

Inspection of Whitmore Primary School and Nursery

Whitmore Way, Basildon, Essex SS14 2TP

Inspection dates: 24–25 September 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Whitmore Primary and Nursery School are proud of, and enjoy coming to, their school. This includes children who go to the Nursery. Routines are quickly established for children in their new Reception classes when teachers give them instructions. Pupils respect their teachers and know that they themselves are respected.

Pupils feel safe at school and told an inspector, 'Teachers know us all. It's like a family.' Pupils say that bullying rarely happens. They are confident that teachers swiftly deal with incidents when they do occur. Elected pupils enjoy the responsibility of being anti-bullying ambassadors. Older pupils recognise how much behaviour in the school has improved in recent years.

Staff are caring and committed to the pupils' right to a full and rich curriculum. Leaders have made sure that pupils are taught how to uphold school values and British values. They believe that all pupils must learn about the world in which they live. Staff prepare pupils well for the next stage of their education.

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

The headteacher and staff have a clear vision for what pupils should learn. The academy trust has helped leaders to develop a good quality of education. Leaders plan what they want pupils to learn and the order in which they teach knowledge. They enjoy many new experiences to help them learn.

Teachers encourage pupils to be ambitious and to rise to the challenge. This includes pupils who are disadvantaged or with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Occasionally these challenges presented to pupils are wide of the mark. For example, sometimes the more able pupils still find work too easy. Or younger pupils record practical work in their books which is too hard for them.

Children begin to learn to read as soon as they start in the Nursery. Reading continues to be taught systematically in the Reception classes. Leaders have identified that few pupils enjoy reading. They have introduced a new way of teaching reading to foster a love of books. However, leaders know they need to check if these changes could inhibit the development of pupils' higher-order reading skills

Most pupils finish each stage of their education working at the same level as pupils nationally. Staff identify pupils who need to catch up with their learning quickly. These pupils have extra help so that they do not fall too far behind their classmates.

Writing is taught particularly well and is a strength of the school. Pupils are encouraged to write for an audience. They work towards their writing being published. The content of what they write is mature and well structured. Pupils use

correct punctuation and grammar. Leaders have identified presentation of handwriting as an area for improvement.

Pupils develop a good attitude to learning as they go through the school. By the time pupils start key stage 2, they behave well around the school, at playtime, in assembly and in lessons.

Some children who start in the Reception classes do not concentrate on any activity for long. Adults do not always notice that these children are not concentrating. This means that some children in the early years do not learn as much as they could.

Pupils take part in community events and wider experiences that broaden their horizons. They have many opportunities to engage in extra-curricular activities. For example, the choir has been to sing at the local theatre and at the O2. Athletic pupils are proud to represent the school at district sports events.

There is a team of staff that supports families. Staff offer counselling and also support good attendance for pupils. Pupils with SEND are particularly well supported so that they are fully involved in school life. They are encouraged to be as independent as possible. Teachers make sure that communication difficulties do not affect pupils' abilities to access the curriculum.

Governors want what is best for all pupils and staff. They provide challenge and support to the headteacher, together with the trust. Governors check on the well-being of staff. Staff are supportive of leaders and are proud to be involved with school leadership. Governors and other leaders make sure that they consider teachers' workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff care for pupils and keep them safe. Leaders make sure that all staff receive regular training. Staff know the signs that might raise concerns about a pupil's welfare. They know what to do if they have a concern. Leaders record concerns and work with other organisations when it is relevant to do so.

The school's records of the checks they carry out on adults working in the school meet requirements. Pupils report that they feel safe. Most parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, agree.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The level of challenge set in lessons is sometimes not appropriate for all pupils to learn. Younger pupils are expected to record their tasks in a way that hinders their understanding. Often older, more able pupils find challenges insufficient.

Teachers should use the information they have about pupils to plan tasks that are pitched at the right level for all pupils.

- Leaders have identified that too few pupils love reading. The new reading programme to address this has not been checked to ensure that it offers pupils all the reading skills they need. Leaders should ensure that the reading programme fosters a love of reading as well as developing reading skills.
- Some children in Reception have poorly developed behaviours for learning. They run from one activity to another without settling. Encourage children to concentrate for longer on activities that optimise their learning.

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	143126
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10110183
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	619
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Eileen Patching
Headteacher	Nina Kemp
Website	www.whitmore-pri.essex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Whitmore Primary and Nursery School converted to become an academy school on 1 October 2016, when it joined the Berlesduna Trust.
- The school has a Nursery and three classes per year group.
- The school has a breakfast club

Information about this inspection

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

- During the inspection, the inspection team met with the headteacher, the chief executive officer of the trust, the local governing body, the deputy headteacher and the assistant headteachers. Inspectors met with teachers from all year groups and several groups of pupils to talk about their learning across the curriculum.
- Reading, writing, mathematics, physical education, science and history were considered as part of the inspection. Inspectors spoke to leaders of these subjects, visited lessons, spoke with pupils and teachers and carried out work scrutiny to understand the quality of education.

- Inspectors held meetings with the designated safeguarding leader, midday supervisors, with pupils, and spoke to staff to check safeguarding. Inspectors also checked the school's processes for checking the suitability of adults who work with pupils and who visit the school.

Inspection team

Paula Masters, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Linda Allison	Ofsted Inspector
Jacqueline Bell-Cook	Ofsted Inspector
Nick Templeton	Ofsted Inspector

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