

Inspection of Hornton Primary School

Church Lane, Hornton, Banbury, Oxfordshire OX15 6BZ

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 November 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

The headteacher of this school is Wendy Whitehouse. This school is part of The Warriner Multi Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Annabel Kay, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Duncan Raper.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud of their charming village school. In keeping with the school's values, pupils aspire to be successful learners. They live up to the high expectations that are set for their education by behaving well and focusing diligently during lessons. Consequently, pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well across the curriculum.

There is a friendly and caring environment in this school. One parent summed up the views of many by saying: 'Everyone here looks after one another. It's a real community for growth.' Pupils feel safe and secure. They develop warm friendships that extend across year groups, creating a distinct family feel. One pupil remarked that they know everyone's name in the school. Pupils are empathetic in considering the lives of those less fortunate than themselves. They learn about current affairs and organise fundraising events and initiatives to support worthy causes.

Pupils are responsible. Recently trained play leaders organise enjoyable activities for other pupils during breaktimes. With the school sitting at the heart of the village, pupils develop a strong sense of belonging in their rural community. Pupils learn to cooperate with others by hosting intergenerational tea parties or through collaborating with a local charity to develop the school library.

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

In collaboration with the trust, the school has developed a curriculum that is broad and highly ambitious. Across all subjects, and from the start of early years, curriculum plans detail the precise knowledge, skills and vocabulary that are to be learned. These are organised into a coherent order so that pupils' knowledge builds over time. The needs of each pupil are known well. Bespoke plans outline the support that pupils with SEND require. In lessons, staff confidently meet the needs of pupils with SEND.

Pupils achieve well at this school. On the whole, new ideas and concepts are presented clearly. The school makes clear the links between new knowledge and things that have been learned before. This helps pupils to secure strong recall of what they have learned. However, at times, pupils would benefit from clearer instructions and guidance when learning new knowledge and skills. On occasions, where this is done less effectively, pupils are less sure about what they have learned.

Engaging activities are selected to help pupils to practise and apply their knowledge and skills. In Reception, staff all know the purpose of each activity and have a sharp focus on helping children to develop their communication. Focused writing tasks are well designed and linked to the stories that children have been enjoying. Teachers routinely check what pupils have understood. When misconceptions are identified, rapid action is taken. In particular, there is a strong commitment in mathematics to ensuring every pupil achieves highly through targeted interventions.

Pupils' attitudes to school are positive. They attend well. The learning environment is calm and purposeful. Pupils appreciate the clear and consistent approach taken by adults. From early years, children pick up helpful classroom routines. The nursery is a warm and nurturing environment. Staff take real care of the children here.

Reading is prioritised. Children learn to read right from the start of Reception. The phonics scheme that the school uses is taught well. Teachers skilfully model how to sound and blend words. Those pupils who find reading more difficult are swiftly identified and receive the help they need to develop into fluent readers. Older pupils are keen readers, confidently recounting their favourite novels and authors.

The school's personal development curriculum is exceptional. Pupils develop age-appropriate knowledge of how to keep themselves safe, including how to use the internet sensibly. A rich variety of trips and experiences are carefully mapped out for pupils as they move through year groups. Leaders have intentionally ensured that the curriculum maximises opportunities to learn about different cultures. Diversity is valued highly across the school, and pupils have enjoyed recent learning about Diwali. Pupils are highly respectful towards each other and say they would never tolerate any unkindness or discrimination.

School and trust leaders are highly ambitious and committed in their roles. They ensure staff receive effective training to improve their practice. Staff feel valued and motivated to provide a comprehensive education for the pupils in their care. Governors and trustees are diligent in their approach to school improvement. Clear systems are in place to check the quality of provision and to set challenging targets for the future. Parents value the clear communication between school and home. They appreciate frequent opportunities to come into school, including during the regular 'book look' events.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, teachers do not always have the secure teaching knowledge needed to implement the curriculum as consistently well as leaders intend. When this is the case, pupils occasionally develop gaps in their learning. The school needs to continue to improve teachers' expertise to ensure pupils achieve highly across all subjects.

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	142200
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10288060
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	100
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Duncan Rayner
CEO of the trust	Annabel Kay
Headteacher	Wendy Whitehouse
Website	www.horntonprimaryschool.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	8 and 9 March 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, there have been a number of changes in staff, including the appointment of the headteacher.
- The school is part of The Warriner Multi Academy Trust.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- The school has provision for two-year-olds in the school's Nursery.

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.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher, subject leaders, the leader responsible for pupils with SEND, other teachers and support staff.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of trustees, a governor and the CEO of the trust.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and history. For each deep dive, inspectors 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 where appropriate.
- 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.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils and staff to hear their views.
- The inspectors considered the responses to the confidential Ofsted surveys for staff and pupils and to Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Martin Smith, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Felix Rayner

Ofsted Inspector

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