

Inspection of a good school: Waterfield Primary School

Waterfield Gardens, Bewbush, Crawley, West Sussex RH11 8RA

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 June 2022

Outcome

Waterfield Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Each pupil at Waterfield Primary School is made to feel welcome and valued within the school community. Pupils feel safe and are confident to share any worries they might have with staff.

Leaders have established high expectations for all pupils, underpinned by the school values of kindness, respect and hard work. Leaders are ensuring that pupils get the help they need with reading and mathematics where they have fallen behind or have missed learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This is helping to develop pupils' confidence in themselves as learners.

Behaviour at the school is excellent. Right from the start of Nursery, children begin to learn the routines of the school day. Throughout the school, classrooms are calm and settled. Pupils want to do their best and are proud of the work they produce. Pupils trust school adults to resolve any friendship issues that arise.

Parents feel very positively about the school. Parents of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) say they are very well supported and happy. One parent, whose comments reflect the views of many, commented, 'It's a small school with great expectations, expectations which are larger than just academic but that are about growing caring, respectful citizens of the future.'

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

Following the last inspection, school leaders, and those responsible for governance, made a strategic decision to join a multi-academy trust. They began to work with a multi-academy trust in 2017 and in March 2018, formally joined that trust. The multi-academy trust quickly identified a concerning decline in standards at the school. They took immediate action to address this. This led to a complete transformation of the school's senior leadership team. The current headteacher took up the post in April 2019. The current senior leadership team was formed by the headteacher following his appointment.

With the support of the multi-academy trust, leaders have redeveloped the school's curriculum. The impact of this work is particularly evident in reading, mathematics and in the early years. Leaders have worked hard to transform the culture of the school in relation to reading from Nursery through to Year 6. They have selected high-quality texts that pupils read in their English lessons, but also across the curriculum. The vocabulary that teachers will teach and the themes that they will emphasise and explore are precisely set out for each text. Teachers read aloud to pupils daily. The early reading programme for pupils is underpinned by a phonics programme which is well delivered. Leaders ensure that all pupils, but particularly the most vulnerable readers, get enough practice reading books that match the sounds they have learned. Leaders very quickly identify any pupil who is falling behind in reading and ensure that they get effective support.

The mathematics curriculum is well sequenced. The multi-academy trust provides training and ongoing coaching to teachers so that teachers are increasingly expert at delivering the mathematics curriculum. Assessment in mathematics is well developed. Daily, staff are identifying those needing more support and those requiring a higher level of challenge. This is provided within class and by well-trained specialist teachers.

The curriculum for early years has been completely redesigned to meet the needs of the children who attend. The special educational needs coordinator works closely with the early years team during transition and throughout children's time in early years and beyond. This ensures that if children arrive with an identified SEND, they get the right support and care from the start and any unidentified needs are picked up quickly. Children in Nursery and Reception feel safe and secure. They are stimulated and happy in their learning and play.

The curriculum in the foundation subjects has been redeveloped. In some subjects, leaders' curriculum thinking is very well developed, and this is reflected in subject plans. However, leaders have not ensured that teachers fully understand the knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn over time. This is compounded by some teachers' lack of subject knowledge in the foundation subjects. On occasion, subjects such as art and design become a vehicle for teaching English, and there is no clear learning that relates to the art and design curriculum. Leaders have clear plans in place to address this.

Pupils' wider development is a real focus for leaders. They have carefully considered how to incorporate meaningful opportunities to build pupils' cultural capital into the curriculum. Leaders carefully utilise the local Mill Pond area, which is a Site of Nature Conservation Importance. Leaders also extend pupils' experience beyond the local area, for example with trips to London.

Senior leaders are committed to providing the pupils of Waterfield Primary School with a high-quality education that equips them well for the future. They are well supported by the multi-academy trust in their ongoing work to develop the curriculum and ensure that teachers have the expertise they need to deliver it well. Teachers appreciate the support and development opportunities that leaders provided.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Senior leaders responsible for safeguarding ensure that staff receive regular training so that they understand the risks that pupils might face both within and outside of their homes. Staff know how to raise concerns. Those responsible for safeguarding engage with external safeguarding partners, both for advice and to share concerns that they have about pupils' safety and well-being.

The early help that the school provides to families as soon as a problem emerges is a strength. This support promotes the welfare of children effectively and reduces the need for more reactive work later on. This has built the community's confidence in leaders and the school as a whole. Consequently, more parents now engage with the school openly. However, senior leaders need to ensure that they are rigorous in their analysis of all information known about each child so that they can identify when a child might need further assessment by children's social care.

Through the curriculum for personal, social and emotional education, pupils learn about keeping themselves safe online, in relationships and their local community and beyond.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers do not yet have expert knowledge of all the foundation subjects that they teach. This means they do not always explain key learning clearly enough for all pupils to understand and make progress through the intended curriculum. Leaders need to continue their work to ensure teachers' subject-specific expertise in all subjects so that they can deliver the curriculum as leaders intend.
- In some foundation subjects, the important subject-specific knowledge that leaders intend pupils to learn and remember is not always clear or well understood by teachers. Teachers then do not convey this key learning to pupils with sufficient clarity. Nor do they understand how the components of the curriculum build towards a clear end point. Leaders need to continue to refine their curriculum, ensuring that teachers have clarity around what pupils need to be taught over time in each subject.

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 as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Waterfield Primary School, to be good in November 2016.

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	145544
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10227009
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	365
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Philip Hogan
Headteacher	Harry Hope
Website	www.waterfieldprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	29 and 30 November 2016

Information about this school

- The headteacher was appointed in April 2019. All other members of the senior leadership have been appointed subsequently.
- The school joined The Collegiate Trust, a multi-academy trust, in March 2018.
- The school is not currently using any external alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- 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.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and other members of the senior leadership team. The inspectors met with the chair of trustees and the chair of the local governing body.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and art and design. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. For the reading deep dive,

an inspector listened to pupils reading to a familiar adult. The inspectors also spoke to leaders about curriculum development in other foundation subjects.

- To inspect safeguarding, the inspectors checked the single central record, reviewed safeguarding records and spoke to leaders, staff and pupils. The inspectors also discussed safeguarding with those responsible for governance.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of documentation.
- The inspectors talked to pupils about their learning, what behaviour is like at the school and whether they felt safe at school.
- The inspectors reviewed 16 responses to the staff survey and 24 responses to the parent survey, including the free-text comments.

Inspection team

Alice Roberts, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Paul Hemmings, team inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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