

# Inspection of a good school: Wansdyke School

Downlands Road, Devizes, Wiltshire, SN10 5EF

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Inspection dates:

17 and 18 November 2021

## **Outcome**

Wansdyke School continues to be a good school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils flourish personally and academically at this happy and friendly school. They understand and follow the school's 'INSPIRE' values in all they do. For example, pupils are 'resilient' when they find things challenging and 'supportive' when friends need help.

Pupils learn about important topics in the curriculum, such as diversity and inclusion. They say that 'we make anyone feel welcome', regardless of difference. Pupils, including those in the specialist resource base 'Rainbow', feel safe and enjoy belonging to Wansdyke School.

Pupils are polite and respectful towards each other and all staff. They behave very well in lessons and around the school. Pupils rarely need reminding about the behaviour rules. They say that bullying is not a problem. Pupils are confident that adults will sort out any of their worries without delay.

Leaders have put together a purposeful and engaging curriculum. Staff skilfully make connections between subjects to help pupils have a better understanding of what they learn. They enhance the curriculum further through visits and workshops. Parents and carers comment positively about the richness of the curriculum and the nurturing environment.

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

Leaders pay great attention to reading. Pupils experience a rich diet of literature. This ranges from traditional tales in Reception to Shakespeare in key stage 2. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their love of reading. They say how 'reading helps to get you caught up in your imagination'. Pupils enjoy the 'book club' sessions, where they read, discuss and debate different viewpoints and opinions. Teachers expertly draw out pupils' understanding of what they are reading. Leaders match high-quality texts to the class topics. Pupils apply their reading skills well across other subjects.

Leaders' revised approach to phonics teaching is beginning to pay off. In Reception, children can read and write simple words from the sounds they know. They build on this knowledge in Years 1 and 2 by reading and spelling more complex combinations of sounds. Staff use assessment well to ensure that pupils keep up with the pace of the phonics programme. Pupils who fall behind receive the help they need to get back on track. However, leaders have not made sure that these pupils consistently read books that contain the sounds they know. This means they sometimes struggle to read accurately.

Leaders have worked successfully to develop a curriculum that is ambitious for all pupils. They have identified the exact knowledge that they want pupils to know and remember in each subject. Leaders have used staff training and research to inform their decisions. For example, teachers carefully plan assessment quizzes to help pupils secure their understanding.

Teachers break learning down into small manageable steps, so that all pupils can succeed. They revisit prior learning to help pupils remember more as they move through the school. In science, for example, pupils apply their knowledge of solids, liquids and gases from Year 4 to help understand chemical changes in Year 5. Similarly, in art and design, pupils in Year 3 produce work of a high standard based on refining printing techniques started in Year 1. Leaders' well-sequenced plans help pupils gain a deep and thorough knowledge of each subject. Nevertheless, leaders are not complacent. They recognise that, due to the disruption caused by the national pandemic, some subject leaders are at the early stage of evaluating the impact of their work across the whole school.

Leaders include pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities in all aspects of school life. They have a precise understanding of pupils with the most complex needs. Leaders ensure that effective support is in place for pupils who need it. Staff adapt learning, so that pupils experience success.

Relationships between staff and pupils are strong. Pupils have positive attitudes and want to learn. This means that classrooms are calm and purposeful places.

Leaders provide frequent opportunities to develop pupils as responsible young citizens. Pupils play an active role in raising money for charities and help organise fundraising events. Leaders weave the concepts of equality and acceptance into all they do. For example, through teaching about different relationships and naming the school's houses after inspirational young adults from diverse backgrounds. Pupils say this inspires them to follow their dreams.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a strong culture of safeguarding. They ensure that all staff understand their role in keeping pupils safe. Staff know how to spot and report any pupils who may be at risk. Trust and academy council members monitor the effectiveness of school systems, such as safer recruitment, and provide an extra layer of vigilance. Leaders act quickly to engage external agency support for families.

Staff keep pupils well informed of ways to stay safe in different situations. For example, fire safety, the appropriate use of the internet and evacuation drills.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- For some of the younger pupils at the early stages of reading, teachers do not consistently match the reading books to the sounds that pupils know. When this is the case, pupils struggle to read unfamiliar words. Leaders should ensure that these pupils have reading books that are well matched to the sounds they have already learned.
- Subject leaders have started to review and refine the curriculum plans. In a minority of subjects, this work is at an early stage of development. Leaders should continue to support subject leaders to monitor and evaluate how well pupils learn across the school.

## **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 or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, 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 deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Wansdyke School, to be good on 8 and 9 March 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 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.

If you are the school and 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	139303
<b>Local authority</b>	Wiltshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10199670
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	233
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	David Middleton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Samuel Heard
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.wansdyke.wilts.sch.uk">www.wansdyke.wilts.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	8 – 9 March 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school joined the Acorn Education Trust in December 2019. This is a group of 10 primary schools and two secondary schools within the local area.
- There have been many changes to staffing and governance since the previous inspection. The current headteacher and deputy headteacher have been in post since January 2020. An executive headteacher oversees the work of the school.
- The school has its own academy council with delegated responsibilities. The chair of the academy council was elected in May 2021.
- The school has a specialist resource base for pupils with complex needs. Currently, there are 28 pupils accessing this provision.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation.

- The inspector met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, the executive headteacher, the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust and the chair of trustees.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, art and design and science. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of work.
- The inspector also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about other subjects, including history and geography.
- The inspector listened to pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 read to an adult.
- The inspector reviewed the school's safeguarding documentation, including the single central record. The inspector considered how well safeguarding leaders act on concerns about pupils' welfare and safety. The inspector talked to pupils and staff about safe working practices.
- The inspector considered 47 responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including 39 free-text responses and 27 responses to the staff survey.

### **Inspection team**

Dale Burr, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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