

# Inspection of a good school: White Bridge Primary School

Greensted Road, Loughton, Essex IG10 3DR

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Inspection dates: 12 and 13 July 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 at White Bridge Primary all strive to 'be the best version' of themselves. There is a friendly welcome for everyone. Pupils look out for each other. They say the teachers care for them.

Pupils feel safe. Bullying is rare. When it occurs, pupils are confident that adults will stop it. One pupil represented many, saying, 'Our teachers really wouldn't accept that'. Pupils know that 'kind time' is always available to help them if they need it.

Pupils talk enthusiastically about their learning. In lessons, pupils are attentive. They settle quickly to the tasks their teachers set. In some subjects, while these tasks are enjoyable, they do not help pupils to build on what they already know. The support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), or those pupils who find it hard to read, does not help them to catch up quickly.

Playtimes are happy and fun. Older pupils volunteer as play leaders to help out younger pupils. Pupils play games and take turns on the climbing apparatus. They can relax with a good book in the library.

Pupils enjoy the clubs available such as dodge ball and craft. Older pupils enjoy sports events such as triathlons, swimming galas and tag rugby tournaments.

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

Staff's teaching of early reading skills is not sufficiently well developed. Leaders have introduced a new, carefully structured scheme for teaching phonics. Suitable books have now been purchased to help pupils learning to read. However, children did not start learning to read swiftly enough and many are already falling behind. Support for pupils

with the highest level of need with reading is not well planned or evaluated. Too many of these pupils are not quickly developing the skills they need to read independently.

Pupils in the specialist resource provision are well supported. They get carefully planned learning based on their social and emotional needs. This enables them to move on successfully to the next stage of their educational journey.

Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) elsewhere in the school do not always get the help they need. Leaders have not implemented processes to support pupils with SEND consistently. They do not ensure that staff receive up-to-date or precise information to be able to tailor strategies to the needs of pupils. Leaders have not checked how well the support provided is meeting the needs of pupils. Some parents lack confidence in the support provided for pupils with SEND. Leaders are aware of this. They are acting to improve the support available for these learners and their families.

Where the curriculum is well structured, teachers introduce learning in small steps. They make links to what pupils have learned already. This builds confidence and understanding. Pupils take part in interesting learning activities with great enthusiasm. They encourage each other and share ideas. Adults regularly check that pupils understand what they are learning. They provide extra help or challenge for those who need it. This helps pupils to build their knowledge and skills over time. In these subjects, pupils learn well.

In a few subjects, plans do not set out clearly enough what pupils are to learn. Teachers are not clear about what pupils are to learn in these lessons. They are not well trained to ensure that they teach all the essential knowledge. As a result, teachers are not precise in what they teach, and how they check what pupils know and can do in these subjects.

Many parents feel that they do not receive enough information from the school about what their children are learning and how they can help.

Across the school, pupils know their teachers have high expectations for behaviour. They behave well. In lessons they listen carefully to their teachers and each other. Everyone gets on with their learning, indoors and outside.

Pupils are proud to be resilient learners. Adults encourage pupils to understand that it is fine to make mistakes as part of the learning process. Pupils are confident to ask questions.

Pupils enjoy learning about different religions, cultures and ways of life. They say it is 'more than ok' to be different here, saying, 'We embrace our differences'. They enjoyed learning about different countries on the recent Commonwealth Day.

Older pupils enjoy opportunities to take responsibility. For example, prefects run 'star assemblies' on a Friday. Pupils like to help out around the school. They volunteer to be play leaders or recycling monitors. Reading ambassadors are proud to encourage younger pupils to develop a love of reading.

There is a strong ethos of teamwork among staff. They help each other and appreciate the support provided by the Multi Academy Trust. Staff say that school leaders are always there for them and willing to help.

In discussion with the acting headteacher, the inspector agreed that early reading, systems to support pupils with SEND and the quality of some aspects of the foundation curriculum may usefully serve as a focus for the next inspection.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established an effective culture of safeguarding. Staff use their knowledge from training to look out for any signs of concern. They use the school systems to report these straight away. Leaders work with a range of professionals to secure the right help for vulnerable pupils.

Leaders act to keep pupils safe, but records have not always been kept as accurately as required. Governors and trustees are aware of this and are taking action to strengthen the processes to check on this.

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

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

- Adults do not provide precise support for pupils with SEND to ensure that they learn well across the curriculum, including in their early reading skills. Leaders do not review how well the support provided is working for pupils. Leaders must ensure that SEND provision is based on up-to-date assessments and advice. This provision should be regularly reviewed and adjusted to ensure that pupils are getting the help they need.
- Some pupils are not being well enough supported to keep up with their peers when learning to read. Although these pupils do receive extra help, it is not planned or monitored well enough. Leaders must ensure that the teaching of phonics is prioritised from the start and that additional support for phonics is well planned, delivered and evaluated. They must also ensure that adults get the training they need to put this in place.
- In some foundation subjects, the small steps of learning have not been set out clearly enough. In these subjects, teachers do not always know what pupils need to learn or how this will be assessed. Lessons in these subjects do not help pupils to build on their learning and develop their skills. As a result, pupils do not achieve as well as they should. Leaders must ensure that staff have the clear plans and training they need so they can ensure that pupils build on their learning as they progress through 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 as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, White Bridge Community Infant School to be good in December 2011.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	145603
<b>Local authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	10238291
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	430
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Reverend Lee Batson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Lesley Hester (acting)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.whitebridge.essex.sch.uk">www.whitebridge.essex.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	8 and 9 December 2011

## Information about this school

- At the time of inspection, an acting headteacher was in place.
- White Bridge Primary School joined Epping Forest Schools Partnership Trust in April 2018.
- The school does not use any off-site providers of alternative education.
- There is an additional specialist resource provision on the school site for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs.

## Information about this inspection

- This is the first routine inspection since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school staff and has taken that into account.
- The inspector held meetings with senior leaders, including the acting headteacher, governors and representatives of the trustees. The inspector also spoke to other leaders, staff and pupils.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and art and design. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning, and looked at samples of pupils' work. In early reading, the inspector listened to pupils read to a familiar adult.
- As part of the evaluation of the school's safeguarding processes, the inspector reviewed the school's single central record and met with the designated safeguarding lead.
- The inspector reviewed a range of school documents, including the school development plan, curriculum plans and school policies.
- The inspector reviewed the 84 responses that were submitted by parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, and considered the 68 free-text responses from parents. The inspector also considered the 34 responses to the Ofsted staff survey and the 59 responses to the Ofsted pupil survey.

## **Inspection team**

Lynne Williams, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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