

Inspection of Witnesham Primary School

High Road, Witnesham, Ipswich, Suffolk IP6 9EX

Inspection dates: 9 and 10 November 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
------------------------------	-------------

The quality of education	Good
--------------------------	-------------

Behaviour and attitudes	Good
-------------------------	-------------

Personal development	Good
----------------------	-------------

Leadership and management	Good
---------------------------	-------------

Early years provision	Good
-----------------------	-------------

Previous inspection grade	Good
---------------------------	------

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils flourish at Witnesham Primary School. Pupils expect to be happy and safe, and to learn a lot. Kindness is important and evident throughout the school. Pupils enjoy positive relationships with adults. They feel happy and are safe at school.

Pupils get along well together. They know what teachers expect of them and about how they should behave and act. Pupils are clear about the behavioural systems both in and out of classrooms. They all look out for one another. Pupils who act as young leaders ensure everyone has a friend and a game to share during playtimes.

Pupils say that bullying rarely happens at their school. Pupils learn to talk about how they are feeling to the staff that are on hand to help them. As one pupil said, 'It is easy to speak to any adult, they will always help you.'

Pupils wear their 'learning muscles' badges with pride. They represent how pupils learn about important values. 'Persevering Penguin' and 'Responsible Rhino' are examples of the values pupils demonstrate in their work and play.

Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. Many commented about the sense of a community and the way in which staff help children settle into school life.

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

Leaders have high expectations for pupils' achievement. They have created an ambitious curriculum. Subject programmes identify the key things pupils need to know and remember from Reception through to Year 6. Leaders review and revise their curriculums each year owing to the mixed class arrangements. This ensures that pupils do not repeat similar topics. Pupils build their knowledge over time so that they can successfully tackle more-complex ideas. For example, in science, pupils were able to explain how they would investigate air resistance because they understood about fair testing and variables.

Staff make sure that pupils understand what they are learning. Through the lessons, teachers ask questions and provide pupils with quizzes. Teachers use this information to change their plans to address and misconceptions. Leaders check the impact of their curriculum plans regularly. Pupils receive extra help if they are falling behind.

In a small number of subjects, teachers do not have a secure grasp of the planned content of the curriculum. This means their explanations are not as clear as they might be. This makes it hard for pupils to remember what they have learned previously. For example, in history, pupils are not always able to recall what they have learned about different periods, and consider the links between them. This slows the progress pupils make in these subjects.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) learn the curriculum well. This is because leaders quickly identify their needs. The support pupils receive is well tailored, helping pupils to learn confidently.

Leaders have made changes to the ways pupils learn to read. They have introduced a new approach to teaching phonics. Adults are well trained. Pupils learn phonics systematically from the time they start in the early years. Any pupil that needs additional help is quickly spotted and supported to catch up quickly. Most pupils have books that help them to become accurate and confident readers. However, for a few pupils, the new books are not well matched to stages of pupils' learning. Some then find reading difficult, which slows their reading fluency.

Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning. They are keen to learn and attentive in class. Disruptions are rare, allowing pupils to get on with their work.

Pupils undertake different roles in school. These help pupils to take on additional responsibility and consider their roles as citizens by being school or eco councillors. Pupils learn about healthy relationships and what it means to be a good citizen. Pupils learn about different faiths. However, pupils have fewer opportunities to develop their talents and interests through the enrichment opportunities. This holds back some aspects of their personal development.

Governors know the school well. They question leaders' actions, to ensure that they are making the right decisions for pupils. Staff appreciate the support they receive from leaders to help them carry out their roles. All staff are proud to work at the school. Staff morale is high.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established a robust culture to ensure pupils are kept safe. Regular training and frequent updates refresh staff's understanding of safeguarding concerns. Staff will pass on any concerns, no matter how small. Leaders act promptly and follow up any issues regarding safeguarding. Leaders are tenacious in getting help for vulnerable pupils and families from external partners and agencies.

Pupils and parents receive regular information about being safe online. Pupils know how to stay safe and what to do if they have any worries. Leaders carry out robust checks for all those who work at the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders' approach to teaching phonics is new. Overall, it is working well. However, a few pupils do not read from books that are well matched to the

phonics they know. This means that these pupils are not developing the required fluency and accuracy in learning to read quickly. Leaders should ensure that they evaluate whether all pupils have books to help them read well.

- Some staff do not possess the subject and pedagogical knowledge needed to deliver all areas of the curriculum effectively. This means that pupils do not make links and remember their learning over time. Leaders should ensure that all staff receive the training they need to teach the curriculum effectively.

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

Unique reference number	124618
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10226906
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	102
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Ian Liddell
Headteacher	Hannah Rigby (Interim Executive Headteacher)
Website	www.owfed.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	11 October 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Witnesham is federated with Otley Primary School. The two schools share an executive headteacher and governing body. An interim executive headteacher is currently covering the absence of the substantive executive headteacher.
- The school makes use of a single alternative provider, the Green Light Trust.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspectors met with the interim executive headteacher, the interim deputy executive headteacher (who is also the leader of the early years) and the special educational needs coordinator. Inspectors had discussions with curriculum leaders. They also met with five members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. The lead inspector held a phone conversation with a representative of the local authority.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history, and science. Inspectors visited lessons, looked at a range of pupils' work, and met with teaching staff and pupils. Inspectors also observed some pupils reading and talked to pupils about their reading habits.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including safeguarding, school improvement plans, school curriculum planning documents and the school's self-evaluation.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents including free-text responses. They spoke to parents at the end of the school day. Inspectors reviewed responses to the staff inspection survey.
- Inspectors also observed pupils at play at breaktime and lunchtime and talked to groups of pupils about their experiences at school.

Inspection team

Steve Mellors, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Daniel Gee

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022