

Inspection of Waltham on the Wolds Church of England Primary School

Melton Road, Waltham-on-the-Wolds, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire LE14 4AJ

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 April 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a warm, happy and inclusive school. As one pupil told inspectors, 'We are one family, we grow together.' Pupils are kind, polite and considerate of each other. They know that adults will quickly sort out any concerns or worries they have. Instances of bullying are very rare.

Most parents and carers speak highly of the school. Families of children who attend the pre-school particularly appreciate how relationships are nurtured. As one parent commented, 'Every child is valued at this school.'

All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), benefit from the wide range of opportunities on offer. Many participate in after-school clubs, such as drama, sports and cooking. Pupils with a particular talent are provided with additional lessons. Leaders want pupils to understand how they can make a difference in the local community. Some pupils visit the local care home; others take part in church events or improve their environment by litter picking. Pupils learn about communities that are different from their own. For example, pupils recall visiting different places of worship in Leicester.

There have been rapid developments in the school's curriculum. However, some of this work is not yet complete.

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

Leaders, including those from the trust, have been rigorous in developing the school's curriculum. They are relentless in their focus to ensure that all pupils recall more knowledge over time. In most subjects, they have ensured that the curriculum outlines exactly what pupils need to know and when. Adults in school have the right expertise to deliver the school's curriculum because they have received effective ongoing support. The 'I do, we do, you do' approach has helped them to make checks on what pupils understand and what needs to be learned next. In a few subjects and in the early years, this work is not yet complete.

Pupils typically achieve well. The exception to this was in mathematics at the end of key stage 2 last year. However, leaders have addressed this concern swiftly. They ensure that they are persistent in ensuring that pupils' mathematical knowledge builds in a logical order. Where they identify any concerns, they are quick to put in targeted support.

Leaders are determined that every child, regardless of starting points, will learn to read. They ensure that staff teach the school's approach to early reading precisely. They make regular checks on how well children are remembering the sounds and words they are taught. Younger children use these methods to decode unfamiliar words. Older pupils look forward to the next 'class read'. The suspense in the stories that adults have carefully selected creates anticipation and excitement. As pupils

read more, the 'STAR books' reward card gives them opportunities to win book vouchers.

Pupils with SEND learn the same curriculum as their peers. They do well because leaders quickly identify pupils' barriers and put in the right support. The special educational needs and disabilities coordinator (SENDCo) has, through regular 'MOT' discussions, helped staff to understand how to break down the curriculum into smaller steps. This has had a positive impact.

Right from the start of pre-school, staff work hard to build effective and trusting relationships with families. Children in the early years use good manners and take turns. They learn how to use tools safely and develop early self-care skills. They enjoy role play, and many can be seen animated in the characters they have become. The curriculum for early years is in development. Leaders are working to ensure that it prepares children well for their next steps.

Pupils know of the importance of positive mental health. They recognise that they might find things hard, but that they should 'keep trying and not let things get you down'. Pupils who need additional help to regulate emotions do well because they are given effective support.

Pupils are respectful and tolerant of everyone in the school community and beyond. This prepares them well for life in modern society. They learn to listen to different viewpoints and to debate different ideas in considered ways. They enjoy the opportunities in school to take on roles and responsibilities. The 'OWL ministers' write manifestos with a view to how they can further improve the school.

Most staff feel valued at this school. They appreciate the actions leaders, including those in the trust, have taken to reduce teachers' workload.

Leaders responsible for governance have a strong oversight of the school. They work closely with school and trust leaders to ensure that the right priorities for the school are in place.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know pupils and families well. Leaders are quick to identify any emerging concerns. All staff have regular safeguarding training and updates. This helps them to spot any signs that may suggest a child is at risk. As the school expands, leaders are ensuring that records across all parts of the school are kept in a systematic and coherent way.

Pupils know adults in school will take their concerns seriously. Leaders have ensured that the school's curriculum provides pupils with opportunities to understand how to stay safe in a variety of contexts.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects and in the early years, leaders have not fully implemented the curriculum as they intend. Therefore, pupils' knowledge and understanding in these areas are not as secure. Leaders need to ensure that they make the necessary adaptations to the remaining subjects so that pupils can recall more as they progress through school.

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](#)' 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

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| Unique reference number | 140913 |
| Local authority | Leicestershire |
| Inspection number | 10254827 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Academy converter |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 96 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of trust | Stephen Adshead |
| Headteacher | Julie Hopkins (Executive Headteacher) Hollie Geeson (Head of School) |
| Website | www.waltham.leics.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 14 November 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, there has been some restructuring of governance. The executive headteacher provides leadership across four schools in the trust. There have been significant changes in teaching staff.
- The school's most recent section 48 inspection, which is an inspection of the school's religious character, took place in November 2021.
- The school uses no alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspectors held various meetings with the executive headteacher, the head of school, the SENDCo, leaders of the RISE Trust and representatives of the governing body and trust board.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives into early reading, mathematics, history and geography. Inspectors met with leaders to discuss the curriculum. They visited lessons, looked at samples of pupils' work and spoke with teachers and pupils. Aspects of the school's art and design curriculum were also sampled.
- Meetings were held to discuss the school's arrangements for safeguarding. This included checking records leaders keep for pupils' safety and welfare.
- A range of school documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation, improvement plans and documentation relating to governance, was examined.
- Inspectors met with several groups of pupils. This included having discussions around the school's curriculum, behaviour and personal development. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at various times during the school day.
- The views of staff and parents were considered through Ofsted's surveys. Inspectors also spoke to parents while on site during the inspection.

Inspection team

Shaheen Hussain, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Sarah Allison

Ofsted Inspector

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