

# Inspection of a good school: William Cobbett Primary School

Weybourne Road, Farnham, Surrey GU9 9ER

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Inspection dates:

26 and 27 March 2024

## **Outcome**

William Cobbett Primary School continues to be a good school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils proudly offer everyone a warm welcome to their aspirational and joyful school. There are high expectations for all. Pupils happily realise the school's inclusive ambitions by working hard and achieving well across the curriculum. Most pupils behave brilliantly, and all benefit from the whole school approach to mindfulness. When pupils need help with managing their emotions, staff give amazing pastoral care. Provision including nurture rooms, art therapy, counselling and sensory breaks offer valuable support to pupils.

School life is enhanced with engaging experiences. Trips such as the residential activity week are enriching and character building. The club offer is extensive. There is something for everyone, including gardening, modern foreign languages, taekwondo and gymnastics. The school ensures that disadvantaged pupils never miss out. Sport is a strength of the school. Links with local clubs and visits from professional sportspeople inspire everyone. Pupils proudly represent the school in a range of competitive events to test their skills to the highest level. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) attend a range of sports festivals.

Pupils embrace different faiths and cultures as a result of well-considered curriculum and assembly activities. They also make a tangible difference to the school through responsibilities such as school and eco councillor.

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

Reading is at the heart of this school, and highly prioritised from the start. Children begin developing their phonics skills well in the nurturing early years setting. School-wide training ensures all staff are equipped with expertise which helps pupils learn to read with fluency, expression and confidence. Pupils who struggle with reading benefit from effective catch up. The love of reading is encouraged through celebratory events, author visits and the inspiring library, which is well-equipped with a diverse range of books for all to enjoy.

Pupils with SEND flourish, as a result of the school's collective expertise and highly inclusive ethos. Staff work together to review the progress of every pupil, sharply identifying when help is needed to ensure that pupils grow and achieve well from their starting points. This is exemplified in the Woodland Centre, where pupils with autism are successful. They are immersed in school life, accessing rich curriculum activities alongside their peers as much as possible. In the Woodland Centre, bespoke help from highly skilled staff helps pupils to fulfil their potential in a calm, safe and positive environment.

The school's curriculum is precisely sequenced with skills, knowledge and vocabulary. In writing, ambitions are fulfilled particularly well. Pupils learn specific skills before applying their talents in extended written work. From crafting persuasive letters to developing exciting stories, pupils use rich vocabulary and accurate techniques to write impressively. The most effective lessons in subjects such as mathematics and physical education showcase the school's learning approach. Teachers model language, concepts and skills to ensure that pupils acquire essential knowledge with success. They use recall activities to check what pupils have learned over time. Ambitions across the whole curriculum are equally strong, but implementation is not fully consistent. In less effective tasks, pupils are not as enthused, and learning is less secure. The school has identified improvements needed to ensure that teaching is consistently strong across all subjects and classes.

Learning behaviour is positive. The atmosphere around the school is calm, safe and purposeful. Nurture provision and emotional support are excellent. Some pupils struggle to manage their feelings, and the school offers a comprehensive range of strategies and pastoral provision to help them. Pupils find comfort and care in three separate nurture spaces: the Hive, the Den and the Burrow. The school has also worked supportively with families to improve the attendance of pupils. Attendance is now in line, and persistent absence rates are better, than national averages.

Pupils' wider development is highly prioritised. They enjoy spiritual development through links with the local church. Assemblies about religious events including Eid and Easter help everyone to appreciate different faiths. Mental health week inspired pupils' well-being and understanding of how everyone's minds work differently. 'Cool carers' club provides thoughtful support to pupils who help care for family members. Workshops for parents, carnivals and fairs provide opportunities for the community to link with the school for the benefit of pupils.

Leaders are inspirational, dedicated and compassionate. Well-being is prioritised for all, ensuring that staff morale is buoyant. Staff training is valued highly. Subject leaders are motivated, reflective and effective, helping to raise standards further. Governors provide effective challenge and support. They are knowledgeable and diligent, contributing strongly to the school's shared values and practice. Families speak highly of the school's caring culture. One parent reflected many others when saying that all pupils, 'feel heard and valued' because staff 'always make time to listen'.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some lesson activities do not ensure that curriculum ambitions are fully met. These tasks do not support pupils to securely learn key content. The school must continue to fully embed its curriculum improvements, ensuring that teaching consistently enables pupils to learn and remember essential knowledge and skills over time.

## 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 school to be good in July 2018.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	125077
<b>Local authority</b>	Surrey
<b>Inspection number</b>	10296298
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	471
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Nick Somerville
<b>Headteacher</b>	Andrew Stear
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.william-cobbett.surrey.sch.uk">www.william-cobbett.surrey.sch.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	11 and 12 July 2018

## Information about this school

- The school incorporates the Woodland Centre. This is a special education needs unit specialising in supporting up to 30 pupils on the autistic spectrum with speech, language and communication needs.
- The headteacher was appointed in April 2023.
- The school offers a before- and after- school club, overseen by the governing body.
- The school currently uses two alternative providers, one registered and one unregistered.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector carried out this ungraded inspection under section 8 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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspector met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, assistant headteachers, subject leaders, teachers and support staff.
- The inspector met with five governors, including the chair of governors.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and physical education. For each deep dive, the inspector 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.
- The inspector also discussed and evaluated pupils' writing from English lessons.
- The inspector listened to a range of pupils read. He observed catch-up interventions to evaluate how staff provide extra support to pupils.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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.
- The inspector considered the responses to the staff survey and spoke to a range of staff about their views of the school.
- The inspector evaluated responses to the pupil survey and spoke with a range of pupils in meetings, lessons and break times.
- The inspector took account of responses to Ofsted Parent View questionnaire and the free-text responses.

## **Inspection team**

Scott Reece, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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