

Inspection of West Wycombe School

Church Lane, West Wycombe, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire HP14 3AH

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 June 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are very happy at this small village school. Many pupils have joined the school recently, settling in quickly and establishing a sense of belonging through clear routines and values that are known throughout the school community. One pupil summed this up by stating, 'Every person has a different background but the whole school is a big family.' Leaders emphasise the school's values of honesty, ambition, respect, kindness, positivity and happiness. This helps pupils to grow in confidence and develop a shared understanding of what respect is and how to show this to each other.

Pupils feel safe. They learn about how to keep themselves safe, including when online. Behaviour is positive throughout the school. Happiness and kindness are common features of school life. If any negative behaviour incidents happen, leaders are quick to respond and ensure that things are resolved quickly. Leaders have high expectations for all pupils and have made some progress with improving the school. However, key areas of the school's work, particularly the curriculum and the support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are not as effective as they need to be. This means that not all pupils are achieving as well as they should.

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

Leaders prioritise English and mathematics. By the end of key stage 2, most pupils achieve well in these subjects. However, leaders have not yet developed the wider curriculum fully. In some subjects, leaders have not identified the precise knowledge that they want pupils to learn. The sequence of lessons is not always clear and connected. This means that there are inconsistencies in how some subjects are taught and what pupils know. In history, for example, some pupils can remember activities like making Roman shields, which they clearly enjoy, but struggle to connect this to a wider understanding of the Roman Empire and its impact on Britain.

Phonics teaching is beginning to have a positive impact on younger pupils' learning. Children learn phonics from the start of Reception. Leaders have invested in a new phonics scheme and trained staff to be able to deliver this effectively. However, some teaching is not consistently in line with how leaders intend the programme to be delivered. As a result, some pupils in key stage 1 and in Reception are not learning to read as well as they could. Leaders are ambitious for pupils with SEND. They have responded well to the changing levels of need at the school and the increase in numbers of pupils who need additional support. However, the curriculum is not always adapted well enough for some pupils with SEND and their learning does not always build on what they already know. This prevents some pupils from developing a deeper understanding and greater independence.

In early years, the curriculum has not yet been adapted to ensure that children learn well across all seven areas of learning. Trust leaders work closely with staff to

develop the curriculum and improve the effectiveness of practice. Staff focus on communication and language. They use engaging and diverse texts as well as songs and rhymes to help pupils develop talking and listening skills. Staff have very positive relationships with the children. They ask thoughtful questions, listen and explain things well. However, early mathematics and early reading are not taught as effectively as they could be, and too many children are not fully prepared for Year 1.

Leaders provide meaningful experiences that help pupils to develop their character. Pupils love their roles as reading buddies, members of the pupil parliament and 'eco warriors'. They enjoy taking part in after-school clubs such as football, art and outdoor explorers club. There is a strong programme of visits for pupils that includes a trip a local mosque, gardening with the National Trust, visiting the local Hellfire Caves and contributing to community work, such as helping to clean a local church. Leaders regularly communicate positive and inspiring messages to children and parents through newsletters and assemblies. These are widely appreciated.

Governors know the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They support and challenge leaders and hold them to account where any issues have been identified. Staff are passionate about the school. They are proud to be part of the staff team and appreciate leaders' efforts to help them manage workload and well-being. Parents are highly supportive of school leaders and the way staff engage with and support all. One parent echoed the thoughts of many, sharing that, 'The school has grown so much in the last few years...we are proud to be part of the school community.'

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have strong relationships with their children and families. This helps staff to be aware of any changes that may indicate a child is at risk of harm. If staff do have concerns, they use their training effectively and know what steps to take. Pupils have a clear understanding of safeguarding issues, such as the potential dangers of social media and apps. They learn about these in age-appropriate ways. Leaders keep accurate and detailed records and ensure that staff receive the training that they need. Governors are also trained and have the knowledge they need to check the effectiveness of safeguarding, including safe recruitment practices.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some foundation subjects, leaders have not identified the precise knowledge that pupils need to learn. As a result, pupils do not learn as well as they should. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum for all subjects builds cumulative knowledge and vocabulary to support all pupils in knowing and remembering more.

- In the early years and key stage 1, and for some pupils with SEND, staff do not consistently ensure that the curriculum impacts on children's learning well enough. This means that not all children are fully prepared for their next stage of education. Leaders should refine and embed the curriculum securely, ensuring that what children learn builds on prior knowledge and is matched to pupils' needs and stage of development.
- The phonics programme is not delivered consistently and effectively. This means that some pupils are not learning phonics well. Leaders must continue to develop precision and consistency by ensuring that the school's phonics programme is implemented as intended, so all staff develop the phonics expertise that they need.

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	144338
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10267801
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	142
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Alan Rosen
Headteacher	Ed Tang
Website	www.westwycombe.bucks.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- West Wycombe School converted to become an academy school in September 2020. When its predecessor school, West Wycombe Combined School, was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be requires improvement.
- This is a smaller-than-average primary school.
- The school is part of the Great Learners Trust.
- The school does not use any alternative provider.

Information about this inspection

The inspector(s) carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- 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 carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, history and physical education. For each deep dive, the inspector 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. An inspector also heard pupils read.

- Inspectors also considered the curriculum, visited other lessons and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders of the school, members of staff, pupils and parents.
- The lead inspector also met with representatives of the trustees and governing body, and spoke to a representative of the local authority.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors reviewed a wide range of safeguarding documents and records. The inspectors also talked to a range of parents, staff and pupils about safeguarding.
- Inspectors spoke with staff, pupils and parents to gather their views. They considered responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. Inspectors also took account of responses to the staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Carl McCarthy, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Ally Aldridge-Gibbons

His Majesty's Inspector

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