

Inspection of Whitehall Primary School

Johnsons Lane, Whitehall, Bristol BS5 9AT

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 March 2024

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	Outstanding

This school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 11 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?

Whitehall Primary School works tirelessly and sensitively to integrate pupils and families from different faiths, cultures and backgrounds into school life. This includes those who speak English as an additional language. Staff know pupils' individual needs well. As a result, pupils feel safe, secure and well cared for.

The vast majority of pupils behave well. Staff support those who need help to manage their emotions. Pupils know the difference between bullying and when people fall out with one another. The school deals effectively with bullying on the rare occasions it occurs.

Whitehall's high-quality offer beyond the academic underpins its inclusive ethos. It celebrates diversity throughout school life. For example, pupils visit different places of worship to help them understand a range of world religions. This helps them to become tolerant and well-rounded citizens who are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Pupils contribute to the running of the school through leadership roles. These include jobs such as school councillors, house captains and library monitors. Pupils learn to take risks and become more independent when they take part in residential visits and trips. They pursue their talents and interests through a wide range of clubs, including choir, athletics and art.

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

The school is passionate about ensuring pupils' learning helps them to understand both their diverse locality and beyond. Its well-established and carefully designed curriculum is central to this. Consequently, pupils enjoy their learning and understand its relevance to the world around them.

The detail in the curriculum means that teachers are clear about what to teach and when. This supports them to implement it effectively. Teachers have strong subject knowledge and explain key concepts precisely. This starts in the early years meaning children get off to a strong start in their education.

Across most areas of the curriculum, pupils learn well. This is particularly so in reading where outcomes at the end of key stage 2 are consistently above the national average. Children in Reception Year begin to learn to read straightaway. They apply their learning in phonics during their independent activities. For example, children read a 'menu' in their 'café'. Pupils who do fall behind receive support to address specific gaps in their knowledge. As a result, pupils who fall behind catch up quickly.

Where there is any dip in pupils' achievement, such as writing, the school takes effective action to improve outcomes. As a result, pupils are well prepared for their next stage of education.

Pupils' recall much of what they have learned. For example, in history, pupils can discuss historical periods studied in previous academic years, such as the Vikings' invasion of Britain. Older pupils talk with confidence in mathematics about how their past learning helps them with new concepts. However, systems for checking how well pupils learn in some wider curriculum subjects have not been fully established. This means the school is not sure where gaps in knowledge are. It has identified this as an area to improve.

The school has effective provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This includes those with the most complex needs where the numbers have increased sharply. The school has expertly adjusted to this changing picture. It ensures that support is precisely matched to individual needs. These pupils learn well in the school's care.

Through the personal, social, health and economic curriculum, pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of risks in society. For example, they know the effects of alcohol and smoking. They recognise how the makeup of families can be different to their own. Pupils know how to lead a healthy lifestyle through eating the right foods and exercising regularly.

The rate of pupils' attendance has improved this year. The school dovetails its positive relationships with families with clear systems to ensure that pupils attend regularly. It provides further support and guidance to those families who need help with this.

Governors know the school well. This is because they make regular checks on the school's work, such as in early reading or mathematics. They share the same vision, alongside senior leaders, of a high-quality education for all.

Parents have a strong faith and trust in the school. They value the approachability of staff and the 'family feel' of the setting. One comment, typical of many, stated, 'Everyone is valued and respected within our school culture'.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some wider curriculum subjects, approaches to assessment are still being developed. In these subjects, the school does not have a clear oversight of how

well pupils are learning the curriculum. The school should ensure that assessment is effective in identifying how well pupils are learning each subject so that it can address any gaps in knowledge.

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	109132
Local authority	Bristol City of
Inspection number	10307220
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	623
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Dani Andrews
Headteacher	Tom Burton
Website	www.whitehall.bristol.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	6 and 7 March 2013

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection the school roll has increased significantly. A new school building for Years 4 to 6 has also been built.
- The headteacher took up his post in September 2022.
- The school use two registered alternative providers.

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.
- Inspectors spoke to the headteacher and other senior leaders, groups of staff, groups of pupils, a representative from the local authority, staff from the two alternative providers and members of the local governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, religious education, history, and design and technology. For each deep dive, inspectors

held discussions about the curriculum, 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 discussed the English curriculum with leaders.
- 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 in lessons and around the school site.
- Inspectors spoke to parents at the start of the school day. They also considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View and to the staff survey.

Inspection team

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