

# Inspection of a good school: Wilstead Primary School

Cotton End Road, Wilstead, Bedford, Bedfordshire MK45 3BX

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Inspection dates:

16 and 17 March 2022

## **Outcome**

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this initial (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a full inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a full (section 5) inspection.

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

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They listen carefully in lessons and are eager to learn. Some lesson activities do not give pupils enough opportunity to deepen their understanding. Therefore, some pupils are not well enough prepared for the next stage in their education.

Respect and tolerance are at the forefront of how pupils behave. Pupils behave well in lessons and at breaktimes. They are friendly and welcoming to all. Pupils say how 'theme weeks' and 'dress-up' days help them to understand differences.

Pupils at Wilstead Primary School are safe and well cared for. Pupils say that incidents are resolved quickly by the pupils themselves, or they know that they can go to adults for help if needed. Pupils say that bullying is rare. When it does happen, it is quickly followed up and addressed.

Pupils welcome the opportunities that are available to take on additional responsibilities, such as those of sports leaders and head boy or head girl. They also enjoy the range of clubs that are on offer, for example for ballet, choir and dodgeball.

Feedback from parents and carers is positive. Parents appreciate the care and support that their children receive.

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

Leaders' actions are bringing about improvements in the quality of education.

In reading and mathematics, pupils are learning well over time because the curriculum is effectively planned and delivered. Leaders have secure subject knowledge. They have

created a carefully considered curriculum that builds pupils' knowledge well over time. Leaders also provide teachers with appropriate support and training. Teachers effectively check pupils' understanding and can quickly identify where and when pupils need further support. This results in pupils achieving well over time in these core areas of the curriculum.

Leaders have prioritised learning to read across the school. Pupils have books that accurately match their reading ability. Pupils read regularly, and any gaps in reading skills are quickly identified and addressed. Pupils enjoy the books read to them in class. These often inspire the pupils' own reading choices. This high priority given to reading, as well as a well-planned and taught reading curriculum, contribute to pupils becoming confident and fluent readers.

While the reading curriculum provides effective skills to learn in other subjects, leaders have identified that further work is needed to ensure that learning in the foundation subjects is as effective as that in mathematics and English. Subject leaders have not considered what pupils need to learn for each subject, and curriculum thinking does not identify clearly enough the essential knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn year on year. As a result, teachers are not supported well enough to deliver leaders' intended curriculum. Consequently, pupils do not consistently build a strong base for future learning throughout the foundation areas of the curriculum.

Leaders accurately identify the specific needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders have focused on ensuring that teachers are being trained to be able to support pupils well, so pupils are accessing the curriculum they intend. Training has started to support teachers to identify pupils with SEND more accurately. Teachers are taking a more active role in securing effective plans to support pupils with SEND. However, this work is in its infancy and not fully developed throughout the school.

The curriculum in early years considers what children need in order to be well prepared for Year 1. Teachers provide a range of opportunities, in both adult-led and independent activities, for children to learn new skills, and to apply them and develop their knowledge. Throughout the school, pupils behave well. This is because the agreed systems are being used consistently and pupils understand what is expected of them.

Leaders plan and promote pupils' personal, social and health education and personal development well. Pupils learn how to be resilient, and responsible and active citizens. Leaders listen to what pupils think. The use of ballot boxes in school has helped the pupils to learn that their voices are valued.

Governors and school leaders have a shared understanding of what the school needs to do to improve. Governors carry out their statutory duties appropriately. Governors do not have secure enough systems in place to hold leaders to account, particularly in respect of the quality of education. This is because they do not have a deep enough understanding of what the quality of the curriculum needs to be in order to support pupils to know and remember more in all curriculum areas effectively.

In discussion with the headteacher, the inspector agreed that building subject leaders' knowledge and further training for staff to teach the foundation subjects well, and embedding the provision for pupils with SEND, may usefully serve as a focus for the next inspection.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a positive culture for safeguarding. Staff are well trained on what signs to look out for if pupils are at risk. Staff know how to report concerns.

When concerns are raised, these are followed up promptly by leaders. Leaders work effectively with other agencies to ensure that families can access the support they need.

Pupils know how to keep safe both in school and in the wider world, for example by staying safe when online.

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

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

- Curriculum thinking for many aspects of the quality of education is not well thought through. This limits how well leaders can support teachers and how effectively they check the effectiveness of the area of the curriculum they lead. Leaders should ensure that subject leaders are well trained and supported to carry out their leadership role effectively.
- The full curriculum is not carefully considered and implemented consistently. Leaders need to ensure that their intended curriculum is thought through, so that the knowledge pupils need to build throughout the curriculum is clear, and so that teachers are able to deliver it effectively and the quality of education improves.
- Provision for pupils with SEND has recently been reviewed. Pupils' needs are more accurately identified, and staff are developing confidence to implement plans. Further training for staff and regular reviews of plans will ensure that the needs of pupils with SEND are more effectively met.
- While governors carry out their statutory duties effectively and understand what the school needs to do to improve, they do not hold leaders sufficiently to account for school improvement, particularly in respect of the quality of education. Governors should increase their knowledge of leaders' intended curriculum. They then need to ask more probing questions, so that they can hold leaders to account more effectively for the quality of the education in 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 a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the third section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in March 2012.

## **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 from 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>	109492
<b>Local authority</b>	Bedford
<b>Inspection number</b>	10211244
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	198
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Elizabeth Greaves and Louise Day (Co-Chairs)
<b>Headteacher</b>	Caron Brown
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.wilsteadschool.co.uk">www.wilsteadschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	8 December 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Wilstead Primary School converted to a full primary school in 2018.
- There has been a change of leadership since the previous inspection. The headteacher has been in post since April 2020, and the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) started at the school in January 2022.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

The inspector discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.

- During the inspection, the inspector held meetings with leaders. This included the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and the SENCo.
- The inspector met with members of the governing body, including the co-chairs. The inspector looked at minutes of governing body and committee meetings, and held a virtual meeting with a representative of the local authority.

- The inspector did deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics and history. She met with subject leaders and visited lessons. She reviewed pupils' work in these subjects, as well as speaking with teachers and pupils.
- The inspector heard pupils reading to a familiar adult, visited the playground, observed lunchtime routines and behaviour, and spoke with pupil groups to learn about pupils' behaviour and personal development and pupils' views of their school experience.
- The inspector looked at the arrangements for safeguarding. This included meeting with the designated safeguarding lead and scrutinising the single central record and other safeguarding documentation.
- The 69 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and 25 free-text comments were considered. The inspectors also took into account the 27 responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

### **Inspection team**

Sharon Waldron, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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