

Inspection of Wilbury Junior School

Bedford Road, Letchworth Garden City, Hertfordshire SG6 4DU

Inspection dates: 1 and 2 February 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5
of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They experience a broad curriculum that extends their understanding of the world. Pupils work hard in lessons and are eager to learn. However, some pupils do not make as much progress as they should in some subjects. Some pupils are not well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Pupils are friendly, welcoming and polite. Pupils join the school in Year 3 and settle quickly. They are clear about routines and expectations. Pupils are happy and feel safe. They say that bullying is rare. When it does happen, it is followed up quickly and resolved. Pupils know that adults are there to help them if they have worries or concerns. Pupils appreciate the support they receive to help them overcome any challenges or difficulties they may have.

Pupils behave well in lessons and at breaktimes. They take pride in their learning. They listen carefully to adults and each other. Pupils become confident, resilient learners.

Feedback from parents is overwhelmingly positive. Parents appreciate the commitment and determination of leaders and staff to create a caring school ethos in which their children feel valued.

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

Since converting to become an academy, leaders have steadily improved the school. They have established a positive school ethos. Leaders have raised expectations of what all pupils can and should achieve. Leaders are bringing about improvements in the quality of education.

In English, all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are learning well and improving from their starting points. The curriculum is well designed and supports pupils to become confident and fluent readers. Pupils read widely and often. Pupils enjoy the books that they explore together in class. The curriculum is structured to help pupils extend their vocabulary knowledge. Pupils consider the techniques authors use to create atmosphere or suspense. Pupils apply these techniques well in their own writing.

Subject leaders have set out clearly what pupils should learn in each subject. Leaders have reviewed their plans so that teachers revisit aspects of the curriculum that pupils have missed because of the pandemic.

In lessons, teachers do not routinely check what pupils know and understand. This means that some pupils, including those with SEND, are not securing important knowledge before they move on to new learning. In mathematics, for example, pupils' errors and misunderstandings are not systematically addressed. Some pupils do not develop the secure knowledge and understanding they need to be well prepared for their next stage in education.

Leaders have established a strong culture of respect. One pupil spoke for many when they said, 'We respect everyone for their unique qualities.' Relationships between adults and pupils are very positive. Adults model the behaviours they expect from pupils. Staff have high expectations of pupils' learning and behaviour. This helps create a positive environment in which pupils are ready to learn. Pupils say that adults treat them fairly. Pupils are learning strategies that enable them to be successful in school and in the future.

Leaders plan and promote pupils' personal, social, health and economic education and personal development well. Pupils are learning to become active and responsible citizens. Leaders actively seek the views of pupils to help improve the school. The 'Wilbury parliament' helps pupils develop their understanding of democracy. Pupils have regular opportunities to debate and share their ideas. Pupils learn that their voices and views count and that they can make a difference.

The trust and the academy's governing body provide effective challenge and support for school leaders. They are well informed and hold leaders to account for their actions to improve the school. Governors and school leaders have a shared understanding of what needs to improve. This is bringing about a positive change in school culture and in the quality of education that pupils receive.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a positive culture of safeguarding. Staff receive regular training. This helps keep safeguarding at the forefront of everybody's mind. Staff are vigilant and use the school's clear systems for reporting concerns appropriately. When concerns are raised, these are followed up promptly. Leaders work effectively with other agencies to ensure that families can access the support they need. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including online. Pupils identify adults they trust, with whom they can share their worries or concerns.

The single central record of pre-employment checks is up to date.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers do not use assessment well enough in lessons to identify what pupils know and understand. As a result, pupils are taught aspects of the curriculum they are not ready for, such as in mathematics. Leaders should ensure that teachers routinely check pupils' understanding in lessons, address misconceptions and enable pupils to secure the knowledge they need. Subject leadership is underdeveloped.

- Subject leaders are not fully effective in ensuring that all pupils learn the curriculum well across all subjects so that pupils know more, remember more and achieve well. Leaders should ensure that subject leadership is fully effective so that the curriculum is implemented consistently, so all pupils achieve well in the subjects they study.

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	144903
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10212040
Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	273
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Patrick McAteer
Headteacher	Chelsea Atkins
Website	www.wilbury.herts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Wilbury Junior School converted to become an academy school in September 2017. When its predecessor school, Wilbury Junior School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be requires improvement overall.
- Wilbury Junior School is part of the Agora Learning Partnership (formerly the Herts for Learning Multi Academy Trust), which consists of nine primary schools in Hertfordshire.
- A new leadership team has been appointed since the school became an academy. The headteacher was appointed in April 2019. The deputy headteacher took up her role in June 2019. The assistant headteacher for inclusion, who is also the special educational needs coordinator, was appointed in January 2020.
- The chair of the academy governing body was appointed in September 2018.
- The school runs a breakfast and after-school club which is open to pupils who attend the school.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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

- Inspectors met with the headteacher and the senior leadership team.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of trustees, the chair and vice-chair of the academy governing body and the safeguarding governor, who joined the meeting via telephone.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, computing, history and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors reviewed the information that is published on the school's website, including school policies and information about the curriculum, including the provision for remote learning.
- The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead, the well-being leader and the assistant headteacher to discuss the arrangements that are in place to safeguard pupils and staff.
- Inspectors scrutinised the single central record of pre-employment checks and the school's safeguarding records.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's behaviour records, including records of bullying incidents and how these are followed up. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, in assembly and at breaktimes.
- Inspectors met with pupils and with staff to gather their views.
- Inspectors considered the 51 responses to Ofsted Parent View, together with 41 free-text comments. Inspectors reviewed the 36 responses to Ofsted's staff survey. They also considered the 198 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.

Inspection team

Katherine Douglas, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Sharon Waldron	Her Majesty's Inspector
Sara Boyce	Ofsted Inspector

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