

# Inspection of Two Waters Primary School

High Ridge Close, Apsley, High Ridge Close, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire HP3 0AU

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Inspection dates: 24 and 25 September 2024

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

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding for overall effectiveness at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since December 2011.

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

Being a pupil at Two Waters means being part of a caring and inclusive community. Everyone is encouraged to thrive and reach their potential. Pupils feel safe and valued. This is because there is a supportive environment, where everyone's differences are celebrated. For example, the school recently put on a 'paralympic roadshow', which enabled pupils with special educational needs and/or physical disabilities (SEND) to shine.

Pupils benefit from a broad and ambitious curriculum. This includes a strong focus on developing their love of reading. Older pupils take great pride in their roles as reading ambassadors. They help inspire younger pupils to develop a love of books. While pupils achieve very well in reading and mathematics, they do not always get the support needed to develop their handwriting skills effectively.

Pupils behave well. This is because they understand the school's expectations and look forward to getting house points for positive behaviour. They are confident that any issues, including perceived bullying, are addressed promptly and effectively.

Children in early years enjoy a stimulating and nurturing environment. There are many interesting activities to explore. However, they do not always have enough suitable opportunities to develop their writing skills.

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

The school's curriculum is broad and covers the full national curriculum. Leaders have carefully planned the important knowledge that pupils should learn across the main school. However, this is less well developed in early years, as knowledge intended for children to learn has not always been thought through carefully enough.

Experienced teachers are more ambitious in taking planned knowledge and exploring it with pupils in more depth. Where this is the case, pupils develop deeper and more complex understanding and achieve very well. The school recognises this and has plans to address it.

Teachers actively foster a love for reading among pupils. This starts with effective phonics teaching in the early years, where children are well supported in decoding and blending words. This provides the secure foundation they need to read fluently and access increasingly challenging books.

The school provides a wealth of opportunities to explore and enjoy books. Books are everywhere, from classrooms, to the school library, to pupils reading them in playgrounds. Pupils are passionate about reading and have developed a clear love for it.

Although the school has taken effective steps to develop writing, the quality of pupils' handwriting is not consistently high. This is because in the lower school, including early years, the approach to developing early letter formation and simple sentence construction has not been as effective as intended. Some pupils do not consolidate these basic elements strongly, before moving on to more complex writing.

The school excels in supporting pupils with SEND. Staff skilfully tailor learning and carefully consider education, health, and care plans to remove any barriers to participation. This ensures that all pupils with SEND are fully included and achieve as well as possible.

Pupils attend and behave very well as they know and follow the school values, such as respect. Most pupils find lessons engaging and want to learn. Any instances of low-level disruption are addressed quickly. In early years, children share and take turns and include each other. However, there are occasions when teachers expect pupils to concentrate for longer periods than they are able to. This impacts on some younger children's motivation for learning.

Personal development is richly promoted. Pupils take pride in their leadership roles. These include house captains, which create cohesion between year groups. There are highly meaningful opportunities for pupils to learn about fundamental British values, such as democracy and citizenship. These include standing for election, raising money for charity and working with the elderly. The school also offers an extensive range of extracurricular activities, trips, and clubs that are carefully planned to ensure everyone benefits. Over time, these build a rich tapestry of wider experiences. For example, pupils have been to the theatre to develop their understanding of Shakespeare and participated in high ropes courses to build their confidence and teamwork skills.

The school proactively involve parents in pupils' education. This is reflected in the number of parents running clubs. Governors know the school well. For example, they carefully planned for the recent period of transition, during which a few experienced teachers moved on to promotions. This ensured that new teachers have the support they need. The school engages effectively with staff regarding well-being but recognise that further work is needed to refine workload in line with new assessment systems.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- The school has not ensured that its programme for developing pupils' handwriting is effectively structured from the early years. As a result, some pupils advance to more complex writing without fully consolidating essential transcription skills, such as letter formation, word spacing, and alignment. The school needs to establish a clear approach to handwriting development that strengthens transcription skills from the early years, ensuring pupils have a solid foundation for more advanced writing.
- The school is redeveloping the early years curriculum. As such, in some areas of learning it is not fully clear what children should learn. Certain activities in early years do not develop children's knowledge and skills effectively, particularly in writing and

transcription. The school needs to ensure that the intended knowledge is carefully planned and sequenced, with activities consistently supporting the development of these skills.

## 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>	117108
<b>Local authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10294956
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	229
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Andy Townsend
<b>Headteacher</b>	Tim Gately
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://hwww.twowaters.herts.sch.uk">hwww.twowaters.herts.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	1 and 2 December 2011, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The headteacher took up post in December 2015.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024, will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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, deputy headteacher, local authority standards and excellence officer, special education needs coordinator, middle leaders and class teachers.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English (including early reading), mathematics and religious education. 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.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects, which included science, history and geography. Inspectors also spent time in early years and met with early years staff.
- 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 met with the governing body regarding governance.
- Inspectors met with pupils and visited break and lunch times.
- Inspectors reviewed staff, pupil and parent surveys and free text comments.
- Inspectors conducted further meetings on behaviour and attendance, personal development and SEND.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's pupil survey and Ofsted's staff survey. They considered responses to the parent survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text messages.

## **Inspection team**

James Chester, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Emma Breckenridge

Ofsted Inspector

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