

Inspection of Witney Community Primary School

Hailey Road, Witney, Oxfordshire OX28 1HL

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 July 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Inadequate

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils flourish at this community school. They understand the school values, which underpin their actions and attitudes. Pupils develop into responsible, articulate and impressive young people. They enjoy the variety of trips and visitors they have across the curriculum, such as to the Steam Museum. These experiences enhance and bring learning to life. Pupils enjoy exploring new ideas and learn well across the curriculum.

The school has a calm and welcoming ethos. Pupils are kind and considerate to all. They recognise the impact of their actions on others. Pupils are keen to take care of each other. For example, older pupils are trained to support their younger peers at breaktimes and to champion well-being. Pupils are encouraged to be active and many represent the school in sporting competitions, including cross country and boccia.

Pupils learn the true meaning of citizenship. The eco ambassadors are proud to have achieved a number of rewards. Pupils are excited to engage in range of community projects such as the local Witney Carnival where their float, raising awareness for the local foodbank, won. Throughout the year, pupils also raise funds for local and national charities.

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

The leadership team has brought about significant and positive changes to the areas that needed addressing at the time of the last inspection. Leaders have a strong vision with a focus on improvement. Trustees and governors now have clear oversight and the assurances they need that children are safe and receiving a high-quality education. Trust leaders know the school well and provide effective support and guidance. Staff appreciate the support provided by leaders and consideration for their workload and wellbeing. They value the changes that have been made.

Leaders' work on pupils' personal development is a strength. They use a range of inspirational visitors to instil a sense of 'you owe it to your future self'. As a result, pupils value education, recognising the potential opportunities it gives them. Pupils learn about healthy relationships and safety in an age-appropriate way. They are encouraged to explore different faiths and beliefs and can identify commonalities and differences with their own. They enjoy the clubs that help them develop their own talents and interests. However, participation to these clubs is not high yet for all pupils. Leaders are addressing this with exciting new provision, such as the popular Hedgehogs club, as well as increasing the range of lunchtime activities.

Reading is at the heart of the curriculum. Pupils develop a deep love of reading fostered by staff who are passionate about introducing them to a wide range of authors from diverse backgrounds. Early reading is taught well from day one in Reception. Here, children use the new sounds they have learned confidently in their independent reading and writing. They are provided with books that help them

practise these new sounds and develop fluency in their reading. Pupils who are at risk of falling behind are given the help they need to catch up.

Leaders have developed an ambitious curriculum which starts in the early years. In most subjects, they have constructed the essential knowledge that pupils are to learn and when. Leaders carefully monitor pupils' progress across the curriculum. They quickly and accurately identify those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and provide staff with the information they need to effectively support pupils. However, in a small number of subjects, leaders are still refining their curriculum thinking. In these subjects, teachers do not always know what to teach and when. As a result, pupils' understanding is not as secure in these areas.

Where curriculum thinking is complete, teachers confidently breakdown new learning into manageable steps so that pupils' understanding builds over time. In early years, leaders carefully craft learning, so that children gain a deep understanding of language and develop the skills they need to prepare them for Year 1. Adults skilfully provide additional support for pupils who need it, ensuring that they learn the same curriculum as their peers. In a small number of subjects, including mathematics and geography, teachers use effective 'flashbacks' to recall prior learning. This encourages pupils to make links in their learning. However, teachers do not yet routinely recap on prior learning across the entire curriculum. This means pupils are not always able to recall longer-term learning in some subjects.

Pupils' behaviour is good. They are well mannered and respectful. Expectations are established from the early years and embedded right through the school. This builds a harmonious and inclusive environment where pupils feel safe to take risks in their learning.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have addressed the significant weaknesses in the school's arrangements identified in the previous inspection. All staff and volunteers are checked with diligence. Risk assessments are robust. Trustees and governors have also made significant changes to their arrangements and now have effective oversight of safeguarding.

All staff know exactly what to do if they have a concern about a pupil. Training is frequently refreshed. Leaders keep records meticulously. Every issue is taken seriously, and leaders work tenaciously to get help for families when needed.

Pupils are taught to 'Speak out, Stay safe' and learn to recognise the signs of abuse. Pupils can identify their trusted adults and know who to speak to if they are worried.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders' curriculum thinking is still at an early stage in a small number of subjects. This means that pupils do not always learn or remember the key information they need for what comes next. Leaders should ensure that everybody is clear how the essential knowledge in each subject should build over time.
- In some foundation subjects, staff do not routinely recap and revisit prior learning. As a result, pupils cannot always link new learning to their existing understanding. Leaders should ensure that all staff understand how learning moves from pupils' working memory to their long-term memory.

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	145651
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10284739
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	219
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Kirsten Robinson
Headteacher	Mark Peacey
Website	www.witneycp.org
Date of previous inspection	14 and 15 June 2022, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- The school converted to become an academy in April 2018. The school is one of 28 primary and secondary schools in the River Learning Trust.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- The school has nursery provision for two- and three-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a graded (section 5) inspection under the same Act.

In accordance with section 13(5) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other senior leaders. They also met with members of the local governing body, a trustee and two senior leaders from the trust.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, French, geography and art and design.
- 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.
- During the inspection, inspectors met with a range of pupils to discuss their views about the school and talked to them informally during social times.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors scrutinised a wide range of information, including a selection of the school's records. Inspectors spoke to staff and pupils about safeguarding and looked at how pupils learn to keep themselves safe. Inspectors spoke to the safeguarding leader about the recording and reporting of safeguarding incidents.
- Inspectors reviewed the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. They also considered the views of staff during meetings with them.

Inspection team

Laura James, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Mineza Maher

Ofsted Inspector

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