

Inspection of Whitwell Primary School

Southfield Lane, Whitwell, Worksop, Nottinghamshire S80 4NR

Inspection dates: 3–4 December 2019

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils told us that they enjoy coming to school. They appreciate the wide range of after-school clubs, for example rugby, science, choir and handball. They told us about the school currency, which they helped design. They really like earning currency for things like good attendance or being well organised. They can spend or save this 'money' in the school bank. This helps pupils to learn about managing their own money.

Pupils behave well in most lessons and as they move around school. All staff expect them to be well-mannered and respect others. Pupils told us that they feel safe in school, including from bullying. Pupils say that bullying rarely happens. Pupils benefit from activities such as 'forest school', the 'daily mile' and the nurture group. These activities help to build their self-esteem, confidence and social skills. They are developing as well-rounded and thoughtful individuals.

Younger pupils make a good start in learning to read. However, older pupils do not achieve as well as they should in reading, grammar and mathematics by the time they leave the school. Some pupils do not remember what they have learned in other subjects, such as geography and science.

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

Leaders and staff promote pupils' personal development well. They provide plenty of activities to support pupils' physical fitness and mental well-being. In most cases, staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Leaders keep careful records of any behaviour or bullying incidents. These incidents are rare. Staff are skilled in managing challenging behaviours linked to pupils' additional needs. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive good support. Staff adapt the work for these pupils so that they achieve well and are fully included in school life.

We saw lots of examples of how teachers make pupils aware of the range of faiths and cultures in modern British society. Pupils' work, inspired by their 'faith week', is imaginative and well presented.

Children in the early years settle quickly and achieve well. Staff understand their needs well. They plan a wide range of interesting activities that support children's development in all areas of learning. The 'busy bees' Nursery class is an asset to the school. It provides a warm, nurturing environment and lots of high-quality learning experiences. When we visited the Nursery class, children were enjoying making 'reindeer stew' from vegetables grown in the school garden. In doing so, they were happily chatting with staff about healthy foods. They were developing good language skills and an awareness of the world around them.

The teaching of early reading and phonics is strong. Staff make sure that younger pupils learn to read quickly. This begins right from the time children enter the

Nursery class. Almost all younger pupils become fluent readers. Pupils who need extra help receive it promptly. Pupils achieve well in reading at the end of key stage 1. This strong start does not continue into key stage 2. Leaders began to introduce improvements, but this did not happen quickly enough. Pupils' achievement continued to decline in 2019. Leaders and staff have taken further actions to improve reading in key stage 2 this year. It is too soon to see the impact.

In mathematics, the picture is more positive. Pupils build their knowledge, skills and confidence each year. Teachers plan activities that are demanding. They ensure that pupils get the support that they need. Pupils' achievement in mathematics is improving.

Leaders have not finished reviewing and developing the curriculums in subjects other than English and mathematics. Pupils cannot remember what they had been taught in other subjects. For example, they struggled to identify the important knowledge they had learned in science and geography. They often confused the two subjects. Some pupils said that they did not enjoy these subjects because they were not explained well. They told us that lessons moved on to new content too quickly. Leaders have not made sure that subjects are planned and taught systematically.

At the previous inspection, leaders were asked to continue their work to improve pupils' attendance. Recent attendance figures show a small improvement. Leaders follow up absences promptly and work closely with parents and carers. Leaders are taking reasonable steps to promote high attendance. However, there are still too many pupils who do not come to school regularly enough.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school's safeguarding policies and procedures are up to date and well managed. The designated safeguarding lead ensures that all staff and governors receive regular updates and training. Leaders could describe how they encourage a culture of safeguarding. They say that staff are caring and quick to recognise and report any concerns for pupils' welfare. Staff say that leaders are always ready to listen. They care for their staff and pupils very well.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils' achievement in reading by the end of key stage 2 is not good enough. Leaders have introduced a range of measures to improve reading in this key stage. It is too soon to tell if these are improving pupils' reading abilities. Leaders should monitor the impact of their actions stringently, throughout the year, to ensure significant and sustained improvement.

- Leaders are in the very early stages of reviewing the foundation subject curriculum. It is not coherently planned and sequenced. Leaders should strengthen subject leadership and staff training. They must focus on designing a curriculum that systematically builds pupils' knowledge and skills over time so that pupils know and remember more.
- Overall attendance is improving slightly. Rates of persistent absence are still too high. Leaders should continue to work closely with families to reduce persistent absence.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	112649
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10110166
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	296
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Tom Munro
Headteacher	Lisa Duncan
Website	www.whitwellprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 March 2019

Information about this school

- There have been no significant changes since the last inspection.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- We met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator and other curriculum leaders.
- Reading, mathematics, geography and science were evaluated in depth. This involved speaking with leaders, teachers and pupils, visiting lessons, hearing pupils read and examining pupils' work.
- We visited lessons and examined pupils' work across a range of other subjects.
- The lead inspector held a meeting with a group of governors, including the chair. She held a telephone interview with a representative from the local authority.
- We observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school.
- We evaluated safeguarding by reviewing policies, systems for recording concerns, training records and procedures for checking staff suitability to work with children.

Inspection team

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