

Inspection of Wilden CofE VA Primary School

High Street, Wilden, Bedford, Bedfordshire MK44 2PB

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 July 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy at Wilden Primary School. Pupils respond well to the school's motto of 'be ready, be respectful and be safe'. Pupils have positive, respectful relationships with staff. Older and younger pupils play together harmoniously at break and lunchtime. Bullying is extremely rare. When it happens, pupils know that adults will deal with it quickly. Pupils know adults care for them, and they feel safe within the caring school culture. Pupils behave well in lessons, at break and lunchtimes and when moving around the school. They are ready to learn.

Pupils enjoy the clubs that are available, such as reading, dodgeball and multisports, but say they would like to participate in other activities. They benefit from a range of trips, such as to London, and The Faith Tour, where pupils visit different places of worship. These help pupils to develop their wider cultural knowledge.

Pupils experience a broad curriculum. However, pupils do not learn as well as they might because leaders have not identified the important knowledge they want pupils to learn in all subjects. Some pupils continue to make the same mistakes because some teachers do not check what pupils know and what they do not.

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

Leaders have prioritised the teaching of reading across the school. They have provided staff with appropriate training. Teachers therefore adopt a consistent approach to the teaching of phonics. Children in the early years learn new sounds quickly. They blend simple words and sentences. Pupils soon read with fluency. This is because leaders ensure that the books pupils read are closely matched to their reading level. Leaders regularly check how well pupils are learning to read. They quickly provide support for those that fall behind. Pupils have access to a wide range of diverse texts. These help pupils develop their understanding and appreciation of those who are different from them.

Teachers' subject knowledge is not strong in some subjects. Leaders have not identified the important knowledge they want pupils to learn in all subjects. What pupils learn does not link well to what they have learned before. This means that pupils do not gain the knowledge they need consistently well across all areas of the curriculum.

In the early years, leaders are skilled at breaking down the knowledge children need in all areas of learning, for both Nursery and Reception children. This helps them to build language and deepen their understanding of the world. Children are well prepared for the next stage in their learning.

In some subjects, teachers regularly revisit what pupils know and can do. They make appropriate checks to identify misconceptions and mistakes. This ensures that they can plan the right next steps in pupils' learning. This practice is not consistent

across all subjects. Some pupils therefore continue to misunderstand important knowledge and make the same mistakes.

Leaders quickly identify pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They ensure that teachers fully understand how best to provide the precise support pupils with SEND need. Teachers adapt what they teach effectively so that pupils with SEND access the curriculum well over time.

Leaders' high expectations ensure that pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Routines and expectations are established from the early years. All pupils understand how to behave. Pupils listen carefully to adults and each other. They work well together.

The curriculum contributes well to pupils' personal development. Leaders' high expectations and values ensure that pupils are kind, tolerant and open-minded. Pupils have access to a family support worker to support their well-being. Pupils know how to develop healthy relationships and they understand how they will change as they get older. Pupils have regular opportunities to take part in forest school activities. These help pupils to develop their social skills, resilience and perseverance. Pupils benefit from a range of fitness equipment, which helps them develop their understanding of how to ensure a healthy lifestyle.

Leaders have accurately identified what is working well and what needs to improve, especially within the realms of the curriculum. Following recent training, governors are holding leaders more firmly to account. This is supporting school improvement. Staff value the training and support they receive from leaders. Parents and carers appreciate the education their children receive. However, some feel that leaders could communicate more regularly so that stakeholders are more aware of school life.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders prioritise safeguarding. Staff are well trained. As a result, they have the expertise to identify any child who may be at risk of harm. Teachers report concerns swiftly using the new electronic recording system. Leaders provide appropriate support for those pupils in need of help. Leaders make effective use of outside agencies when necessary.

In lessons and through assemblies, pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including when working online.

Appropriate safeguarding checks are made to ensure that all new staff are suitable to work with children.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Curriculum plans are underdeveloped for some subjects. Leaders do not equip teachers with the subject knowledge they need to be able to construct a well-sequenced curriculum. Knowledge does not therefore build well on what pupils have learned before. As a result of this, pupils do not learn as well as they might. Leaders need to provide teachers with training which enables them to develop the subject knowledge they need.
- In some areas of the curriculum, teachers do not systematically check what pupils know and do not know. As a result of this, pupils continue to make the same mistakes. Leaders must ensure that teachers have the training they need so that they know how to check for misconceptions, mistakes and gaps in learning. Teachers must then provide the right support so that pupils can learn better over time.

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	109627
Local authority	Bedford
Inspection number	10227399
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	47
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Lorraine Knight
Executive Headteacher	Leigh Pointon
Website	www.wilden.beds.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	26 and 27 September 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- There have been several changes in leadership over the last two years.
- The executive headteacher has been in post since September 2021. He leads another local school with whom Wilden works in partnership.

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 school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, geography, and design and technology to evaluate the quality of education. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, considered curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke with pupils about their

learning and scrutinised samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also checked curriculum provision for pupils' learning in other subject areas.

- The lead inspector observed some pupils read to staff and talked to them about their reading.
- An inspector spoke with parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, around the school and at lunch and playtimes.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils to seek their views of the school. They also spoke to pupils informally in class, around the school and at breaktimes.
- Inspectors met with the executive headteacher, who is the school's designated safeguarding lead, and other staff to discuss safeguarding.
- Inspectors met with the special educational needs coordinator and scrutinised documentation for SEND provision. They observed support for pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation during the inspection, including curriculum plans, school development plans, safeguarding documentation and behaviour plans.
- Inspectors considered the 27 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including 27 free-text comments. There were no responses to Ofsted's staff or pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Joan Beale, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Shan Oswald

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