

Inspection of a good school: Whipperley Infant Academy

Whipperley Ring, Farley Hill, Luton, Bedfordshire LU1 5QY

Inspection dates:

8 and 9 May 2024

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might be outstanding if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Amelia Whitehouse. This school is part of Whipperley Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Amelia Whitehouse, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Sue Spriggs.

What is it like to attend this school?

All pupils absolutely thrive at this school. This is because staff are totally committed to every pupil succeeding, whatever their starting points or needs. Any barriers to learning are expertly overcome, especially in language development. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are immersed in learning that is of a consistently high quality. Teachers hone learning to precisely fill gaps in pupils' knowledge.

Pupils love reading and mathematics. They are excited to find out more about the world around them. Good use is made of outdoor space to rehearse learning independently. Large climbing frames and sandpits support their physical development well.

Pupils' learning is also vastly enriched by a range of wider experiences they would not otherwise access. They visit the zoo, museums, parks and places of worship. They have visits from authors and artists. They correspond with another school in Greenland.

Pupils always behave very well. High levels of respect are shown. Diversity is celebrated. Pupils take turns to be on the active school council. They participate in choir, multi-sports, art and gardening clubs. Pupils are well prepared for junior school.

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

The school has built an ambitious curriculum that is based on leaders' expertise around pupils' early development. Its design also recognises the specific requirements of pupils with SEND or who speak English as an additional language. It is well crafted to build incrementally pupils' knowledge, language and social skills needed for the next stage of their education. It results in pupils achieving exceptionally well from their starting points. The school weaves into the curriculum the direct teaching of how to listen well, cooperate and be independent. This means pupils soon settle and are ready to follow the norms of school life. There are also repeated opportunities for pupils to rehearse new knowledge and skills through exploration and play, so they become secured in their memory.

Leaders have ensured that all staff understand their curriculum expectations and how best to teach them. Teachers take ownership of how well pupils achieve in their class across all subjects. Staff know every pupil in their class well. They constantly check on how well pupils are learning. Teachers are nimble in responding to pupils' needs and successfully address misconceptions as soon as noticed. This has been particularly effective in mathematics where pupils are now achieving well. This is due to very effective staff training. Staff appreciate the time and support leaders give them to sharpen their practice.

All staff share the ambition that every pupil will be a fluent and confident reader. Staff know how to teach early reading very well, from early years upwards. They follow a consistent approach to teaching phonics and have high expectations of all pupils, including weaker readers. Through regular, robust checks on pupils' reading, any pupil who is struggling is picked up and intervention provided without hesitation. Pupils, many who speak English as an additional language, quickly catch up. By Year 2, most pupils are reading at a level expected for their age. This is impressive, as the majority of pupils start school speaking little or no English.

Pupils with additional needs, including SEND, receive excellent support and are successful in their learning. Specialist advice is acted upon so pupils achieve their specific targets. Staff make intelligent adaptations to the curriculum so that learning is accessible to everyone. A few pupils with the highest needs are provided with bespoke language, communication and social skills support so they make progress.

As well as positive attitudes to learning, pupils show excellent behaviour. In Reception, children turn take and share, for example when playing skittles outside and keeping a tally of their score. Elsewhere, pupils also know and follow the school rules and are respectful of the learning environment. They access equipment and resources carefully and independently. Pupils get on well, and bullying is rare. Pupils are safe and happy. Attendance is high due to robust oversight from the pastoral team.

Through lessons, assemblies and wider opportunities, pupils of all ages learn about healthy lifestyles and how they develop from babies to adults. They know that discrimination is wrong. Pupils know about different religions and why respect is important. They celebrate religious festivals and learn about other cultures. They experience visits outside the local area, so they understand the world beyond. This

prepares them for life in modern Britain.

Trustees know the school well. They fulfil their statutory duties. Trustees seek external quality assurance for school improvement and hold leaders to account. Parents are encouraged to contribute to school life and are positive about the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in September 2014.

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	139219
Local authority	Luton
Inspection number	10323728
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	267
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Sue Spriggs
CEO of the trust	Amelia Whitehouse
Headteacher	Amelia Whitehouse
Website	www.whipperleyinfantacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	2 October 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act, 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of Whipperley Academy Trust. The school joined the trust in January 2013 as its founding member. The other school in the trust is a junior school and shares the same headteacher.
- The headteacher is also the chief executive officer of the trust.
- The school runs a breakfast club on site.
- It does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- 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 has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the special

educational needs coordinator, subject leaders, year group leaders and teaching staff.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector spoke to leaders, visited lessons, spoke with pupils, looked at pupils' work and spoke with teachers and support staff.
- The inspector also looked at a range of pupils' work from across the curriculum and talked to other subject leaders.
- The inspector spoke to four trustees for the school, including the chair of trustees.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of documentation, including the school's own self-evaluation, trustee minutes and school improvement adviser visit notes.
- The inspector met with the school's improvement adviser from the local authority.
- 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 gathered through Ofsted's online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View, which included 11 free-text comments. There were 35 responses to the staff survey. No pupils answered the pupil survey. However, the inspector also spoke to several pupils from different year groups during the inspection, along with a range of staff.

Inspection team

Sara Boyce, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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