

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Wantage Church of England Primary School

Newbury Street, Wantage, Oxfordshire OX12 8DJ

Inspection dates:

11 and 12 February 2025

Outcome

Wantage Church of England Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Andrew Browne. This school is part of Cambrian Learning Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Richard Evans, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Beth Taylor.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy learning at Wantage Church of England Primary School. They say teachers make lessons fun and bring learning to life. The school ensures that pupils feel happy and safe. It provides a nurturing and caring environment for all. Staff and pupils say the school is like a big family. Pupils understand the school values, including respect. They live these daily through their interactions with others. As a result, pupils say it is a kind school, where you can be yourself.

Pupils behave consistently well in lessons and around the school. They are polite and respectful. The school has high expectations for all. Pupils are supported by staff effectively to achieve well. Pupils rise to the challenge and thrive on new and interesting learning. Pupils are keen to demonstrate the learning behaviours of resilience, reciprocity, reflectiveness and resourcefulness.

The school provides many opportunities for pupils to make a strong contribution to school life and to the community it serves. Pupils love singing and performing plays in the church and raising money for local charities. They enjoy taking on one of many ambassador or prefect roles, especially when they can work and support younger children.

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

The school's curriculum is broad and ambitious. It sets out clearly the knowledge and skills pupils will learn. The school has carefully considered the vocabulary that pupils will use over time to deepen their understanding. The curriculum brings learning to life through a well-considered range of activities inside and outside of the classroom.

Overall, staff deliver the curriculum well. They design activities which help pupils to make links within their learning. This supports pupils to compare and contrast the knowledge they learn. For instance, in art, pupils compare the work of artists, and in history, they evaluate the legacy of the Roman period. However, in a few subjects, teachers do not check carefully enough what pupils have learned. This means that staff do not consistently address key gaps in understanding. As a result, some pupils do not learn as well as they could.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are quickly identified and supported effectively in class. Staff are well trained to support all pupils, including those with SEND. Overall, this supports pupils to achieve well.

The school strongly promotes pupils' love of reading. Well-trained staff teach the school's phonics programme effectively. They support pupils to practise the sounds they have learned. Books that pupils read are carefully matched to these sounds and as a result, pupils become increasingly fluent readers. Staff identify quickly any pupils who have fallen behind. They provide helpful additional support to enable them to read confidently.

Children in early years get off to a strong and positive start. They focus and engage enthusiastically. Tasks are designed to ignite children's interests while building their vocabulary. Adults ensure there are many opportunities to count and to write. Staff provide effective support and nurture for children so they flourish in all areas of their learning. Children are well prepared for their learning in key stage 1

Pupils behave well and have high attendance. They focus well in lessons and engage positively with each other at social times. The school provides additional emotional support for pupils who sometimes struggle in the classroom. This well-considered approach means that the number of behaviour incidents is swiftly reducing.

The school works hard to develop pupils' character. It provides many opportunities for pupils to lead and volunteer. Pupils are enthused at the possibility of receiving a coveted 'platinum citizenship award'. They take part in school events such as producing their own plays and are full of enthusiasm for the 'Strictly Come Dancing' competition. They have a strong understanding of keeping healthy and safe, especially when online. The school uses personal, social and health education lessons to help pupils understand important issues, including equalities. This supports pupils to understand the importance of being respectful to everyone.

The school and trust ensure staff well-being is a priority. Staff report high levels of support from leaders. Staff also benefit from a range of useful training that enables them

to focus on pupils' learning. Since the last inspection, the school has shown it is responsive to any issues that occur. As a result, leaders have continued to maintain the standards and have taken action to support all pupils to thrive.

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 few subjects, assessment is at an early stage of development. This means that some pupils do not achieve as well as they could. The school should continue to develop its approach to check pupils' understanding and address gaps swiftly so that pupils build learning securely across the curriculum.

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 to be 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in July 2019.

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	140255
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10341758
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	398
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Anthony Cook
CEO of the trust	Richard Evans
Headteacher	Andrew Browne
Website	www.wantagece.org
Date of previous inspection	2 July 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Cambrian Learning Trust.
- The school is a Church of England primary school in the Oxford diocese. It's last section 48 report was in November 2021.
- The school runs its own breakfast and after-school club provision.
- The school currently does not use any 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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.

- The inspector met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other senior staff including the school business manager and the special educational needs coordinator (SENDCO).
- The inspector met with members of the trust and local governing body.
- The inspector met with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector spoke with groups of pupils and observed behaviour at lunchtime.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector reviewed the single central record, took into account 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 took account of a range of other information, including the school's own self-evaluation, the school development plan, school policies and minutes from the trust and governing board.
- The inspector took account of the views expressed through the online survey, Ofsted Parent View. He also took into account consideration of the online Ofsted pupil and staff surveys.

Inspection team

Simon Woodbridge, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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