

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Whitchurch Primary School

22 Bristol Road, Whitchurch, Bristol BS14 0PT

Inspection dates:

4 and 5 February 2025

Outcome

Whitchurch Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Carl Hornsby. This school is part of the Lighthouse Schools Partnership which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Gary Lewis, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Adele Haysom.

What is it like to attend this school?

From 'Excellent Entering' at the start of the day to 'Excellent Exiting' at the end, pupils are surrounded by smiles. Smiling is what 'S' stands for in the school's 'STEEP' approach to interacting. The other factors ensure that pupils make eye contact and say, 'Please', 'Thank you', and 'Excuse me'. Smiling is also one of the 'smart' walking rules, along with sensibly, silently and safely. Pupils move around school exactly like that.

Teachers want pupils to achieve high academic standards that will set them up well for the future. Pupils behave well in lessons. They work hard for their teachers and achieve highly, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics.

Another school rule is to be kind. Pupils show this attribute in abundance. For example, they understand that sometimes others need help to cope with the demands of school life. Pupils say that it is important to help others to fit in.

Playtimes are a happy, positive experience. There are many ways to spend the time. Pupils appreciate that they can choose to play sport, climb, dance, scoot, read, draw or simply sit and relax. Playground activities are part of a rich, broad programme of experiences that enhance pupils' personal development considerably.

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

The school's curriculum starts by giving children in Reception a strong foundation across all areas of learning. From this point, it sets out a framework that supports teachers in building pupils' understanding across subjects systematically.

The school ensures that pupils master the basic skills they need for future success. For example, as soon as they start school in Reception, children learn to recognise, blend and write letter sounds. Through Year 1, pupils master phonics. The school makes sure that all pupils keep up with the reading programme by providing support where needed to catch up. By the end of Year 2, pupils become fluent readers. This sets them up well for learning in key stage 2.

The school makes sure that pupils secure their basic mathematical understanding well. From the start in Reception, pupils learn how numbers work. They also learn to think mathematically. This strong start enables pupils to recall and use number facts quickly when tackling more complex mathematics as they get older.

Teachers make sure that pupils understand the vocabulary they will use in English and mathematics lessons before each one begins. They explain clearly how to do the work and check that pupils understand fully before they complete a task on their own. Along the way, teachers check pupils' understanding and clarify any misconceptions. As a result, pupils achieve very well in English and mathematics. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They achieve well because teachers understand pupils' needs and adapt lessons as needed to ensure that pupils learn what they need.

Teachers are beginning to apply the school's agreed approaches when teaching other subjects. However, they do not use the same strategies consistently across the whole curriculum. For example, in geography lessons, teachers do not follow the school's, 'I do, We do, You do' approach consistently. Therefore, teachers do not ensure that pupils understand how to complete the task routinely. Consequently, pupils could learn even more in some subjects.

Most pupils attend regularly. The school does all it can to be a welcoming, friendly and secure environment. It keeps a close eye on who is absent and when. It does this to understand why a pupil finds it difficult to come to school. The school works with families sensitively to find solutions to attendance barriers.

The school is determined to equip pupils for success beyond school. To achieve this, it has shaped a highly cohesive programme of events, activities and wider experiences. The programme develops each element of pupils' character to help them become caring, responsible, resilient and proactive citizens. This culminates in the silver and gold badge awards for Year 6 pupils that recognise readiness for different elements of secondary school life. For example, to get the award, pupils must hand in all homework on time.

The success of this programme is seen in the tolerance and respect pupils show towards each other. They behave very well in class, around school and when playing outside at break times.

Leaders in the school and from the trust evaluate the school's provision accurately. They take swift action where needed to maintain high standards. Trustees maintain clear oversight of the how well the school is doing. They provide support and challenge as needed.

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 apply the school's agreed principles of effective teaching across the wider curriculum consistently. For example, while teachers show pupils clearly how to complete a task in English or mathematics, they do not always do so as clearly in geography. As a result, pupils could achieve even more in some subjects. Leaders have identified this and have begun to address it, but there is further to go. The school should ensure that teachers follow the agreed practices consistently so that pupils achieve equally well in all subjects.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024, graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 predecessor school, Whitchurch Primary School the school to be good for overall effectiveness 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	147800
Local authority	Bath and North East Somerset Council
Inspection number	10344835
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	224
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Adele Haysom
CEO of the trust	Gary Lewis
Headteacher	Carl Hornsby
Website	www.whitchurchprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- This school is run by the Lighthouse Schools Partnership multi-academy trust.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- 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.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, other senior staff, the full governing body, the CEO of the trust and a trustee, a group of teachers and three groups of pupils.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- 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 responses to the online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also reviewed staff responses to the online staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Sandy Hayes, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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