

Inspection of Widden Primary School

Sinope Street, Gloucester, Gloucestershire GL1 4AW

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 March 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy at this welcoming and diverse school. Leaders and staff ensure that all pupils are accepted, and that different cultures are celebrated.

Leaders, including governors, are ambitious for all pupils. However, the quality of education is not yet good. Significant turbulence in leadership means that planned improvements to the curriculum have not happened. As a result, pupils are not developing their knowledge as well as they could.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils' conduct. Pupils like the recent changes to the way behaviour is managed. They say that bullying is rare, and that staff take swift action to address any issues. However, teachers do not always have high enough expectations of pupils. Not all pupils have acquired important behaviours and attitudes to support their learning. For example, older pupils sometimes do not commit themselves to producing good-quality work.

Relationships are strong because pupils trust adults to keep them safe. Pupils learn to respect one another. They interact well during learning and breaktimes. Recent work to address poor attendance is beginning to ensure that fewer pupils are regularly missing school.

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

Leaders have designed the curriculum taking into consideration the context and background of the school community. Key knowledge is sequenced from the early years onwards, which provides a coherent structure for pupils' learning. However, leaders have not checked that teachers are delivering this knowledge as expected. This means that pupils do not learn well enough across the curriculum.

In some subjects, teachers use assessment well to ensure that pupils learn the right knowledge in the right order. However, in other subjects, assessment is not used well enough to check that pupils learn effectively.

Leaders have prioritised a love of reading. Teachers demonstrate a love of reading. Pupils enjoy choosing from a variety of books and talk with enthusiasm about the books they have read, including children in the early years. Children start learning to read as soon as they start in Reception. However, the teaching of reading is not effective, particularly for those who are struggling to read. The delivery of the reading curriculum is not consistent across the school. Leaders have not ensured that the subject knowledge of teachers and support staff is strong enough to help pupils catch up quickly.

Pupils' personal development is built on the school's seven core values. Pupils learn about friendship and how to listen to one another respectfully. They show a secure understanding of right and wrong and are proud of the responsibilities they have.

Nevertheless, there is more to do to ensure that pupils understand fundamental British values and learn how to keep themselves safe in the community.

Governors are determined that every pupil reaches their full potential. They understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They recognise that the many changes to leadership have hampered improvements.

Staff are positive about their work in the school. They feel supported by leaders and appreciate the focus on their well-being.

Leaders have established systems that ensure staff have a detailed understanding of the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils with the most complex needs are well supported. However, teachers do not yet adapt the curriculum effectively to give all pupils with SEND the precise support they need.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils say that they feel safe. They talk confidently about some ways to stay safe, particularly when using the internet. Leaders also ensure pupils know about risks within their local area.

Staff understand how to keep children safe. Regular training ensures they are well informed. They follow school systems and policies well so that concerns are shared in a timely and effective manner.

Leaders have effective systems in place for reporting and reviewing safeguarding concerns. They escalate concerns to external agencies where necessary and demonstrate tenacity in following these up. Leaders manage the safe recruitment of staff with diligence.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There are inconsistencies in the teaching of phonics and reading. This means too many pupils are not learning to read as well as they could. Leaders must ensure evaluations of teaching are accurate and lead to precise support for groups and individuals so that pupils can reach their full potential.
- Subject leaders have designed a suitable curriculum but have not checked that it is being implemented effectively. Across a number of subjects, teaching does not match leaders' expectations. Leaders need to ensure that teaching supports pupils to know and remember more of the curriculum.
- Teachers do not plan effectively for all pupils with SEND. This means that teaching does not support pupils to take important next steps. Leaders need to

develop staff's expertise to ensure that provision enables these pupils to reach the potential they are capable of.

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	115481
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10211723
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	361
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Sanjai Desai
Headteacher	Paulina Kirkpatrick
Website	www.widdenprimaryschool.net
Dates of previous inspection	14 and 15 March 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There have been a number of changes to senior leadership at the school. The current headteacher has been supporting the school since January 2022. She was appointed as interim headteacher in February 2022.
- The school has recently opened breakfast- and after-school club provision.
- The school does not use any alternative provision for pupils.

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. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science, history and physical education. For each deep dive, the inspector 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.

- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the assistant headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, the pastoral leader, curriculum leaders and teaching and support staff.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of the governing body, two other members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors met with designated safeguarding leaders to discuss how they keep pupils safe in school. They considered the school's recruitment procedures, staff induction and training, records of concerns and leaders' engagement with external agencies. The inspectors also spoke with staff and pupils throughout the inspection.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils in the early years and key stages 1 and 2 read to an adult.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. In addition, they met with pupils both informally and formally to hear their views.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses. Inspectors also took into consideration responses to the staff survey. There were no responses to the pupil survey.
- Inspectors examined a range of documentation provided by the school, including the school's self-evaluation document, the school's improvement plan and documentation relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Angela Folland, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Stephen Wigley

Ofsted Inspector

Leanne Thirlby

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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