make strong progress. Their progress is closely monitored, and

effective interventions are put in place where they are needed.

Early years provision

Good

- Leaders have a clear and accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses in early years. They know their children well and ensure that they have a good understanding of the children's needs when they start at school.
- The early years area is vibrant and engaging. There are opportunities for children to work with others on planned tasks or explore resources independently. As a result, children develop their social skills well and learn to be resilient when working on their own.
- The proportion of children reaching a good level of development in 2018 dipped compared to 2017. However, current children make strong progress towards reaching a good level of development because of good teaching. Children with SEND are well supported so that they catch up if they have been behind.
- The early years curriculum is rich and varied. Children learn about a wide range of subjects, topics and ideas. They are encouraged to develop their literacy and mathematical skills during learning tasks. As a result, a high proportion of children develop these skills well.
- Leaders ensure that children get many rich opportunities within the curriculum. For example, children participated in a bicycle-safety course. This improved their coordination on bicycles and helped them learn about safe behaviour, such as wearing a helmet when cycling.
- Children are well looked after. Staff create a nurturing and caring environment while building children's resilience. As a result, children develop well emotionally.
- Children are very polite to visitors and they are respectful towards staff. Staff ensure that children quickly learn the formal rules of the classroom. For example, all children are able to sit on the carpet and respond appropriately to the teacher's questions. Children also wait for their turn to speak and comment sensibly on each other's responses.
- Extra funding for disadvantaged children is used effectively so that they make the same progress as their peers.
- Staff are trained in safeguarding and are diligent in ensuring that the early years environment is safe. Children are taught how to behave safely. They learn routines which will help them keep safe.

School details

Unique reference number	109984
Local authority	West Berkshire
Inspection number	10085495

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	97
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alison Wellman
Headteacher	Katie Dickens
Telephone number	01488 608306
Website	www.welfordandwickham.org.uk
Email address	office@welford.w-berks.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	March 2009

Information about this school

- Welford and Wickham Church of England School is smaller than the average-sized primary school. Year 1 and Year 2 pupils are taught in one mixed-age class. Year 3 and 4 pupils are also taught in a mixed-age class, as are pupils in Years 5 and 6.
- The executive headteacher joined the school in September 2015.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British background.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged is below the national average for primary schools.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is below the national average for primary schools.
- A Section 48 inspection was carried out in March 2014.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning, with the executive headteacher, in all classes across a range of subjects.
- The inspector held meetings with the executive headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, staff, and governors.
- Pupils' behaviour was observed in lessons, around the school and during break and lunchtimes.
- The inspector held a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector observed a reading intervention lesson and met formally with a group of pupils from key stage 2. The inspector also spoke to a range of pupils during social times and during lessons.
- Documentation was scrutinised by the inspector, including the school's plans for improvement, the school's self-evaluation, reports on attendance and behaviour, records relating to pupils' safety, minutes of governors' meetings, and information on pupils' outcomes.
- The inspector looked at samples of pupils' work and spoke to parents during the inspection.
- The inspector reviewed safeguarding records, including the central record of recruitment checks on staff.

Inspection team

Harry Ingham, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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