

# Inspection of Warden Hill Primary School

Durham Close, Warden Hill, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire GL51 3DF

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Inspection dates: 22 and 23 November 2022

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Outstanding</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

This school was last inspected 14 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection.

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

Pupils are proud to belong to a school community that welcomes and accepts everyone. They know how to be respectful, safe and try their best. Pupils call this 'The Warden Hill Way'. It guides them successfully in all they do.

Leaders and governors have high aspirations for all pupils. They have planned an ambitious curriculum. It encourages pupils to take responsibility and become lifelong learners. House captains, school councillors and eco warriors talk with passion and enthusiasm about the roles they have in school. Pupils say, 'we create a sense of teamwork and belonging', and they do.

Pupils express positive views about behaviour. Typically, they behave well in class and strive to do their best. Bullying is rare. Pupils have complete confidence that staff will sort out any issues. They feel safe in school because adults care about them and build trusting relationships.

The vast majority of parents hold the school in high regard. They say the staff 'go above and beyond', and they find it 'joyful' to watch their children flourish. Events such as class assemblies and sporting fixtures help include parents in the life of the school.

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

The headteacher leads with a determined vision for every child to succeed. She has instilled a strong sense of teamwork. Morale is high. Staff are proud to work at Warden Hill. They value leaders' efforts to manage their workload and well-being. Governors know the school and community well. They ask challenging questions of leaders to make sure the school continues to improve.

Leaders make reading an absolute priority. It is the linchpin of the curriculum. Staff use carefully chosen books to inspire and motivate pupils to read. Pupils share this enthusiasm. They talk avidly about their favourite books and authors. Teachers skilfully develop pupils' vocabulary and origins of words. This helps to deepen pupils' understanding of what they read. By the time they leave school, pupils achieve highly and are hooked on reading.

Leaders have ensured that reading begins as soon as children start in Reception Year. Staff have expert knowledge in teaching phonics. They make sure that no pupil is left behind when learning to read. Pupils read books matched to the sounds they know. This allows them to develop their fluency and expression. Leaders work well with parents. They provide them with the information they need to support their children at home.

Leaders have crafted a well-sequenced curriculum. They have mapped out what they expect pupils to learn from Reception through to Year 6. Leaders have broken

down important knowledge into small, achievable steps. They revisit prior learning regularly. This helps pupils build their knowledge gradually and in a range of subjects. For example, in computing, pupils use their digital literacy skills to write geographical blogs. Staff know the needs of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Nonetheless, not all teachers adapt the curriculum carefully enough to meet the needs of all pupils, including some with SEND. This means that some groups of pupils do not learn the intended curriculum as well as they could.

Leaders and staff use assessment well to find out how pupils are doing. They provide targeted support, such as arithmetic sessions, to help pupils keep up. However, occasionally, the written work pupils produce is not of consistently high quality. Not all staff pick up on this quickly enough.

Staff provide positive mental health support for pupils. For example, they teach them the benefits of mindfulness and yoga. Pupils value the chance to talk through any worries with specialist staff. Learning is typically free from disruption. Pupils enjoy earning house points for making the right choices.

Leaders' work to develop pupils' experiences beyond the classroom is exceptional. They provide wide-ranging activities and clubs to engage and excite pupils. Pupils lead assemblies, take part in house competitions and conduct tours for prospective parents. Through books, pupils learn about global issues, such as refugees and war. They are confident to challenge discrimination and stand up for their beliefs. For example, they know judging someone based on their faith, family structure or appearance is wrong. Leaders are successfully growing a community of caring young citizens, ready for the challenges of life in modern Britain.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Staff, including governors, are well trained. They know the process for identifying and reporting concerns. Leaders act quickly to secure help for families who need it. For example, they have developed packs to help with bereavement and anxiety. Record-keeping is thorough. Leaders ensure that they complete the statutory checks on adults who work at the school.

Through the curriculum, pupils learn about important issues like drugs and consent. They speak knowledgeably about the online 'golden rules'. Pupils know who to talk to if they have any worries.

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

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

- Not all teachers adapt the curriculum precisely enough to meet the needs of all pupils. This means some groups of pupils do not learn consistently well in all curriculum areas. Leaders need to ensure that all teachers have the expertise to adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of different groups of pupils.
- On occasions, not all staff insist on the same high standard of work pupils produce. As a result, some pupils' work varies in quality. Leaders should ensure that all staff expect the same high standards from pupils across all subjects.

## 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>	115740
<b>Local authority</b>	Gloucestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10229004
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	422
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Co-chairs of governing body</b>	Lynda Dineen and Neil Chamberlain
<b>Headteacher</b>	Georgina Flooks
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.wardenhill.gloucs.sch.uk">www.wardenhill.gloucs.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	21 May 2008

## Information about this school

- There have been changes in leadership since the previous inspection. The current headteacher took up post in March 2017.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

## 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 school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders, other school staff, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and computing. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors met with leaders and looked more widely at documentation in personal, social and health education, geography, design technology and writing.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 read to an adult.
- The lead inspector reviewed the school's safeguarding documentation, including safeguarding checks carried out on staff working at the school. Inspectors talked to governors, staff and pupils about how the school keeps everyone safe.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site.
- Inspectors spoke with a range of staff to discuss how leaders support their workload and well-being.
- Inspectors considered responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments, and responses to the pupil and staff survey.

### **Inspection team**

Dale Burr, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Neil Lankester	Ofsted Inspector
Paula Marsh	Ofsted Inspector

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