

Inspection of an outstanding school: Woodchester Endowed Church of England Aided Primary School

Church Road, North Woodchester, Stroud, Gloucestershire GL5 5PD

Inspection date:

16 February 2023

Outcome

Woodchester Endowed Church of England Aided Primary School continues to be an outstanding school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils love to attend this school. It is a school that helps them to be caring, respectful, curious, community minded and very well-educated individuals. The strong Christian ethos and values are brought alive in what the school provides for its pupils.

Impeccable behaviour and the calm environment mean that the school is a purposeful place to learn. Teachers expect much of pupils, and pupils deliver. Pupils respect others. They are polite to each other as well as to adults. Bullying is not part of the school's culture. If it did happen, pupils know that they would get the help they need.

School life is enhanced considerably by the wide range of things to do beyond the classroom. The breakfast book club is a big hit, as are the trips pupils go on and the many clubs that they can attend.

The school sits very much at the heart of the community. Pupils contribute to village life. They welcome members of its community into school, often through the link with the church. This partnership gives a real sense of belonging. Pupils are keen to broaden their horizons and learn more about the rich and diverse world beyond North Woodchester.

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

The school's governors, leaders and staff work very hard to turn their vision into reality. They are determined that pupils deserve the very best. They pursue this aim non-stop. Staff see every pupil as special and have the highest ambition for them all.

The drive to be better is why leaders have changed the curriculum since the previous inspection. They have pinpointed what they want pupils to know at every step in each subject. The sum of this knowledge is deep understanding that exceeds national curriculum requirements. For example, pupils study chemistry in more depth than is typical by the end of Year 6. This prepares them exceptionally well for secondary school. In addition, teaching in all subjects makes the most of the school's outdoor environment. This adds much to what pupils achieve. Inspectors witnessed this in the passion and strength of argument that pupils in the Juniper Class brought to their persuasive writing about environmental matters.

Teachers make sure that pupils learn all that the curriculum intends. They adapt approaches to help all pupils learn the curriculum in ways that suit them. This is reflected in the high standard of pupils' work. This is equally so for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Getting the basics right means that teachers can take pupils' learning a long way. For example, staff teach pupils early on to read. This means that pupils can read what they need to learn in all subjects. Teachers make sure that pupils' spelling, grammar and punctuation become increasingly secure. This helps them to write fluently and accurately for a range of purposes, tailoring the structure, style and tone to the intended audience. Similarly, teachers ensure that all pupils master the basics of number by the time they start Year 3. All teachers focus on teaching pupils to use correct language about what they are learning. From starting school in Ash Class to leaving at the end of Year 6, pupils build an increasingly sophisticated vocabulary.

Assessment is at the heart of the school's teaching. Teachers focus their attention on the tiny building blocks of knowledge set out for pupils to learn. They check that pupils have learned them. If pupils are missing a crucial piece of knowledge, teachers make sure that it is learned as soon as possible so that the pupil is ready to move on. Teachers check this in many ways. For example, they often talk to pupils about what they have learned.

Pupils talk in detail about what they have learned. This is because they have learned a lot. During the inspection, pupils talked knowledgeably about how volcanoes form and why earthquakes happen. Pupils in Year 3 and 4 have learned these things recently. Year 6 pupils also spoke vividly about the topic because they remember what they were taught in the past.

As well as academic success, pupils develop very well personally and socially. They have many opportunities to take part in sporting, cultural or other fulfilling activities. They learn to be reflective and empathetic. They have a strong sense of how community works and the part they play in creating it.

The school is led with care, integrity and compassion. Staff are proud to work at the school. They feel that they are treated with respect and consideration by the headteacher and governors.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school's community orientated culture means that leaders seek to help with the underlying causes of risk to pupils. They work with families to help with wider issues. They teach pupils to identify and manage risk to themselves, including from online sources.

All staff and governors are trained to a high level in identifying potential risks to pupils. Even the smallest hint that something might be wrong is spotted, recorded and acted upon. Leaders escalate concerns swiftly to appropriate external agencies and collaborate with them to secure the right help for children and their families.

Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding on 21–22 March 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	115704
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10256720
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
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	134
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Sally Bull
Headteacher	Lynn Pennington
Website	http://www.woodchesterprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	21 and 22 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has a Christian character. Its last inspection of religious ethos (SIAMS) under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 took place in January 2017. The next SIAMS inspection is due within eight years of this date due to the delay in inspections caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

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 met with the headteacher, other senior staff, the chair and two other members of the governing body and spoke with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, science and geography. 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 also spoke to leaders about and looked at evidence of pupils' learning in mathematics in the early years and key stage 1.
- Inspectors inspected safeguarding by looking at the single central record of staff, governors and volunteers, meeting with the designated safeguarding lead, speaking to staff and pupils and scrutinising documents relating to child protection.
- Inspectors evaluated the impact of pupils' behaviour on learning by observing their conduct in lessons, talking to pupils, staff and parents and considering the responses to our online surveys, including Parent View.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils and parents about the wider opportunities provided to promote pupils' personal development.
- Inspectors scrutinised records about pupils joining and leaving the school and spoke to staff about their experience of working at the school to consider the quality of leadership and management.

Inspection team

Sandy Hayes, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Lakmini Harkus

His Majesty's Inspector

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