

Inspection of Whitefriars Primary School

Boughton Drive, Rushden, Northamptonshire NN10 9HX

Inspection dates: 1 and 2 February 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Whitefriars Primary is a happy and safe place to learn. Leaders place a strong focus on promoting respect. Pupils told the inspectors: 'Everyone is special, everyone is equal. Teachers respect us and we respect them.' Pupils understand the school's values of 'respect, responsibility, compassion, courage and integrity'. They appreciate and celebrate the differences between groups of people.

Leaders and governors expect all pupils to achieve well. They are ambitious and support pupils to 'learn for life together'. Leaders work hard to help pupils become considerate and caring young citizens. Pupils are well prepared for secondary school by the time they reach the end of Year 6.

Pupils know that leaders and teachers expect them to behave sensibly. Most pupils behave well. Leaders provide appropriate support for those pupils who sometimes struggle with their behaviour. Pupils are understanding of others, and want their classmates to succeed. Pupils understand what bullying is. Pupils said that staff help them if problems do ever arise.

Pupils enjoy the positions of responsibility they hold. These include anti-bullying ambassadors and librarians. Pupils' learning is enhanced by a variety of trips and visitors to the school. Leaders make sure that all pupils can be part of these activities.

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

Leaders are determined that all pupils will achieve well, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders' plans for the curriculum set out what they expect all pupils to learn in every year group, including in the early years. Teachers are knowledgeable and deliver a well-planned curriculum. This is particularly effective in key stage 2. In mathematics, for example, pupils' learning is well sequenced and broken down into small steps. Teachers check what pupils know and remember before moving on. In early years, children secure their knowledge of number in a well-sequenced way.

Reading is prioritised across the school. Leaders and teachers ensure that pupils quickly learn to read. Children learn phonics from when they start school. They can soon recognise letters and the sounds they represent as they begin to read simple words. Staff have received suitable training in how to teach phonics. This means that staff deliver the early reading programme well. Leaders carefully track pupils' acquisition of phonics knowledge. Those pupils who fall behind receive support to catch up quickly. Pupils have positive attitudes to reading. Older pupils understand why reading is so important. One pupil told the inspectors: 'Reading books can take you to a magical place and can let you see what is happening in the world.'

Leaders ensure that pupils with SEND feel welcome in the school, and learn the full range of subjects in the curriculum. Leaders and staff quickly identify pupils with SEND. Learning activities are adapted to take account of an individual's needs. Pupils with SEND said that they feel supported by the staff.

In subjects such as history, geography and music, teachers check what pupils know and remember. This is mostly through questioning pupils about their learning in lessons. There are effective assessment procedures in place for reading and mathematics. Assessment in the other subject areas is not yet consistently in place. This needs to be further developed to ensure that teachers understand exactly what pupils know and remember.

The school's curriculum is broad and balanced. Leaders have thought carefully about what Whitefriars pupils need to learn. Teachers make sure that pupils learn about life beyond their local community. Pupils enjoy learning about different cultures and families. Pupils respect diversity. One pupil told the inspectors: 'We should all be treated the same. It doesn't matter who you live with, as long as they look after you.'

Leaders prioritise pupils' personal development. Pupils have many opportunities to develop their talents and interests. Numerous experiences, such as sporting competitions, learning a musical instrument and visits to the opera house, are available to all pupils. The curriculum is enhanced further through a wide range of extra-curricular activities. These are well attended.

Leaders have high expectations for pupils' behaviour. They know their pupils well, and act early to support pupils who might struggle. A few younger pupils find it difficult to stay on task in lessons. Teachers are supporting these pupils to help them to focus on their learning.

Governors and the local authority provide rigorous support and challenge. The governors have a wide range of skills. They are clear about their statutory duties. Staff appreciate the support given by leaders and governors. They said that leaders always consider their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff have received the training needed to make sure that pupils are safe. They are vigilant and quick to act on any concerns. Leaders are not afraid to challenge external agencies to get the best outcomes for pupils. Leaders keep detailed records of the actions taken, and follow up when necessary. Governors check the school's single central record. They make sure that all appropriate checks are made on adults before they go into school.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations. Leaders have made sure that pupils know how to stay safe when learning online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Assessment of the foundation subjects is not yet consistently in place. As a result, teachers are less confident about checking on how pupils' knowledge and understanding in some subjects are developing. This means that it is difficult to determine where further support may be required. Leaders should carefully monitor the effectiveness of assessment, to ensure that pupils know and remember more across the school's curriculum.
- Leaders have sequenced the intended learning in the curriculum clearly. However, there are variations in the implementation of the curriculum in some subjects and some year groups. Leaders should ensure that they closely monitor the implementation of the curriculum, so that pupils receive the highest-quality teaching in all year groups.

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	121909
Local authority	North Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10210948
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	408
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Clare Atthews
Headteacher	Lucy Burman
Website	www.whitefriarsprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	4 October 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. This was as Whitefriars Infant School.

Information about this school

- The school became a primary school in September 2017, when Whitefriars Infant School and Whitefriars Junior School amalgamated. Whitefriars Junior School was last inspected by Ofsted in 2013, and was judged to be good overall. Whitefriars Infant School was last inspected in October 2016. This was a short inspection. The school remained good.
- The headteacher took up post in September 2017.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

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.

- During the inspection, inspectors discussed the curriculum with the headteacher, the two assistant headteachers, the SEND coordinator, the early years leader, curriculum subject leaders and teachers from across all year groups. Inspectors also met with members of the governing body. Inspectors spoke to a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke with several groups of pupils to talk about their learning across the curriculum.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics, music, geography and history. Inspectors discussed the curriculum with the leaders of these subjects. Inspectors visited lessons, spoke with pupils and teachers, listened to pupils read, looked at pupils' work and looked at documentation to understand the quality of education.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors reviewed school policies, procedures and records. Inspectors spoke with the designated safeguarding lead. Inspectors also spoke to staff, governors and pupils about the school's approach to keeping pupils safe.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school.
- Inspectors considered 48 responses to Ofsted Parent View, as well as 49 free-text comments. Inspectors also considered the views of staff from meetings with groups of staff.

Inspection team

Kirsty Norbury, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
John Craig	Ofsted Inspector
Elizabeth Mace	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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