

Inspection of a good school: Whitefield Primary Academy

Stockholm Way, Luton, Bedfordshire LU3 3SS

Inspection dates: 23 and 24 May 2023

Outcome

Whitefield Primary Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils happily attend Whitefield Primary Academy. They are kind, friendly and welcoming to visitors. Pupils know and understand the school values. These help pupils to be respectful and become well-rounded individuals. Pupils trust staff to help them. This helps pupils feel safe.

Pupils respond to staff's high expectations. They work hard and behave well. Teachers work together to help pupils understand and follow the 'Whitefield way'. Pupils learn the same rules. This makes them easier to follow and understand. Bullying is rare. If it does happen, pupils know that adults will help them to resolve it.

Pupils learn a broad and rich curriculum. This helps them to develop their talents and interests. Pupils show positive attitudes to their learning. They try their best and consequently achieve well. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

Pupils enjoy the extra opportunities leaders provide, including trips and interesting visitors. For instance, staff invited representatives from different faiths to talk to pupils during assembly. This helps pupils learn about the wider world. Many pupils have extra jobs, including school councillors and sports champions. Pupils show responsible attitudes when carrying out these roles.

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

In many subjects, leaders have thoughtfully constructed the curriculum. They have identified what pupils need to learn. They have set out the knowledge and content in a way that new learning can build on secure foundations. Teachers check pupils learning regularly. Leaders use these checks to change and adapt when necessary to better support pupils' learning. In a few subjects, leaders' curriculum planning is new. Leaders are providing appropriate training and support for teachers in these subjects. In the meantime, while these plans become established, a few teachers do not have secure subject knowledge. This means that they cannot explain all tasks clearly, and occasionally,

pupils are not able to complete some activities quickly and with clarity about what they are learning.

Leaders in the early years ensure that all activities help children develop their language skills. Staff choose the appropriate vocabulary for each task and repeat and recap this each day. This helps children to develop essential communication skills they need for their learning in Year 1.

Reading has a high priority. This is clear in the importance books have across all curriculum areas. For instance, when pupils learn about Nelson Mandela, they read a book about a young person living through apartheid. This helps pupils to have a deeper understanding of more complex issues and to read more widely. Pupils are encouraged to read widely through incentives, and they respond well to this.

In the Nursery, children start to learn about sounds. They learn to enjoy and share books and listen to stories. In Reception, children learn phonics every day through recall and repetition. Pupils continue to have daily phonics lessons in key stage 1. Teachers check pupils' phonic knowledge regularly. Any pupils who fall behind have keep-up sessions. Pupils in key stage 2 who are not yet fluent readers have catch-up sessions. This means that all pupils learn to read unfamiliar words with confidence.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive support to overcome any barriers to learning they have. Staff provide tasks that enable pupils with SEND to learn the same curriculum as their peers. Leaders provide some pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs a more individualised curriculum in 'The Lantern' to meet their needs. Overall, pupils with SEND achieve well.

Pupils behave well. They follow the clear rules and routines. This means that most lessons flow smoothly because pupils listen carefully and try their best. Pupils learn to understand how their actions may affect others. This helps them show compassion. They understand that sometimes others do not behave well because their emotions are not calm.

Pupils benefit from a broad personal development programme. They learn and revisit the school's values. These include being aspirational and showing integrity. Pupils learn to be tolerant and learn to respect everyone.

Leaders, governors and the trust work closely together. They share the same values and vision. This supports leaders' work effectively. Leaders are considerate of the well-being and workload of staff. Links with other schools in the trust enable staff at all levels to develop their roles and to further improve teaching across different subjects.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils learn how to stay safe online and in the community. For example, they learn how to stay safe when crossing the road and about fire safety.

Leaders and governors carry out all the necessary checks to ensure that adults are suitable to work in school.

Staff know the local and national risks that pupils face. They have regular training and updates so that they can recognise when a pupil may be at risk. They keep accurate records of concerns and pass these on to leaders. Leaders act quickly to keep pupils safe, working effectively with outside agencies when needed.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, leaders' curriculum planning is less established. Where this is the case, some teachers do not have the subject knowledge required to be fully secure when explaining tasks and modelling work. This means that teaching is not always clear enough, and pupils are unsure how to approach learning activities. Consequently, pupils do not learn all the knowledge intended. Leaders need to ensure that staff have the training and guidance needed to deliver the curriculum highly effectively in these subjects.

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 the predecessor school, Whitefield Primary School, to be good in February 2016.

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	146751
Local authority	Luton
Inspection number	10268681
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	460
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Melissa Trodd
Headteacher	Jan Kirby
Website	www.whitefieldprimaryacademy.com
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Pioneer Learning Trust.
- Since the last inspection, the school has a new headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- The Whitefield Primary Academy converted to become an academy school in January 2019. When its predecessor school, Whitefield Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The school runs its own breakfast and after-school club.

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 carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and physical education. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspector met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. The inspector also held a meeting with representatives from the trust.
- To evaluate the arrangements that are in place to safeguard pupils, the inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead, considered school records and spoke with staff and pupils. The inspector scrutinised the single central record of pre-employment checks.
- The inspector viewed a range of documents, including governor meeting minutes and information on the school's website.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at playtime. They spoke with pupils to seek their views.
- The inspector considered the 15 responses and 10 free-text responses made by parents to the questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View. The inspector also considered the 49 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire and the 116 responses to Ofsted's pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

Jessie Linsley, lead inspector

His Majesty's 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 2023