

Inspection of Wrestlingworth CofE VC Lower School

Church Lane, Wrestlingworth, Sandy, Bedfordshire SG19 2EU

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 November 2023

Overall effectiveness

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

This school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 15 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between graded inspections under section 5 of the Act. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Wrestlingworth Lower School is warm and friendly. Pupils enjoy attending and are very happy at school. They embody the school's values such as positivity, integrity, peace, and love. Regular assemblies celebrate the school's values and play an important part in school life.

Relationships between pupils and adults are respectful. Adults know all pupils very well. This helps pupils to feel safe because they know that adults will help them if they have any worries.

Classrooms are calm and orderly. While the curriculum offer is new, pupils enjoy their learning. Pupils respond positively to adults' high expectations of both learning and behaviour.

There is a strong emphasis on using the outdoors to enhance learning. For example, pupils spoke enthusiastically about the fruits and vegetables that they had grown and cooked. There are regular walks around the village and visits to places of worship. These activities help pupils understand and respect their local environment and community. Pupils would like more opportunities to nurture their interests.

Parents are positive about the work of the school. One comment, typical of many was: 'Wrestlingworth is a wonderful school with absolutely fantastic and caring teachers and staff.'

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

The school has ensured that there is a broad and ambitious curriculum in place for all subjects. However, the approach to teaching the curriculum is new in some subjects. It is too early to see the impact of new approaches. Staff are still getting to grips with implementing new curriculum plans. This means that their delivery is not as strong as it could be. Subject leaders are new in post in some curriculum areas. Some staff have not yet had the training they need on both the new and existing curriculum approaches. This means there is some inconsistency in the delivery of the curriculum across classes in some subjects. This is reflected in pupils' work not always being of the same high quality across subjects.

Reading is a priority. The school's chosen phonics scheme is taught well by skilled staff. Children develop a good foundation in reading from the moment they start in the early years. Pupils read books that are well matched to their phonics knowledge. This helps pupils to practise the sounds they are learning. Staff regularly check pupils' progress. They provide additional help for any pupil who is falling behind. As a result, most pupils read fluently by the time they leave the school.

Pupils enjoy reading a variety of texts linked to the curriculum they are studying. Older pupils are enthusiastic about their favourite books and authors. They enjoy choosing books from the well-stocked library.

Staff meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. They quickly identify pupils' specific learning needs. Leaders regularly review support plans. Consequently, teachers provide appropriate support and adaptations in the classroom. As a result, pupils with SEND learn effectively alongside their peers.

Most pupils behave very well and show positive attitudes towards their learning. They are keen to contribute their ideas in class. Occasionally, some forget themselves when moving around the school and in communal areas. A few of the Reception children do not yet completely follow routines and expectations. This is because adults' expectations of their behaviour are not consistently high enough.

The school promotes pupils' personal development well. The school's values permeate all aspects of the curriculum. A new personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum is also in place. Pupils learn about different cultures and beliefs. This helps them to understand that discrimination of any kind is wrong. Pupils also learn how to keep themselves safe, including when working online. They know the importance of eating healthily. Pupils learn to apply the features of democracy. For example, they have voted for representatives on the newly formed school council. Pupils have used this avenue to request more opportunities to develop their interests through clubs.

Pupils' enjoyment of school is reflected in strong attendance, which is above the national average. The school tracks attendance assiduously. The number of pupils regularly missing school is very low.

The new initiatives the school has introduced are beginning to be effective. Leaders know the school well and understand its priorities. Staff appreciate that leaders take their workload and well-being seriously. The school has built strong relationships with parents. Parents provide valuable support to the school, for example through fundraising for new equipment and volunteering in school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school has very recently introduced several new approaches to implementing the curriculum in some subjects. Some staff are not yet confident in delivering the

new curriculum plans as well as they could. The school should ensure that teachers deliver the planned curriculum consistently well across all subjects and classes.

- There are very few opportunities for pupils to take up school clubs. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop their interests. The school should implement its plans to provide more opportunities for pupils to attend school clubs.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	109609
Local authority	Central Bedfordshire
Inspection number	10242270
Type of school	First
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	42
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Lauren Hill and Kelly Whitfield (Co-chairs)
Headteacher	David Bower (Executive Headteacher)
Website	www.duntonwrestlingworthschool.com
Date of previous inspection	6 June 2008, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Wrestlingworth Lower School is federated with Dunton Lower School. There is currently an interim executive headteacher leading both schools. Subject leaders work across both schools.
- From September 2024, the federation will change. Wrestlingworth will become an infant school, and Dunton will become a junior school.
- There are new permanent staff in place following a period of instability during the last academic year. Some subject leaders are new to their roles. The Executive headteacher and head of school took up their roles in September 2023.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- Wrestlingworth is a Church of England School. The school's most recent inspection of its religious character, under section 48 of the Education Act 2005, took place in June 2018. The next section 48 inspection is likely to take place before 2025.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken this into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders, the special educational needs coordinator, and the subject leader for personal, social and health education. The lead inspector met with representatives of the governing body including the co-chairs of the governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, English, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, considered curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning, and scrutinised samples of pupils' work.
- Other aspects of the curriculum were also scrutinised to provide further evidence for the quality of education. An inspector listened to some pupils read to staff. They also spoke to pupils about reading.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff, and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour across the school. They met with groups of pupils to seek their views of the school. They also spoke to pupils informally in class, around the school and at breaktimes. Additionally, inspectors considered 15 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation during the inspection, including curriculum plans, headteacher reports to governors, minutes of governing body meetings and school development plans.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents. They spoke with parents after school. Inspectors also considered responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including 20 free-text comments.
- Inspectors spoke with different groups of staff to gather their views, including about their workload and well-being. Additionally, they considered responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

Inspection team

Joan Beale, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Richard Fordham

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