

Inspection of a good school: Warboys Primary Academy

Humberdale Way, Warboys, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire PE28 2RX

Inspection dates:

29 and 30 March 2023

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. Inspectors are recommending the next inspection to be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Warboys Primary Academy are proud of their school. They enjoy representing their school in fixtures and tournaments. Pupils are determined to do their best and work hard in their preparation for these events. This leads to success, such as at the recent gymnastics tournament where the two teams entered came first and third.

Most pupils behave well, in line with the high expectations adults have of them. However, there are a small number of pupils who disrupt the learning of others or behave in an overly boisterous manner during social times. Pupils understand what bullying is and how to report any incidents. These incidents are dealt with quickly and effectively.

Pupils respond well when they are given responsibilities. Year 6 pupils operate as playground buddies to support and comfort younger pupils. Buddies are highly respected and valued as role models. They help all pupils feel safe and happy.

Pupils access a curriculum that is ambitious in its design and aims. It is designed to help pupils reach the high levels of achievement leaders expect. However, these high expectations are not consistently met by teachers. This means some pupils do not learn as effectively as they should.

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

Leaders have developed an ambitious curriculum for all pupils. They have broken down broad curriculum aims into smaller pieces of knowledge. This provides a structure that teachers can use to plan and assess learning of component elements.

Leaders have adopted a highly structured teaching approach. This helps most pupils move from teacher instruction to independent working quickly. Where teachers have been fully

trained and understand the approach, lessons flow with pace and purpose. Learning aims are divided into small, manageable steps. Pupils are engaged in their work, remain on task and learn well. However, where teachers have not had the same level of training, teaching lacks clarity. Activities are not as well matched to the aims of the curriculum. Pupils are uncertain about how to succeed and do not always work well. This results in some pupils disrupting the learning of others.

Leaders have set reading as a priority. However, not all pupils start to learn to read at an early enough stage. Books are carefully matched to the sounds pupils are learning. Pupils can generally decode the words they are reading, but some teachers allow pupils to guess words from pictures. This means that pupils do not have to read the words on the page. As a result, not all pupils become fluent readers.

Some pupils are frustrated with the limited range and lack of diversity of the books available. Some of the books chosen by teachers do not provide a clear sense of progression. Leaders do not ensure that books link to the curriculum as closely as they should. Leaders understand this and have begun to address the issue.

Leaders have planned the content of the early years curriculum carefully. The curriculum meets statutory requirements and is responsive to children's needs and interests. Children learn in a safe and purposeful environment. They work well together and with adults. They develop their awareness of mathematical concepts and subject-specific vocabulary effectively. They use these accurately and with confidence. Children are generally well prepared for key stage 1.

Leaders' ambitions for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are high. Pupils with SEND access the full range of the curriculum. However, the extent to which they learn well is overly dependent on the skillsets of teachers and teaching assistants. Leadership of the provision for pupils with SEND lacks the rigour and precision needed to ensure that their needs are consistently met. This means that some pupils miss key elements of learning. They do not progress though the curriculum as well as they could do. Some parents are dissatisfied with the provision that is in place for their children. Leaders are not always able to respond appropriately to these concerns.

Pupils know about differences, such as different family structures. They know it is okay to look, think and live differently.

Leaders have set high expectations of pupils' behaviour. They have linked the school's values to positive learning behaviours carefully. Leaders have added additional provision for pupils who struggle to manage their emotions. Initial school analysis suggests that this is having a positive impact on pupils' experience in school. However, it is too early to determine the long-term effect on behaviour overall. Not all staff manage pupils' behaviour consistently. This leads to disruptive behaviour affecting the learning of others.

Most staff are proud to work at the school. They are positive about the impact of recent changes. Most feel that leaders are considerate about their well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that all staff receive regular training. As a result, staff are knowledgeable and clear about their safeguarding responsibilities. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. They know to report worries to a trusted adult. Pupils are confident their concerns will be taken seriously.

However, during the inspection, weaknesses were identified in the school's checks on staff and volunteers. There has been a lack of clarity about who is responsible for ensuring these checks are completed in a timely manner. The rigour of all staff in maintaining a safe environment for pupils meant that no pupils were at risk. The school and the trust have taken urgent remedial action to address these issues. This action means that rigorous checks are now carried out in full, in advance of adults taking up positions in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The behaviour policy is not applied consistently. As a result, pupils' learning is disrupted in some lessons and boisterous behaviour at social times can get out of control. Leaders should ensure that all staff have the highest expectations of pupils' behaviour and are appropriately trained to, and do, address behaviour incidents effectively.
- Inconsistent staff training leads to some weaknesses in phonics teaching. As a result, some pupils do not develop confidence and fluency in reading as well as they should. Leaders need to ensure that all staff are trained to deliver the phonics programme effectively.
- The range and diversity of books available for pupils are limited. This limits the extent to which some pupils enjoy and develop a love of reading. Pupils are not able to increase their cultural capital sufficiently. Leaders should implement a reading scheme that clearly sets out how pupils will progress through increasingly diverse and challenging books.

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 first ungraded inspection since we judged Warboys Community Primary 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	146929
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10269218
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	326
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Mark Potter
Principal	Rebecca Ford
Website	www.wpa.education
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school converted to an academy in April 2019, as part of the Thomas Deacon Education Trust.
- The principal joined the school in April 2019 and the deputy principal joined in September 2021.
- There is childcare provision on the school site. This is run by a separately registered and inspected childcare provider.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held meetings with leaders, including the principal, deputy principal, early years leader, special educational needs coordinator, members of the local academy committee, the chair of the trust board and representatives from the trust, including the chief executive officer (CEO).

- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and physical education. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to staff, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector also listened to a sample of pupils read to a familiar adult.
- To further inspect the curriculum, the inspector reviewed curriculum documentation for science, personal, social and health education (PSHE) and computing, and reviewed documentation setting out support for pupils with SEND.
- To inspect safeguarding, the inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead to review safeguarding records, the office manager and representatives from the trust's human resources department, to scrutinise the single central record of recruitment and vetting checks. To further evaluate safeguarding, the inspector also spoke to governors, staff, pupils and parents, and reviewed surveys.
- To gather pupils' views, the inspector spent time observing and speaking to pupils. The inspector also reviewed the 90 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.
- To gather parents' views, the inspector reviewed the 142 responses and 27 free-text responses submitted to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View.
- To gather the views of staff, the inspector spoke to a range of staff and reviewed the 38 responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

Inspection team

Dave Gibson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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