

Inspection of a good school: Winhills Primary Academy

Off Duck Lane, St Neots, Cambridgeshire PE19 2DX

Inspection dates: 1 and 2 May 2024

Outcome

Winhills Primary Academy continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Nicola Harradine. This school is part of the Diamond Learning Partnership Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Susannah Connell, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Alan Ball.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to belong to this welcoming and caring school. They show high levels of respect to one another. They are polite to staff and visitors. Pupils feel safe because they know staff will help them with any worries.

Pupils enjoy a broad, well-planned curriculum and achieve well. They talk enthusiastically about their learning and how it helps them in class. Pupils behave well in lessons. Teachers have high expectations of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). School rewards motivate pupils to do their best, such as the 'RRR Award'. Older pupils take their role as reading ambassadors seriously.

Staff know pupils and their families well. They provide high levels of support for pupils' emotional and social needs. Although most pupils attend school regularly, a small number do not. As a result, they miss out on important learning.

Leaders are determined to broaden pupils' life experiences by providing a range of development opportunities. These include clubs and trips. For example, pupils visited Grafham Water recently. Visitors, such as the police, help pupils learn how to keep safe online and in the community. Pupils look forward to the annual residential trips.

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

The school has a well-planned curriculum. It has developed over time to ensure the content takes account of all pupils' needs, including those with SEND. Curriculum plans outline the important knowledge pupils need to learn from early years through to Year 6. Teachers revisit important knowledge to help pupils remember their learning. Ongoing

training enables teachers to develop their understanding and teaching of subjects. Regular checks on pupils' understanding of the curriculum enable teachers to provide support. Pupils use subject-specific vocabulary in their work. This is because teachers share and explain this in lessons. Quality curriculum resources are used to support all pupils. Pupils know these help them with their learning.

Pupils enjoy reading and read well. This is because the school prioritises reading from the moment children start school. In the nursery, children enjoy listening to stories as part of their daily routine. Staff teach phonics consistently well across the school. They benefit from ongoing training. Accurate assessments ensure that staff know which pupils need extra support. Targeted adult interventions help pupils who are falling behind to catch up. Teachers ensure that the books pupils read match the sounds that they know. Older pupils enjoy sharing stories with younger pupils at breaktimes. This helps pupils develop a love of reading. Book corners provide a diverse and welcoming range of texts for pupils to enjoy. Teachers choose texts carefully to share with pupils as part of English lessons. These inspire pupils to read a wide range of books.

Pupils with SEND are well supported. The school has comprehensive systems to identify and support pupils with SEND. Staff work with parents and outside agencies to ensure that pupils get the support they need. In lessons, teachers adapt learning well to meet the needs of individual pupils.

Behaviour in lessons and around school is good. Pupils say they can learn in lessons without interruption. Children in the nursery know the class routines and settle quickly. Pupils get on well with each other. They say it is easy to make friends and pupil arguments are rare. The school has systems to track and check attendance. This includes working closely with parents and involving external agencies, where necessary. The school's work in this area has led to improvements in attendance. However, too many disadvantaged pupils remain persistently absent. This leaves gaps in pupils' learning which make it harder for them to catch up.

The school has a well-considered programme for pupils' personal development. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including online. They know how to stay healthy through exercise and eating well. A range of clubs provide pupils with many opportunities to develop new skills. Carefully planned trips ensure that pupils experience high-quality enrichment opportunities. Pupils enthused about a recent visit to the Royal Opera House. Pupils know the school is inclusive and that everyone is welcome. Roles of responsibility, such as being a 'truly trusted' ambassador, enable pupils to contribute to the school community.

Staff value the professional development opportunities on offer to them. They know these help them to develop as teachers. Staff enjoy working at the school. The strong culture of teamwork is evident across the school. They know leaders consider their workload. Trustees and governors know the school well. They visit the school regularly.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Too many pupils are persistently absent from school. This means they miss important learning, making it more difficult for them to catch up. Leaders should review their processes for monitoring attendance to ensure that all pupils attend school regularly.

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 on 10 and 11 October 2018.

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	138280
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10323720
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	269
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Alan Ball
CEO of the trust	Susannah Connell
Headteacher	Nicola Harradine
Website	www.winhills-cambs.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	10 and 11 October 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Diamond Learning Partnership Trust.
- The school is currently led by an interim headteacher. A new substantive headteacher is due to start at the school at the end of May 2024.
- The school manages a breakfast and after-school club provision.
- The school does not make use of 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 inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspector met with the interim headteacher, deputy headteacher, teachers, the chief executive officer for the trust, and governors and trustees, including the chair of the trust.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and physical education. For each deep dive, the inspector held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- 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.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents through their responses to the online survey, Parent View and parents' free-text comments. The inspector also considered responses to the Ofsted staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Lisa Massey, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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