

Inspection of a good school: Whimble Primary School

Whimble, Exeter, Devon EX5 2TS

Inspection date:

13 December 2022

Outcome

Whimble Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are kind, polite and friendly towards each other. They love coming to school. They say that there is some bullying, but that teachers resolve it quickly. Pupils enjoy learning a range of subjects. Children in Reception, for instance, are enthusiastic readers.

From Reception to Year 6, pupils learn the routines of school very well. They listen respectfully to each other, share and take turns. They behave very well, both in lessons and at breaktime and lunchtime. Older pupils take the responsibility of being play ambassadors seriously. They help younger pupils to form friendships and to enjoy playing at breaktime.

Pupils enjoy the many after-school clubs and activities, such as the school's music club, 'Rock Steady'. Pupils value visits, for example, to Killerton and Dartmoor to extend their knowledge about the world. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. They value the quality of education and the strong pastoral support of staff. Relationships between staff and pupils are particularly strong. Pupils feel well supported, protected and valued.

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

Leaders, governors and staff share a common vision of ensuring that pupils succeed academically, socially and emotionally. Leaders have developed a well-sequenced curriculum in many areas. This enables pupils to revise what they have learned so that they can understand more complex concepts more easily. For example, the history curriculum is very well structured. Pupils develop progressively more complex knowledge which helps them to evaluate new topics. However, in some subjects, leaders acknowledge that there is further work to do to ensure that pupils learn well. Where this is the case, pupils do not develop sufficiently strong knowledge in order to move on to more complex ideas.

Teachers have good subject knowledge. They regularly check what pupils know and do not know and adapt their teaching accordingly. As a result, pupils are well supported. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive bespoke support that helps them to learn the curriculum as well as other pupils.

Reading is a priority at the school. Leaders recognise the critical importance of reading as a gateway to learning. They have introduced a relatively new reading programme in Reception and key stage 1 with precision and care. Children in Reception are motivated to read well. Along with key stage 1 pupils, they learn to make explicit links between letters and sounds. Teaching checks how well pupils read and additional support is provided when required. Consequently, pupils read well.

Across the school, pupils enjoy reading. In English lessons, pupils develop a breadth of reading skills that help them to craft their writing with accuracy and flair. For example, Year 5 and Year 6 pupils' reading of 'Animalium' by Jenny Broom supported the development of their report writing. Pupils' books in all year groups are very well presented. Pupils take pride in their learning. They are motivated to learn well.

Pupils' emotional well-being develops well through the curriculum. It is prioritised by leaders. Through the provision of games at breaktime and lunchtime, for example, pupils are supported to play with each other and make friendships. They have many opportunities to develop empathy and character through the texts that they read. For example, through reading 'The Boy Who Cried Ninja' by Alex Latimer, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils develop an understanding of the importance of telling the truth.

Governors have a strong understanding of the school. They have been instrumental in supporting the school to work with a federation to develop the curriculum further. Staff are unanimous in feeling proud to work at the school. They feel that their well-being is supported and that workload is managed well.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders are tenacious in ensuring that pupils who are at risk of harm receive immediate and appropriate support. They work well with external agencies and are persistent in ensuring that pupils' physical and emotional well-being is addressed. The safeguarding of pupils is an absolute priority for leaders and staff.

Staff, including governors, receive up-to-date safeguarding training, alongside pertinent updates. Pupils have lots of opportunities to learn how to keep themselves safe. For example, they learn about road safety and online safety.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some subjects in the curriculum are not as well structured as others. Pupils do not learn new knowledge sequentially. This means that pupils do not have sufficiently well embedded knowledge before moving on to more complex concepts. Leaders must ensure that all subjects are consistently well structured to enable pupils to learn well.

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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 2017.

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	113113
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10256673
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	124
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Linden Best
Headteacher	Carole Shilston
Website	www.whimple-primary.devon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	18 October 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a smaller-than-average primary school.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- 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 discussions with the headteacher, the executive headteacher and members of the leadership team, including curriculum leaders.
- An inspector held a discussion with governors, including the chair of governors.
- An inspector held a telephone discussion with an education officer from the local authority.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, English, history and mathematics. This meant that, in each subject, inspectors met with senior and curriculum leaders, talked to pupils, visited lessons, spoke to teachers and looked at pupils' books.
- Inspectors met with staff to consider their views.
- Inspectors reviewed safeguarding records, including the single central record of recruitment checks on staff.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents who responded to the confidential questionnaire for parents, Ofsted Parent View. They evaluated the views of staff from the Ofsted online questionnaire.

Inspection team

Susan Aykin, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Martin Greenwood

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