

Inspection of a good school: Whitecote Primary School

Wellington Grove, Bramley, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS13 2LQ

Inspection dates: 6–7 November 2019

Outcome

Whitecote Primary School continues to be a good school.

However, inspectors have some concerns that standards may be declining, as set out below.

What is it like to attend this school?

Staff greet pupils with a warm smile at the beginning of the day. Pupils at Whitecote are friendly, polite and respectful. Leaders have recently begun to promote the new Whitecote values to inspire, nurture and challenge. This has had a positive impact on behaviour. Rewards assemblies provide encouragement and acknowledge pupils' success. Parents are invited to share in these assemblies.

Most pupils think that behaviour is good in class and at breaktimes. Pupils are positive about the new behaviour and reward system. Behaviour is improving as a result. Pupils are beginning to take responsibility for their actions. They are able to do this by looking at the 'behaviour pyramid' in each classroom. Pupils enjoy sharing how well they have done with parents at the end of the day.

Parents are mostly supportive of the school and school leaders. Many say that their children are happy in school. They say that communication is good, and the school helps to sort out any problems quickly. Some parents say that behaviour is not dealt with and so some pupils do not feel safe.

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

The headteacher has correctly prioritised improving behaviour. The local authority is helping. Behaviour is now improving in some classes. Leaders have planned training for all staff to ensure that behaviour continues to improve. An attendance team ensures that all pupils are supported and rewarded to attend school. Attendance is improving as a result of this.

Leaders recognise that they need to improve the teaching of early reading. They understand the need for a clear structure and sequence for the teaching of phonics. Currently, teachers use more than one approach to teaching phonics. This is confusing for pupils. Teachers sometimes give pupils books that they cannot read. This leads to too

many pupils not learning to read as well as they should by the end of Year 1. Leaders have begun to work with a local English hub to help them to improve reading across school. Although some staff were trained to teach phonics a few years ago, staff have not had recent training.

Leaders have begun to make improvements to the way mathematics is taught. They are at the early stages of this and recognise the need for further training. Teachers are beginning to use the new methods, but some work is repetitive and too easy for pupils. Some teachers question pupils well and pupils are able to explain their understanding. Pupils are enthusiastic about mathematics lessons. They say they help each other, and that work is sometimes challenging.

Leaders have started to review the curriculum for subjects other than English and mathematics. Leaders have planned what pupils will learn. The history leader checks what pupils can remember. Leaders are planning ways to help pupils remember more about the history they have learned. In some classes, pupils use history vocabulary with confidence. Pupils develop their skills in history by studying a range of sources. These skills are developing over time.

In early years, leaders have thought carefully about what children will learn. Teachers provide the right resources to help children learn. The classroom is both calm and stimulating. All areas are well organised and encourage children to practise key skills. Children enjoy role play and play well with each other. Leaders want all children to do well. In the two-year-old provision, children were able to sit and listen to stories. Teachers encourage children to be independent. They can choose to work inside or outdoors. They put on their own coats. Many children in Reception have a good pencil grip and some can read as well as they should for their age. Phonics is taught daily from the beginning of Reception but it is not taught quickly enough for some children. They sometimes become distracted during teaching if work is too easy or too hard.

The curriculum supports pupils' personal development. They have opportunities to learn about moral issues, different cultures and religions through subjects such as religious education (RE) and music.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well. Leaders notice quickly if pupils need extra help. Teachers meet with parents to listen to their views.

Governors work with leaders and know what the priorities for improvement are. They work with the local authority partner to ensure that leaders are supported and challenged.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff get regular safeguarding training. They are up to date with the most recent child protection guidance. Staff know pupils and families well. They provide support quickly and effectively. Systems for staff to report concerns are straightforward and well understood.

The designated leaders for safeguarding are quick to follow up any concerns. They seek advice and support from other professionals when they need to.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils' behaviour has improved. However, leaders have not yet secured and embedded a consistent approach across the whole school. Leaders should make sure that pupils' behaviour continues to improve so that poor behaviour does not disrupt learning or make pupils feel unsafe.
- The teaching of reading is not meeting the needs of all pupils. Staff do not use a systematic approach to teaching phonics and early reading. Staff who teach phonics are not suitably trained. Leaders need to make sure that the support provided for the pupils who did not pass the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 is more closely matched to their needs so that they catch up quickly.
- The quality of education across the school is variable. In some subjects such as history and mathematics, leaders and teachers need support to improve planning. Leaders should identify what specific knowledge and skills pupils need to move on to the next stage of learning.
- Leaders need to develop teachers' use of assessment in all subjects so that they organise work which builds on what pupils, including those with SEND, already know and can do.

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 a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged Whitecote Primary School to be good on 26–27 April 2016.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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	107970
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	10110834
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	443
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Suzanne Hawkshaw
Headteacher	Frances Stead
Website	www.whitecoteprimary.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	26–27 April 2016

Information about this school

- This is the first inspection since this school was judged to be good at the previous inspection on 26–27 April 2016.
- Whitecote Primary School provides before- and after-school care.
- The school has provision for two-year-olds.

Information about this inspection

- During the inspection, I spoke with pupils, both formally and informally, about their work and school life. I spoke with members of the local governing body, the school achievement partner, the headteacher and members of staff. I reviewed a range of documentation including documentation about attendance, behaviour and safeguarding.
- I looked closely at reading, mathematics and history. I held discussions with subject leaders, visited lessons, looked at examples of pupils' and children's work from each subject, held discussions with teachers and pupils about these subjects and listened to children read.
- I took the 57 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, into account. I

spoke with parents at the end of the day.

- I examined the processes for safeguarding. I looked at policies and procedures, checked the school's central record of staff and spoke to governors and teachers about safeguarding. I also spoke to many pupils.

Inspection team

Alexa O'Gara, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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