

Inspection of Wenlock CofE Junior School

Beaconsfield Road, Luton, Bedfordshire LU2 0RW

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 November 2021

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Inadequate

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils who attend Wenlock Junior School do not receive a good quality of education. Pupils have gaps in their knowledge and understanding which are not identified. Consequently, pupils do not make sufficient progress and are not prepared well for the next stages of their education.

When pupils start in Year 3, their reading skills are not checked rigorously. This means that some pupils continue to struggle with their reading. These pupils find other areas of the curriculum hard to access.

Pupils are kind and respectful towards each other. Most pupils behave well at breaktimes. They follow instructions and play happily with one another. However, during lesson times, pupils' attitudes towards their learning can be indifferent. When pupils lose interest, because learning is too easy or too tricky, they do not persevere. There are too many occasions when pupils busy themselves with other activities rather than continue with their work.

Pupils feel safe and do not consider that bullying is a problem. Pupils are confident that staff will help them if they have any worries or concerns. Parents typically say that they appreciate the care the school provides for their children.

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

Leaders, including governors, have an over-generous view of the school's effectiveness. They have not recognised what is necessary to improve the quality of education and pupils' outcomes. Actions to address these weaknesses, and the checking of their impact, have lacked sufficient rigour and urgency. The quality of education is not getting better quickly enough to ensure pupils achieve as well as they should across all year groups and in all curriculum areas.

The curriculum is broad and covers all the subjects from the national curriculum. However, leaders' curriculum plans do not routinely provide enough guidance for teachers. Staff are not clear what important knowledge pupils need to be taught and what they need to remember in each year group. Teaching is disjointed because lessons do not enable pupils to build on what they already know. This means pupils do not learn effectively over time.

Leaders have prioritised improving pupils' reading. These include pupils who are still in the early stages of reading. However, not all leaders have a clear overview of how reading, including phonics, is taught. Leaders do not check carefully that the actions taken are making a positive difference. For example, whether staff training is improving how reading is taught so that pupils quickly develop their reading skills and fluency.

Too many pupils do not engage well in their learning. This is especially the case when teaching is poorly planned and delivered. Additionally, teachers' expectations of how pupils should behave in lessons are too low. A few pupils' behaviour is more challenging, and this disrupts the learning of others. Staff do not use the school's agreed behaviour policy consistently to support pupils' behaviour.

Leaders do not identify the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) accurately. This means that staff do not always provide the right support. Leaders do not check how effectively staff help pupils with SEND to access the curriculum, including in the Lighthouse provision. As a result, pupils with SEND do not achieve as well as they should.

Leaders ensure that pupils learn about healthy relationships and different religions and beliefs. However, pupils do not have enough opportunities to widen their talents and interests or contribute to school life. This is because leaders have not planned how they will promote pupils' personal and social development in sufficient detail to ensure that all pupils learn about life in modern Britain and have the knowledge and skills to be well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Governors are not effective in their role. They do not have the knowledge and understanding required to hold leaders to account for the quality of education that the school provides. Governors do not fulfil their statutory safeguarding duties. They do not check that safeguarding policies and systems are effective.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Leaders provided effective support for vulnerable pupils and their families during the COVID-19 pandemic. They increased the level of personal and pastoral support to those most in need.

Leaders provide staff with up-to-date training. However, leaders do not check that all staff understand this training so that they have the knowledge and confidence to identify when pupils may be at risk of harm. Leaders do not have an effective oversight of their safeguarding responsibilities. They are not rigorous in checking that all concerns are followed through and in a timely manner so that vulnerable pupils get the help they need.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The culture of safeguarding at the school is weak. Despite staff training, leaders have not ensured that staff understand the signs that might indicate a pupil is at risk of harm. Senior leaders do not have a clear oversight of safeguarding concerns. They do not follow up all concerns to check that pupils are receiving

the right support. Leaders must put rigorous systems in place to ensure that training is effective. Additionally, that appropriate actions are taken in a timely manner so that vulnerable pupils receive the support they need, and leaders are assured they are safe.

- Leaders' curriculum plans do not identify clearly what pupils will be taught and in what order. Teachers do not receive enough guidance about the important content they need to teach pupils. Leaders must ensure that curriculum plans in all subjects set out the key knowledge and skills for pupils to learn successfully. Leaders need to check that these plans are followed accurately by all teachers so that pupils build on what they already know and achieve well over time.
- The reading curriculum is not effective. Leaders do not systematically check that their approaches to teaching reading, including phonics, are successful. This means that pupils who struggle with reading are not making sufficient progress and are not catching up quickly enough. Leaders should ensure that the training staff receive is improving pupils' reading.
- Pupils' behaviour is too variable. When teaching is not appropriately planned and adapted, pupils disengage and do not learn successfully. Leaders must make sure that the school's agreed policy and strategies to improve pupils' behaviour are implemented consistently across the school. This includes pupils receiving support from the Lighthouse provision.
- Leaders do not identify the needs of pupils with SEND accurately or the help that will support them to make strong progress in their learning. Leaders should ensure that teachers identify the needs of pupils with SEND quickly, put appropriate support in place and monitor that this has a positive impact on pupils' achievement.
- Leaders do not provide enough opportunities to promote some aspects of pupils' personal and social development. Pupils are keen to develop their interests and play their part in improving the school. Leaders should ensure that a clear and coherent curriculum is in place for pupils to learn fully about life in modern Britain and build on their personal and social skills effectively.
- Leaders, including governors, do not have an accurate view of the effectiveness of the school. They do not identify and implement the right actions that will move the school forward. This means that they do not provide the right challenge to support school improvement by holding senior and middle leaders to account. Leaders, including governors, need support and training to identify the main priorities that will help improve the quality of education, ensure that pupils are safe and check that pupils achieve well.

Leaders and those responsible for governance may not appoint early career teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

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

Unique reference number	109633
Local authority	Luton
Inspection number	10200528
Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	309
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Ian Benjamin
Headteacher	Alex Prior
Website	www.wenlockjunior.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 May 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Wenlock Church of England Junior School is a voluntary aided school. It is part of the Diocese of St Albans. The religious character of the school was inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 in June 2016.
- The school is larger than the average-sized junior school.
- The school hosts the 'lighthouse provision', a unit for pupils with behavioural, social and emotional needs.
- Some of the senior leaders have been supporting another local school during the past year.

Information about this inspection

The inspector(s) carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons

responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, subject leaders, the special educational needs coordinator, a representative from the local authority, groups of staff and pupils, and two representatives from the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, science, geography and computing. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum documents and visited a sample of lessons. They also spoke to teachers and pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- An inspector listened to pupils, who were at the early stages of reading, read to an adult.
- Inspectors looked at how the school keeps pupils safe. The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead. Inspectors also scrutinised safeguarding documentation.
- Inspectors considered the 13 responses made by parents to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and the 13 responses to Ofsted's free-text system. Inspectors also spoke to some parents at the start of the school day. Additionally, inspectors took account of the 48 responses to Ofsted's online staff survey and the 80 responses to Ofsted's online pupil survey.

Inspection team

Lesley Stevens, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Daniel Short

Her Majesty's Inspector

Linda Bartlett

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2021