

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Wooden Hill Primary and Nursery School

Staplehurst, Bracknell, Berkshire RG12 8DB

Inspection dates:

5 and 6 November 2024

Outcome

Evidence gathered during this ungraded (section 8) inspection suggests that aspects of the school's work may not be as strong as at the time of the previous inspection. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Wooden Hill is ambitious for pupils to be 'READY for the next step in their journey'. Pupils know that it is important to be 'respectful, empowered, active, dedicated and yourself'. Most live up to those expectations. From early years upwards, pupils are boosted by staff overtly recognising and praising them when they behave well. Pupils are kind and courteous to each other and adults. They appreciate the recent changes the school has made to breaktimes so that they have more space to play. As one explained, pupils know it is important to 'refresh their minds' before they start learning again.

Pupils respond well to predictable routines. From the moment they arrive for their early morning tasks, classrooms are typically calm and industrious. The curriculum has been recently redesigned to ensure that pupils learn well across the full range of subjects. They are keen to learn new facts and skills.

The school's ambitions for pupils' learning have not been fully achieved. The number of pupils acquiring the basics of reading by the end of Year 1 has not been high enough in recent years. The curriculum has not had enough time to have a significant impact on learning. In addition, the provision for pupils with additional needs is not as well developed as it should be.

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

The parent who described the school as 'going in a positive direction' was spot on. Wooden Hill is emerging with strength from a difficult period. Additional challenges, on

top of those presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, have impacted on its work. The school is both proud of how far it has come in recent times and honest that there is more to do.

The culture has been reset successfully. A positive environment conducive to learning has been re-established. The 'READY' vision sets a high bar. Pupils are explicitly taught how to behave and helped to recognise and manage their own emotions. The personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme builds on this well. Over time, pupils deepen their understanding of respect for themselves and others and learn to accept difference as the norm. They understand they are responsible for their actions and that it is important, as one explained, 'not to be led by others'. Work with individual families is improving attendance. Almost without exception, pupils come into school in the morning ready to learn. They understand the importance of resilience.

The majority of pupils achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2. This has, in part, been dependent on catch-up strategies. In the recent past, a significant number of pupils have not got off to the best start when learning to read. Many more now do. Staff are well trained so phonics teaching is precise. Pupils read carefully matched books to consolidate their learning. Extra support for those who struggle with learning to read is not making enough difference. It has not been put in place quickly enough and some of the strategies used are not helpful. Furthermore, these pupils do not have enough opportunities to practise their early writing skills.

The wider Wooden Hill curriculum is well thought through. It identifies exactly what pupils should know at key points in each subject, what they need to remember for the future and the vocabulary they need to talk about their learning. The same meticulous attention has been paid to redesigning the early years curriculum to plot children's learning from Nursery to the end of the Reception Year and into Year 1. However, the current curriculums are very new and the teaching of them has not had a significant impact on the knowledge pupils retain over time. This is because in the past there was insufficient emphasis on what pupils needed to remember from year to year.

The focus on effective teaching for all pupils has had mixed impact to date. Training for teachers, coupled with clear curriculum guidance, means that most pupils benefit from clear and accurate teaching. The ways staff check pupils' understanding is sometimes skilful, drawing in all pupils to collectively expand on their answers and thinking, although this practice is not consistent. Teachers are becoming more adept at supporting pupils with additional needs. However, for too long, systems for identifying, and provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have not been good enough. This is changing slowly. There is much more to do to make sure that these pupils' needs are fully met and that challenging behaviour is dealt with effectively.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The teaching of early reading and writing is not as strong as it needs to be. Pupils who struggle to acquire these basic skills are not catching up quickly enough. The school needs to ensure that additional support for pupils who need it is fit for purpose and having the necessary impact.
- The school is not yet realising its ambition for 'inclusive quality-first teaching'. Furthermore, some pupils with SEND are not accessing the curriculum. Consequently, pupils with additional needs are not learning as well as they might. The school must make sure that teachers are well equipped to meet the needs of all pupils in the classroom and that provision for pupils with high levels of need is appropriate.
- The curriculums in their current form have only very recently been introduced. Currently, pupils are not retaining key learning in their long-term memory. The school should ensure it maintains the current momentum to embed the new curriculums and further develop staff expertise in using retrieval strategies in the classroom.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in November 2015.

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	109922
Local authority	Bracknell Forest
Inspection number	10341246
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	409
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Gavin Handford
Headteacher	Ian Garner
Website	www.woodenhill.bracknell-forest.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	14 May 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher joined the school in September 2022 and the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator (SENDCo) in September 2023. The deputy headteacher and early years leader both took up their posts in September 2024. Around half the teaching staff are new to the school since the last inspection.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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 inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the SENDCo and the leaders for early years and PSHE. The inspector also had discussions with the chair

of the governing body and other governors, and with a representative of the local authority.

- The inspector focused inspection activity on the following groups of subjects: early English and mathematics; and art, history, geography and science. For each group of subjects she visited some lessons, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work. The inspector also listened to some pupils read to a familiar adult and visited a sample of PSHE lessons.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector 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.
- Staff and parent views were gathered using Ofsted's surveys. There were no responses to the pupil survey, but the inspector met with pupils as well as staff during the inspection. She also talked to pupils around school and with staff as they went about their work.

Inspection team

Alison Bradley, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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