

# Inspection of Wixams Tree Primary School

Green Lane, Wixams, Bedford, Bedfordshire MK42 6BA

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Inspection dates: 17 and 18 April 2024

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

The headteacher of this school is Gareth Thomas. This school is part of the Knowledge Schools Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Ian Hunter, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Suzanna Hobart.

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

This is a happy and nurturing school where pupils enjoy their learning. Adults have high expectations for pupils to achieve well. Pupils try hard to reach these. The school's values are embedded into school life. Pupils know to 'be kind, be kind, be kind'. They respect each other. They know that it is okay to be different.

Pupils are interested, articulate and confident. They enjoy being with their friends and using the extensive play equipment at breaktimes. Lunchtimes are harmonious and pupils play happily together.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including when online. Positive relationships exist between adults and pupils. Pupils know they can speak with a trusted adult if they have any worries.

While there are chances for pupils to participate in after-school sports activities, the availability of other clubs and opportunities to take on leadership roles are limited.

Pupils learn how to be good citizens. Through the school's curriculum, they learn about the world around them and develop thoughtful perspectives on how to improve it. This is helping pupils to become reflective, confident citizens who are ready for the next stage of their education.

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

The school has worked with the trust to put in place an exciting and ambitious curriculum. Leaders have made significant progress in improving the quality of the curriculum in English and mathematics. Curriculum documents detail the essential knowledge and skills that leaders want pupils to learn. Staff training matches the school's improvement priorities. Subject leaders give valuable support to teaching staff. This ensures that subjects are taught effectively. Systems for checking pupils' progress are effective. These allow for timely intervention to address any gaps in pupils' knowledge. This work helps pupils to catch up and deepen their learning progressively over time.

While some subjects are more embedded than others, all subject plans set out clear expectations of what will be taught and when. Teachers are adept at connecting new learning with what pupils already know. They help pupils to make links across different subjects. As a result, pupils are on the way to developing a deep understanding in subjects across the curriculum.

Throughout the curriculum, there is a strong emphasis on language and vocabulary. In subjects such as art, pupils confidently use terms such as texture, tone and shade to explain their learning. In some subjects, more time is needed for pupils to be able to articulate what they know confidently. Teachers plan well for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Consequently, pupils with SEND are well supported to meet their individual targets.

During lessons, teachers check what pupils have learned. However, teachers do not always adapt tasks sufficiently well. They do not always use staff to provide precise enough support to individual pupils who may need extra help. This means that some pupils are not given the opportunity to achieve as well as they might.

Teachers use a range of effective strategies to help children understand different texts and build their confidence in reading. Leaders have carefully considered the books that pupils will listen to and read. Books cover a broad range of themes and topics. These help pupils to develop a love of reading. Pupils across the school enjoy reading. Those who need to catch up receive effective and targeted support. This is helping them to read with increasing fluency.

Children in early years engage in phonics learning with enthusiasm and confidence. They practise letter sounds in a range of activities. Many attempt mark making and writing, as well as enjoy reading books independently. The curriculum ensures that children engage well with a range of activities across all areas of learning. During independent play, adults support children effectively. However, adults do not routinely question children to enhance their learning opportunities.

Pupils behave well and enjoy school. The school's attendance policy sets clear expectations for parents. This is helping to improve attendance.

The school acknowledges the need to better inform parents about their children's learning and provide more opportunities for parents to fully engage with the school.

Pupils' personal development is taught through many subjects across the curriculum. Pupils learn about race, religion and individual liberty. They know about healthy relationships and diverse families.

The school's leaders and governors and the trust work well together. They understand the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Staff appreciate the positive changes made by the leaders to improve the school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- Teachers do not always adapt teaching to meet the needs of all pupils. For example, they sometimes set tasks that are too difficult. This means that some pupils are unable to complete tasks successfully. The school must ensure that teachers adapt work appropriately by breaking tasks down into manageable steps so that all pupils can be successful. In addition, teachers sometimes do not sufficiently plan for added adult support to maximize pupils' achievement. The

school must ensure that classroom adults, including those in the early years, are given clear guidance so that they can effectively support pupils to achieve as well as they can.

- The school does not yet offer a wide range of clubs or leadership opportunities that enhance pupils' learning experiences. The school should ensure that all pupils, including the most disadvantaged, have opportunities to explore their interests and talents through clubs and roles that they may not experience elsewhere.
- Some parents feel that the school does not always communicate effectively with them about their children's learning. The school should find ways to ensure that parents are fully informed about their children's learning journey and any changes in practices, such as behaviour. Additionally, leaders should regularly update the school's website and ensure that all policies are up to date and easily accessible, enabling parents to engage fully in their children's learning.

## 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>	143926
<b>Local authority</b>	Bedford
<b>Inspection number</b>	10318637
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy free school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	502
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Suzanna Hobart
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Ian Hunter
<b>Headteacher</b>	Gareth Thomas
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.wixamstreeprimary.co.uk">www.wixamstreeprimary.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	18 January 2022, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection there has been a change in leadership. The headteacher took up post in September 2023. The school joined the Knowledge School Trust on 1 March 2024.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

## 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 discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher and other senior leaders. The lead inspector met members of the local advisory board and met with the chief

executive officer of the trust who is also the chair of the local advisory board.

- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, art, science and geography. For each deep dive, the 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. The inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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.
- The inspectors considered the views of parents through the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, Ofsted Parent View. Inspectors also spoke with several parents as part of the inspection.
- The inspectors considered the views of staff and pupils through meetings and informal discussions. Inspectors considered the views of staff through the school's own surveys.

### **Inspection team**

Cindy Impey, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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