

Inspection of a good school: Welford and Wickham C.E. Primary School

Welford Road, Newbury, Berkshire RG20 8HL

Inspection date: 12 June 2024

Outcome

Welford and Wickham C.E. Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud of their village school. Staff have created a nurturing environment for all pupils. They know pupils and their families well. Relationships are strong. New leadership has raised expectations in both behaviour and learning. Pupils are rising to these well. Parents are proud of the school. As one parent wrote, 'This is an extremely special school.' There is a strong sense of togetherness.

Older pupils are great role models to their younger friends. Classrooms and playgrounds are happy places. Pupils play and work well together. They love getting 'sunshine tokens' for showing positive behaviours in the playground. Pupils especially enjoy dancing and singing along to music during 'Funky Friday' playtimes.

Pupils understand the school's 'fundamental values' well. They persevere well and treat everyone with respect. Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive. They are proud to receive raffle tickets for a prize draw as rewards for living out these values.

Pupils have many clubs to choose from, including netball, gardening and the popular martial arts club, 'dragon warriors'. There was much excitement on the day of the inspection with the arrival of a Shetland pony ready for pony care club. The school develops pupils' talents and interests well.

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

The school has overhauled the curriculum, including in mathematics and phonics. The new curriculum sets out, with clarity, what important knowledge pupils need to learn and remember over a two-year cycle for the mixed-age classes.

Pupils' current work and knowledge show that most pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are learning and achieving well. For example, in physical education (PE) pupils recall well how important arm position and stride length are in being able to sprint faster. Children in early years benefit from a

stimulating learning environment of their own, as well as the classroom they share with their key stage 1 friends. They explore purposeful activities which support their learning and development. Pupils with SEND thrive. The school identifies the needs of these pupils swiftly and accurately. Teachers understand individual pupils' needs well.

However, the school knows that pupils could learn even better. Governors share this ambitious vision. Staff recognise that the new curriculum needs further embedding for pupils to make more connections with what they have learned before. The school's checks on the impact of the curriculum are less well established. This means the school does not have a clear enough understanding of the difference that the new curriculum is making to pupils' learning. Sometimes, in a few foundation subjects, expectations are not high enough. The school is working well with staff to understand the new curriculum and how best to teach it.

The school prioritises the teaching of reading, coupled with promoting a love of books. It has implemented an effective phonics programme successfully. All staff have been trained to deliver this. This starts well in Reception where children learn to blend sounds and recognise syllables in words. Staff spot pupils quickly who need more support in learning to read. They support pupils well using the school's 'turbo time' programme to help them to keep up. The school ensures that pupils across all year groups enjoy a wide range of diverse and high-quality texts. Everyone is proud of its new library and the wonderful selection of books it contains. Pupils talk with enthusiasm about their favourite authors, books and poems.

Pupils' behaviour is positive across the school. They engage well in lessons. Pupils are polite and well-mannered. The school promotes pupils' personal development well. Pupils learn about healthy relationships at an age-appropriate level. For example, the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) visited to help pupils understand boundaries and know what to do if they feel unsafe. Pupils enjoy the range of roles and responsibilities they take on such as prefects and sports captains. Pupil 'reading ambassadors' love wheeling out the mobile library at lunchtime. They encourage other pupils to read. They like contributing to their school community.

Pupils benefit from a wide range of enrichment experiences such as trips, visitors and links with the federated school. A recent visit from a local charity helped pupils learn more about ecosystems of a local chalk stream. Pupils are proud that everyone from Reception to Year 6 will perform together in the eagerly awaited school performance of 'Jungle Book'.

Staff enjoy working at the school. There is a strong team spirit. Staff greatly appreciate the time they have to plan alongside their 'buddy teacher' from the other federated school. They are positive about the support they get to manage their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Staff are building their knowledge about how best to implement the new curriculum. This means that pupils do not always connect content to previous learning as well as they could. The school should continue their work to ensure that staff are trained to be able to deliver the curriculum consistently well, so pupils achieve even better.
- Oversight of how well the curriculum is being implemented is at an early stage of development. This means that the school does not have a fully accurate view of how well pupils are learning the new curriculum. Leaders should develop their systems further so that they understand how well pupils are learning over time and what further support teachers need.

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 January 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	109984
Local authority	West Berkshire
Inspection number	10321769
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	64
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Pete Collison
Headteacher	Joanna Lagares (executive headteacher)
Website	welfordandwickhamprimaryschool.org
Dates of previous inspection	8 and 9 January 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, the school has federated with another local school. The two schools are known as the Kite Primary Federation. They share a governing board. The executive headteacher and some other staff work across both schools.
- The executive headteacher joined the Kite Primary Federation in September 2022. The deputy headteacher took on her role in September 2023.
- This is a smaller-than-average primary school. Pupils are organised into three mixed-age classes.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Oxford. The last section 48 inspection of the predecessor school took place in March 2019.
- The school does not currently 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. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in the evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and PE. For each deep dive, the 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 heard pupils read to a member of staff.
- The lead inspector also looked at other aspects of the school's curriculum.
- The inspectors met with leaders, staff, pupils. The lead inspector met with three members of the governing board, including the chair. A telephone call was held with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences at school.
- The inspectors spoke with staff about their workload and well-being. They considered the views of staff shared through Ofsted's online survey for staff.
- The inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. An inspector met with parents at the end of the school day.
- 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.

Inspection team

Lea Hannam, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Jason Philipsz

Ofsted Inspector

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