

Inspection of a good school: Whiteshill Primary School

Main Road, Whiteshill, Stroud, Gloucestershire GL6 6AT

Inspection date: 12 June 2024

Outcome

Whiteshill Primary School continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Heather Francis. This school is part of the Diocese of Gloucester Academies Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Rachel Howie, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Tim Brock.

What is it like to attend this school?

Whiteshill Primary School is a vibrant and happy place to learn. Pupils say that this is a school where pupils 'come together and do not leave anyone out'. The school is ambitious for all pupils to achieve well. This ambition is brought to life through the school's values, 'curious, unique and together', which form the bedrock of this school.

These values are threaded through the school's thoughtfully planned wider experiences. The school has used the NHS '5 ways to well-being' to structure this offer. Pupils create art exhibitions to depict what makes them happy. They 'get active' through fencing, archery, skateboarding and scootering. A strong emphasis is placed on interaction with the local community, such as singing at the parish council and local nursing home. Pupils also engage with the local playgroup to construct toy cars out of cardboard and wood. Older pupils create their own clubs for younger pupils to enjoy, such as Lego and cheerleading clubs.

Pupils feel safe and know that caring staff will help them if they have any worries. Staff make behaviour expectations clear. Pupils behave well because they know it is the right thing to do. They are polite, well-mannered and articulate.

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

The school has carefully planned and sequenced a clearly defined curriculum. The curriculum identifies the small steps of knowledge pupils need to learn at each stage. This helps pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), build their knowledge well over time. These pupils are well supported to learn the curriculum. Precise learning plans mean they get what they need to be able to learn well

in lessons. Leaders see the curriculum as an ever-evolving piece of work and accurately evaluate the impact of the curriculum. This helps pupils to learn well.

It is because of this evaluation that the school recently decided to change their early reading curriculum. This is having a positive impact. Well-trained staff teach pupils to read as soon as they start school. Regular assessment means any gaps in learning are quickly filled. Staff know pupils and their needs well. They anticipate misconceptions and ensure these are quickly addressed. Pupils practise reading with books that contain sounds they are confident with. They also take home 'richer reading' books to develop a love for reading. Initiatives help to encourage a passion for reading. These include book recommendations from staff and pupils as well as reading ambassadors who make books available to pupils at lunch time. The school encourages reluctant readers to take ownership of the books available to pupils at the school. This means there is something for everyone. These strategies have helped to quickly develop pupils' love, confidence and fluency in reading.

Staff explain clearly and model new learning well. They revisit previous learning so that pupils retain this knowledge. Consequently, pupils remember their learning well. For example, in mathematics, pupils can convert between mixed number and improper fractions. However, in some areas, pupils' understanding of how different subjects are studied is less secure. This is taught less explicitly than the key facts pupils need to learn, so pupils cannot remember this knowledge as readily.

Children in the early years learn the routines quickly. They benefit from warm relationships with adults who help them learn the expectations. Pupils further up the school know how to behave. They play well together during social times and have positive attitudes to learning.

The school's wider offer for pupils is rich. Leaders have woven exciting and deliberately planned activities throughout the curriculum. Pupils learn about other cultures and religions through assemblies. For example, religious leaders share learning about different faiths. Pupils learn about how to keep safe through water safety sessions and online safety workshops. They learn about life in modern Britain through British Parliament Week. Pupils are passionate about the environment and developing social responsibility. They participated in a net zero science project to stop the plastic waste from dyslexia overlays through creating dyslexia glasses instead. Pupils are clear that mental well-being is part of being healthy. They are mature and are well-equipped for the wider world.

Staff appreciate leaders' consideration when any new curriculum initiatives are introduced. They are involved in these decisions. The trust and local governance have firm oversight of the school and know it well. They provide effective challenge and support to leaders. There are established systems to check the impact of the curriculum. Staff value the direction of the headteacher and the trust in curriculum development.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small minority of subjects, there is not sufficient emphasis on disciplinary knowledge. This means some pupils do not have a secure understanding of how these subjects are studied. The trust should refine the curriculum further so the progression in disciplinary knowledge is clearer for pupils to be able to build this knowledge in readiness for their next stage of learning.

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 May 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

Unique reference number	142451
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10322302
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	104
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Tim Brock
CEO of trust	Rachel Howie
Headteacher	Heather Francis
Website	www.whiteshillschool.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	1 and 2 May 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This school is part of the Diocese of Gloucester Academies Trust, a multi-academy trust of primary schools in Gloucestershire.
- There has been a change in headteacher since the previous inspection. The headteacher was appointed in September 2018.
- There is a before- and an after-school club for pupils who attend the school.
- The school 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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, school staff, parents, pupils, representatives from the trust including the deputy chief executive officer, the chair of the board of trustees and members of the local governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils from Years 1, 2 and 3 read to a known adult.
- 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.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school, including at lunchtime and breaktimes. In addition, the inspectors met with pupils formally and informally to hear their views.
- Inspectors considered responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses. They also looked at responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Lakmini Harkus, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Chris Hansen

Ofsted Inspector

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