

# Inspection of Whinney Banks Primary School

Fakenham Avenue, Whinney Banks, Middlesbrough TS5 4QQ

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Inspection dates: 5 and 6 October 2022

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Early years provision

**Requires improvement**

Previous inspection grade

Good

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

Pupils at Whinney Banks Primary School are safe and happy. This is because staff care for and support them well.

Pupils who struggle to learn to read are not always given the right help. For some pupils, their reading books do not contain the letters and sounds they know, to help them catch up quickly. Leaders' ambition for some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is not ensuring they learn as well as they should.

Children in early years learn from a well-planned curriculum in most areas. However, this is not the case in communication and language. As a result, some children are not gaining the vocabulary they need to make a strong start in Year 1. Children in the two-year-old group get off to a good start because they are supported well.

Most pupils behave well in lessons. Teachers ensure activities are interesting and help pupils remember what they have learned. This helps pupils to develop new knowledge. Pupils know that bullying is not tolerated. They respect each other.

Pupils enjoy the variety of clubs, residential visits and activities that staff organise for them. They know how important it is to be healthy. Pupils enjoy attending sports clubs and additional fitness sessions.

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

In most subjects, leaders have identified the important knowledge and skills that pupils must know to help them gain new knowledge. In most areas of learning, knowledge and skills are well ordered from Nursery to Year 6. It is clear how new learning connects to what pupils have learned before. However, in the early years, plans lack clarity relating to the specific language children must learn. As a result, staff do not have enough guidance to be able to design activities which support children to learn early vocabulary. The use of assessment in the early years requires further development. Staff sometimes miss opportunities to check on how well children understand new words.

There is a detailed curriculum for phonics and early reading. Although leaders have introduced new reading books that match the letter sounds pupils must learn, some pupils do not read them. Most teachers have received training to help them understand how to sequence reading lessons. However, the phonics curriculum does not sufficiently support all readers to learn to read well. Some teachers do not use phonics to help pupils read. Some pupils who are learning to read cannot read the books they are given. This is because the books do not contain the letters and sounds they know. Some older pupils do not know how to read unfamiliar words in texts to help them make sense of what they are reading. Some teachers do not use phonics to help older pupils. Consequently, some children do not achieve well in reading.

Staff identify and provide for the pastoral and wider needs of pupils with SEND. These pupils are supported effectively by adaptations to equipment and learning resources. Some pupils in key stage 2 with gaps in their knowledge, including pupils with SEND, are taught in a separate class for English and mathematics. Leaders have not considered how the curriculum for these pupils will enable them to achieve the best possible outcomes. The support that these pupils receive is not as effective as it could be in helping them do well from their different starting points. Some pupils miss important work they need to ensure they are well prepared for their next stage of learning.

Leaders provide pupils with a wide range of opportunities to develop their character. Pupils enjoy educational visits and experiences such as taking the train to London and Edinburgh to visit museums, art galleries and the theatre. Pupils show that they respect differences. However, some pupils' understanding of British values and different faiths is not well developed. This means that some pupils do not have the knowledge to be able to discuss views and opinions that are different to their own. There are a range of extra-curricular activities available to pupils. Pupils enjoy learning to play musical instruments, sing in the choir and take part in an extensive range of sports. Pupils learn to stay safe online. They understand the importance of a healthy diet and exercise.

Governors care about pupils' personal development. However, some do not have an accurate understanding of what needs to improve in the curriculum. Some governors do not attend relevant safeguarding training. Therefore, governors are not able to challenge leaders sufficiently about the effect of their actions on pupils' learning.

Most staff appreciate the support they receive from leaders to develop their subject knowledge. They appreciate the development opportunities to build their expertise. Most staff agree that leaders support them to manage their workload well.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are clear about the actions to take when they have safeguarding concerns about a pupil. Leaders act quickly in response to these concerns. Detailed records confirm this. Leaders support families and pupils well. They work closely with external agencies to make sure families get the support they need.

Staff teach pupils about the risks in the community and online. Leaders have ensured that pupils know how to tell a trusted adult when they are worried.

Leaders ensure the required safer recruitment checks are made on all adults who work in the school. Although governors do not have up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding, this is not affecting leaders' ability to safeguard pupils.

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

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

- Some pupils who struggle to read, including older pupils with SEND, do not learn to read quickly enough. The support they get is not consistently effective. Leaders have not ensured that all pupils learning to read have books that match the sounds they are learning. This means that pupils cannot read some texts they are given. Leaders must make sure that pupils are provided with the right additional help and books so that they learn to read fluently.
- Leaders do not ensure that all pupils in key stage 2, including some pupils with SEND, access the curriculum in English and mathematics in depth. Some pupils are not provided with a curriculum that gives them the knowledge they need to catch and keep up with their peers. As a result, some pupils do not sufficiently benefit from a good-quality education. Leaders must make sure that all pupils, including pupils with SEND, receive the support they need to be ready for their next stage of education.
- Some pupils' knowledge of British values and of different faiths is not well developed. Although pupils show respect to difference, some pupils do not understand what these differences may be. Leaders must ensure pupils have the necessary knowledge and understanding of British values and faiths.
- In the early years, leaders have not made clear the language and communication skills children need to learn. Adults do not consistently model the language or vocabulary they want children to learn. Some adults do not give children the opportunity to repeat back what they have understood. This means that adults miss opportunities to check whether children have acquired the vocabulary they need to communicate effectively. Leaders must make clear the language and vocabulary they want children to know. They must ensure that children are given meaningful opportunities to practise talking and communicating, so they develop their vocabulary and understanding of language across all seven areas of learning.
- Some governors do not know the most up-to-date information about safeguarding. They do not know the key priorities for improving the school. This means that some governors are unable to hold leaders to account as well as they should. Governors should ensure that they have the information they need, and training to hold leaders to account for the improvement of the school and the safeguarding of pupils.

## 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.

## **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>	134076
<b>Local authority</b>	Middlesbrough
<b>Inspection number</b>	10227453
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	400
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Linda Green
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sandy Thorpe
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.whinneybanks.org.uk">www.whinneybanks.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	6 June 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school has provision for two-year-olds.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- The school provides a breakfast club and an after-school club for its pupils.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded 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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held several discussions with the headteacher and senior leaders. They talked with subject leaders and four members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- An inspector met with a representative from the local authority.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, history, music and physical education. They talked to leaders and teachers about their curriculum plans. Inspectors also talked to pupils about what they know and remember in these subjects. They looked at pupils' work and visited lessons.
- The lead inspector met with the safeguarding team and spoke to pupils and staff about the safeguarding practices in the school.
- Inspectors met with the special educational needs coordinator to discuss the provision for pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors evaluated responses from Ofsted's staff questionnaire and Ofsted's Parent View comments.
- Inspectors talked to pupils to gather their views on school life.

### **Inspection team**

Kathryn McDonald, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Stephen Fallon	Ofsted Inspector
Janet Madden	Ofsted 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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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