

Inspection of Whitestone Infant School

Magyar Crescent, Nuneaton, Warwickshire CV11 4SQ

Inspection dates: 26 and 27 September 2023

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Outstanding

This school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 12 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time. From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between graded inspections under section 5 of the Act.

What is it like to attend this school?

Everyone lives out the school's motto of 'Hand in hand we learn' at this welcoming and nurturing school. Staff know pupils well. Pupils say adults listen to them and support them if they have worries. Pupils talk about how kind the teachers are.

Governors and staff want all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to do their best. They have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Pupils meet these expectations.

Pupils are happy, confident and lively. They enjoy sharing their views and are proud of their school. They play well together at social times. Pupils understand the school rules and they learn how to be caring towards others.

Pupils learn about different cultures through the curriculum and in assemblies. They are tolerant of differences in others. Pupils are clear that everyone is welcome here. There is an exceptional range of opportunities for pupils. For example, they learn about road safety, and everyone has the opportunity to play a musical instrument. Pupils can attend a wide selection of clubs, including martial arts, construction club and football. The school has a focus on ecology and the environment and has won an eco-award for this work.

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

The school has developed a curriculum that is ambitious with well-sequenced content. The curriculum contains details about the skills and knowledge that pupils need to know. The school offers broad and enriching experiences in all subjects. The environment is vibrant and stimulating inside and outdoors. Pupils enjoy their learning. However, while pupils can remember what they have done, they cannot always recall important information. This is because, in some subjects, activities do not give pupils chance to embed their learning.

At Whitestone Infant School, staff receive effective training and support. This ensures that they have secure subject knowledge and they present information clearly to pupils. However, in some subjects, staff do not always have a clear picture of what pupils already know and what they can do. This is because the school is still developing effective ways to check what pupils remember in some foundation subjects.

The school identifies and supports pupils with SEND very well. Staff receive the training and information they need to help these pupils. Adults adapt activities and support pupils with SEND so that they can follow the same curriculum as their peers. This enables these pupils to succeed. The 'Owls Nest' is a calming, nurturing space where individuals and groups get extra support so they can learn well.

Books are everywhere at Whitestone. The school ensures that reading has a high priority. Children in Reception begin learning to read as soon as they start school.

Staff quickly spot any pupils who struggle to develop early reading skills and give them extra support when it is needed. As a result, most pupils are starting to read fluently by the time they leave the school.

The school has high expectations for behaviour. Adults use the school values of forgiveness, aspiration, respect, care and honesty to shape discussions about behaviour. Pupils behave well. Their attitudes to learning are largely positive. However, some pupils sometimes lack respect for others by talking over their peers and not allowing others to have a voice.

The provision for pupils' wider personal development is exceptional. All pupils participate in a range of well-designed activities and experiences. For example, pupils visit a farm to learn about animals' diets and their young. Pupils learn about mental health and how to ride their scooters safely. Pupils have lots of opportunities to be responsible with a range of roles, including school council members, digital leaders, eco-leaders and gardeners. Pupils have a secure understanding of British values. They know what voting means and that people can choose things fairly this way. Pupils have a real voice through the school council. For example, leaders act on pupils' suggestions for ways to support charities. When pupils wanted a school pet, leaders listened, and pupils now have fish.

Children get off to a flying start due to the outstanding Reception provision. The early years curriculum ensures that children develop the knowledge and skills they need to move into Year 1 and beyond. Expert staff give careful thought to every aspect of the indoor and outdoor provision so that it provides children with well-chosen activities with a purpose. The vibrant early years environment promotes independence, and children thrive. Adults are skilled at adapting learning activities so that all children can take part, including pupils with SEND. Children are rightly proud of their achievements and enjoy showing their learning to visitors. Right from the start of Reception, the school fosters strong partnerships with parents and carers. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school.

There is a real sense of teamwork here. Thriving links exist between the school and its community. Staff are proud to work here. They say it is like a 'Whitestone family'. Teachers value the training and care from leaders and governors who are mindful of staff's workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school has not embedded effective formative assessment systems for some foundation subjects. In some subjects, teachers are not clear about what pupils have remembered from previous learning. The school should develop assessment

systems within the foundation curriculum to ensure that teachers are able to check how well children have retained the previous knowledge taught.

- In some subjects, the school does not provide learning activities that ensure pupils retain new knowledge. Pupils remember the activity they do but not recall what they learned as a result. The school should plan activities to meet clear and precise learning intentions from the curriculum so that pupils can retain knowledge over time.

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	125545
Local authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	10267923
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	269
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Christopher Atkins
Headteacher	Nicola Green
Website	www.whitestone-infantschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	May 2011, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- 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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: 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 inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, history, physical education, and art and design. For each deep dive, inspectors

held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.

- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, curriculum leaders and the special educational needs coordinator. Inspectors met representatives of the governing body and spoke with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors met with the leaders responsible for the early years, disadvantaged pupils, behaviour, attendance and personal development.
- Inspectors examined a range of school documents, including leaders' self-evaluation, improvement plans, records of governance, and documentation relating to attendance and pupils' behaviour.
- The inspectors spoke with groups of staff and took account of views shared through the staff survey.
- The inspectors took account of responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View. The inspectors also spoke informally with parents on arrival at school.
- The lead inspector listened to a sample of pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 read to a familiar adult. Inspectors met with groups of pupils from across the school.

Inspection team

Corinne Biddell, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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