

Whaddon CofE First School

Stock Lane, Whaddon, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire MK17 0LS

Inspection dates

21–22 May 2019

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- The headteacher provides very strong leadership. Leaders and governors have created an outstanding school where all pupils thrive.
- The very experienced governors have an excellent understanding of the school. They are frequent visitors and gather pertinent information to inform their view of the school. As a result, they know the school extremely well and support and challenge leaders very effectively.
- Visionary leadership in Reception ensures that children make strong progress in their reading, writing and mathematical skills. Children are extremely well prepared for their learning in Year 1.
- Subject leaders play an important role ensuring that pupils gain appropriate skills, knowledge and understanding in their respective subjects.
- The school's curriculum, including homework, provides rich experiences that stimulate pupils' interests and desire to learn. Exciting themes develop pupils' skills in English and mathematics across a variety of subjects.
- Teaching is of a consistently high quality. Lessons are very well planned and often highly imaginative and stimulating.
- Leaders and governors are diligent in carrying out their duties for safeguarding. As a result, pupils say that they feel safe. Pupils' welfare needs are very well met.
- The precise tracking of pupils' progress across the curriculum enables leaders and teachers to have a detailed understanding of how well pupils are doing and where support may be needed.
- Leaders are rightly focused on ensuring that the most able pupils have further opportunities to write at the higher standard across the curriculum.
- There are many opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. This helps to sustain a nurturing environment in which pupils can thrive and prepares them well for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They take great pride in their school and their work. Pupils say that bullying is rare.
- Parents are extremely supportive and strongly appreciative of the school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Provide further opportunities for the most able pupils to write at the higher standard across all subjects.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The headteacher's unwavering determination to provide the very best for all pupils has resulted in Whaddon Church of England First School being outstanding in all areas. Her passion, commitment and thorough knowledge of what makes excellent teaching and learning has enthused staff to provide exceptional opportunities for pupils to be the best they can be.
- The school's values, wisdom, compassion and endurance are embodied in everything that the school does. Leaders' promotion of equality and diversity means that pupils are caring, considerate, respectful and tolerant of each other and the wider community.
- All staff at the school work as a close-knit team and morale is very high. All the responses to the online staff questionnaire were very positive. Staff receive excellent professional training.
- The school has rigorous systems to check on the progress and achievement of pupils. Consequently, leaders have a clear and accurate view of the school's strengths. There is no complacency at the school. Plans identify where the school can do even better, for example by providing the most able pupils with further opportunities to write at the higher standard in all subjects.
- Leaders spend additional funding wisely. They always consider the value that any spending will add to pupils' educational experiences. As a result, disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make excellent progress and achieve in line with, or better than, other pupils with similar starting points.
- The curriculum has been carefully planned. Pupils benefit greatly from the excellent learning opportunities provided across a range of subjects. Learning in subjects such as history, art and science is a strength of the school. Pupils are enthusiastic about their work. A typical pupil comment was, 'We love learning because all our lessons are interesting and exciting.'
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also skilfully threaded through the curriculum. Cultural diversity is celebrated through assemblies, and educational trips to museums, art galleries and places of worship. These experiences help pupils develop their understanding of life in modern Britain extremely well.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. They appreciate the strong leadership support and told inspectors that staff and leaders 'go to great lengths' to care for their children and do a 'tremendous' job at making sure all pupils succeed.
- The primary school physical education (PE) and sports funding is also used well. Pupils take part in a wide range of sporting activities during and after school. Pupils talk enthusiastically about taking part in a wide range of sporting opportunities, including cricket and athletics. Specialist sports staff lead PE lessons. The funding has also enhanced teachers' own skills. Consequently, pupils receive high-quality provision in sports and PE.

- The school demonstrates innovative practice in teaching and learning. As a result, it is often asked to share its expertise with other schools. The local authority has full confidence in the school's leadership and considers it only necessary to maintain a light-touch monitoring role.

Governance of the school

- The governing body has an expert understanding of the school. Governors take every opportunity to inform themselves about the impact of the school's work and to challenge leaders on what they tell them. Governors talk with confidence and clarity about the school's work.
- The skills of the governing body have been utilised well to ensure that governors' expertise benefits the school. Governors use their skills very effectively to challenge and support the school's improvement plan. As a result, they make an important contribution to raising standards in the school.
- Governors monitor closely the school's use of additional funding for pupils with SEND, and disadvantaged pupils. They also keep a close eye on how the primary PE and sport premium is used. They scrutinise the impact of this additional funding on pupils' outcomes very well.
- Governors fulfil their statutory duties very effectively. They use regular school visits to ensure that the school's safeguarding and health and safety responsibilities meet statutory requirements. Governors have a detailed understanding about how the school keeps pupils safe.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school's caring ethos underpins the vigilant culture that keeps pupils safe. Staff know pupils well and are alert to changes in their behaviour that may indicate safeguarding concerns. Pupils feel safe in school and trust adults to support them if they have any worries.
- The school works very closely with other agencies to keep pupils safe. If necessary, leaders do not shy away from challenging these agencies to ensure that pupils receive the best possible care.
- The school's records of the necessary background checks on adults who work in school are thorough and comply with relevant guidance. Leaders follow appropriate procedures to ensure they recruit staff who are suitable to work with children.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe when online and in their local community. They know to report concerns and worries to adults at home or to staff at school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Teaching is excellent across the school. It is characterised by friendly, warm relationships between staff and pupils. The extremely well-organised lessons balance the needs of pupils with different abilities very effectively. The learning environment is stimulating and industrious.

- Staff have high expectations of pupils in both their learning and their behaviour. Pupils rise to this by working hard and taking an active, enthusiastic role in what they do. Pupils enjoy their learning enormously, saying that 'what we learn is interesting' and that 'we always compete with our best self'.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is strong. Teachers use this knowledge with confidence to constantly challenge and extend pupils' thinking. There is a sense of pace in lessons and a 'buzz' about learning. Adults ask just the right questions to aid pupils' thinking, draw out learning and help them move on. As a result, teachers instantly know when to extend the most able pupils' thinking about specific concepts and when other pupils need more time or help to secure new skills.
- Teaching and learning in phonics are strong. Through a systematic approach resulting in high-quality phonics teaching, pupils make exceptional progress.
- Teaching and learning are very well planned to support pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds and pupils with SEND. As a result, these pupils are catching up quickly and, in many cases, make more progress than other pupils with the same starting points.
- The development of reading, writing, grammar and mathematical skills is a high priority in school and is exemplary. 'Real life scenarios' are used extremely effectively in classes to create a range of interesting and stimulating activities in both reading and writing. There are numerous opportunities for pupils to write at length in different styles and genres. However, the most able pupils do not always write at the higher standard across the curriculum.
- Teaching of mathematics is a particular strength throughout school. Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to think and reason mathematically. This has enabled pupils to develop excellent skills and deepen conceptual understanding very effectively.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils' welfare is at the heart of the curriculum. Pupils develop the qualities of empathy, compassion and tolerance for each other. Pupils debate and thoughtfully consider each other's ideas in lessons.
- Pupils feel safe and well cared for. Members of the school council told the inspector that they feel valued as leaders within the school. They also said that the staff listen to their views and encourage them to lead special assemblies, fundraising events and sports-day activities.
- Pupils' work in their books demonstrates the great pride they take in their learning. All pupils who spoke to the inspector voiced their love of coming to school.
- Pupils have a breadth of opportunities to develop their understanding of the world in which they live. For example, pupils engage in charity work, raising funds for those less fortunate than themselves. Consequently, pupils are extremely thoughtful and considerate of the feelings of others.

- Pupils told inspectors that they knew who to go to if they have a problem and that they feel very safe and well cared for. Pupils understand the potential dangers of the internet and know how to keep themselves safe.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils' attendance is above the national average. The very few pupils who are persistently absent are given appropriate support which means that they quickly get back on track.
- Pupils' behaviour in the playground and at lunchtime is excellent. The school is calm and harmonious. Pupils enjoy the company of other pupils and adults. They are friendly and respectful to everyone. Over time, they gain a tremendous understanding of how important their behaviour is to other people.
- Bullying in any form is extremely rare. Staff manage behaviour very effectively. Adults are excellent role models and monitor pupils' conduct and well-being carefully.
- Pupils conduct themselves impeccably around school. They are exceptionally polite and can regularly be heard asking adults and each other how they are, and opening doors for each other. They are courteous when speaking to adults and their peers, politely asking to challenge what someone has said in a lesson and waiting patiently until it is their turn to speak.
- There is a very productive atmosphere in classrooms. Pupils are encouraged and confident to work without the constant attention of an adult. They are attentive and eager to participate in lessons, visibly enjoying activities.
- Parents who spoke to the inspector expressed praise for the school and the work of the staff. Parents told the inspector that their children are happy and well looked after. A number of parents were keen to say that their children were 'flourishing'. They put this down to the staff's skills at nurturing and building confidence.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- Attainment at the school is high in all subjects. One reason why outcomes are outstanding is because teachers know their pupils exceptionally well. They use the information they have about pupils to carefully create or select tasks that are well suited to pupils' needs. As a result, all groups of pupils make substantial progress.
- Writing in the school is of high quality, and pupils of all abilities and all ages are provided with considerable challenge. For example, Year 1 pupils are able to construct well-formulated sentences which include the accurate use of conjunctions and noun phrases. Pupils in Year 2 are able to plan their writing and organise it into paragraphs.
- Pupils acquire knowledge and skills very well across the broad and balanced curriculum. Current progress records and evidence from work scrutiny show that pupils achieve high standards in science, history, and other subjects. Leaders recognise that they can capitalise on the progress the most able pupils make by ensuring that these pupils have opportunities to write at the higher standard across all subjects.

- Year 1 pupils have achieved above the national average for the last three years in the phonics screening check. This is because teachers skilfully teach pupils to articulate sounds accurately and give pupils opportunities to practise their skills regularly.
- Pupils across the school read fluently and can talk confidently about their books. For example, Year 2 pupils were able to read with expression, and used clues within the text to decide how to read aloud. Year 1 pupils were able to sound out their words accurately and answer questions about their reading books very competently.
- Pupil premium funding is used very effectively to support disadvantaged pupils. As a result, they make outstanding progress. Disadvantaged pupils' attainment is similar to that of other pupils in school and above that of others nationally. This is because the school monitors the progress of these pupils effectively and regularly ensures that they are supported well to improve.
- The curriculum is further extended and enriched through a wide range of after-school activities. Pupils value the clubs, such as yoga and cross-country running, which are all popular with pupils. The choir is a strength of the after-school provision. These wide-ranging activities boost pupils' wider achievement and their enjoyment of school.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- The early years provision is led confidently and successfully. Leaders have a clear view of the strengths of the setting and how to improve provision and children's learning successfully. These improvements are based on a thorough understanding of children's development as well as flexibility to adapt to their individual needs.
- The quality of teaching is outstanding. Adults demonstrate excellent knowledge about young children's learning and are highly skilled at asking questions to draw out children's understanding and extend their thinking. The importance placed on fostering reading, writing, speaking and listening, and mathematical skills is very evident, with regular opportunities for children to write, practise their letters and sounds, and use numbers in all that they do.
- Children start school with skills and knowledge below those typical for their age, and occasionally well below. Children make strong progress. They benefit from a vibrant and stimulating environment in which to learn. Adults' high expectations make sure that children flourish and make a very positive start to school life.
- Teachers create a rich and varied learning environment for all children, both inside and outdoors. As a result, children are excited about their learning and confident in their abilities. Activities are fun and are led regularly by the interests of the children. The activities capture children's imagination and allow them to practise their skills. For example, children were immersed in 'fixing the holes' in the outdoors area. They made decisions about the different 'roles' required for the job, used a range of tools to measure the size of the holes, and considered how much 'cement' they would need to make to fill these holes and make the outdoor area 'safe'.
- Children use their phonics knowledge to write independently. The learning environment provides exciting opportunities for them to read and write for a purpose. For example, the inspector observed children plan a picnic for their 'teddy bear' and write detailed instructions of the 'dos and don'ts' for the event. Their interest and enthusiasm for

writing was palpable. Consequently, children are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

- Parents are regularly invited to contribute to their children's ongoing assessments. For example, parents include comments through an interactive learning 'journal'. The feedback is used to plan for the children's emerging needs in reading, writing and mathematics. Staff also provide parents with activities and games to further support their children in the home environment.
- The safety of the children is of paramount importance for all staff. The children are supervised in safe and secure learning areas. Safeguarding is effective, and all statutory health and safety checks are met in the early years.

School details

Unique reference number	110415
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10087947

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	First
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 8
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	46
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Williamson
Headteacher	Selina Davies
Telephone number	01908 501719
Website	http://www.whaddon.bucks.sch.uk/website
Email address	headteacher@whaddon.bucks.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	3 July 2018

Information about this school

- This first school is much smaller than most primary schools.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above the national average.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning in all classes, jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspector observed phonics lessons in Reception and Years 1 and 2.
- Together with leaders, the inspector scrutinised a sample of pupils' books from all year groups and across a range of subjects, including English, mathematics, science, and history. The inspector analysed and discussed with leaders a range of information about pupils' progress.
- The inspector listened to pupils read. She spoke to pupils while visiting classrooms, the dining hall and playground. In addition, she met with the school council formally to gather their views of the school.
- The inspector met with governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, subject leaders and teachers.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, at playtime and lunchtime.
- The inspector reviewed various documents provided by the school. These included: the school's self-evaluation; the school improvement plan; the pupil premium statement; information about the use of PE and sports premium; an external review of the school; and minutes of the governing body's meetings.
- The inspector reviewed documents relating to safeguarding, attendance and behaviour. These included the school's single central record, records of all behavioural incidents, exclusion records, and child protection and safeguarding files.
- The views of parents were collected at the beginning of the school day and the inspector took account of the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. She also considered responses to the staff survey.
- The inspector visited the breakfast club, spoke to staff and observed some activities.

Inspection team

Shazia Akram, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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