

Inspection of Waterside Primary Academy

Waterside Primary Academy, Black Horse Avenue, Chesham, Buckinghamshire HP5 1QU

Inspection dates:	3 and 4 December 2024
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Jacqui Blackmore. This school is part of Kings Education 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), Joanne Garlick, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Anthony Kent.

What is it like to attend this school?

A strong and inclusive ethos is at the heart of this school. It is committed to serving and welcoming pupils and their families. Pupils show consideration for each other using the school values of care, attitude, respect, effort and safety. Most pupils embrace these values to help them make the right choices, meeting the staff's high expectations and behaving well.

The school is ambitious for all pupils' achievements. The school has a strong understanding of individual pupils' needs. Staff think carefully about how to make every day successful for pupils. As a result, pupils achieve well.

Pupils are polite, well-mannered and respectful. At social times, pupils eat and play sensibly with their friends. Pupils love the leadership opportunities that are available to them, such as becoming school councillors and eco warriors. This enables pupils to learn tolerance and empathy for others. The school provides a varied set of experiences for pupils. These include curriculum outings that enhance pupils' learning such as visiting a local farm and helping in the local community. Pupils love clubs that the school offers such as art and drawing club. Pupils understand more about the world around them by raising money for local and national charities.

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

Leaders at all levels have worked effectively together to develop even greater consistency in pupil achievement across the school. The school considers staff workload and well-being well while focusing on key areas to improve. The trust and the local academy committee members provide expert support and challenge to the school.

Over the last year, leaders have developed a more ambitious curriculum for pupils. In nearly all subjects, the school has created a curriculum that ensures pupils learn the most important knowledge. It is well-sequenced from the early years to Year 6. These improvements were reflected in the school's positive outcomes in 2024. However, in a few subjects, the most important knowledge is not detailed precisely enough. This means that staff are not as clear what to teach and when in these subjects.

Staff subject knowledge is now much stronger. This helps pupils to understand what is taught. Staff check on pupils' learning in lessons effectively, helping them to identify and address pupils' mistakes. The school identifies pupils' individual needs accurately. Staff then make precise, individual adaptations for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Consequently, pupils with SEND achieve well.

In most subjects, teachers check pupils have remembered important knowledge. However, in a few subjects, teachers do not routinely check what pupils have remembered. As a result, pupils do not achieve as well as they could in these subjects.

As soon as children enter Reception, the school prioritises pupils' reading. This means pupils at the earliest stages of reading get the support they need. Teachers regularly assess how well pupils are learning phonics. The school provides any necessary additional support swiftly for pupils. Pupils enjoy the texts that they read and speak of the books that their teachers read to them with enthusiasm and understanding. The school has worked hard to develop pupils' language and writing skills across the school. Staff model key vocabulary and give pupils many opportunities to practise using these words. This helps pupils to develop their language across the whole curriculum in all year groups. As a result, more and more pupils have the foundational knowledge they need to successfully access the rest of the curriculum.

Most pupils have positive attitudes towards their learning. In the early years, routines are well established. Children in the early years play and learn happily alongside each other. Skilled staff help pupils select the right resources to support their learning. The school has a calm and reassuring approach to pupils who sometimes find it hard to follow the behaviour policy. Well-trained staff ensure that pupils can recognise and reflect on their feelings and the impact these have on others. The school continues to work hard to improve some pupils' attendance and punctuality. This is not as high as the school would wish. The school has strong systems in place to track and raise awareness of the importance of high attendance. As a result, the attendance of pupils is improving.

The school's approach to developing pupils' personal development is well designed. Children benefit from a wide range of experiences that develop their understanding of the world around them. For example, pupils visit places of worship such as the local mosque. This deepens their understanding of different cultures. Children also visit museums, helping them to understand more about how the world changes over time. Pupils display high levels of tolerance and acceptance for the differences they see in each other.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

- In a small number of subjects, the school has not identified the most important knowledge pupils need to learn and in what order. This means staff are not as clear as they could be about what they are teaching and when. The school should continue to identify the key content in these subjects, so that teachers are clear about the most important knowledge pupils need to learn from the early years to the end of key stage 2.
- In some subjects, teachers do not check well enough what pupils know and remember. This means that gaps in pupils' learning, and any misconceptions pupils may have, are not routinely identified and addressed as swiftly as they should be. The school needs to ensure that teachers check what pupils know and remember across all subjects and use this to inform future 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 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	149097
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10341922
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsored
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	208
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Anthony Kent
CEO of the trust	Joanne Garlick
Headteacher	Jacqui Blackmore
Website	www.watersideprimaryacademy.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school has provision for two-year-olds.
- The school is part of the Kings Education Trust.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- 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 inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders, staff and pupils. The lead inspector also met with representatives of the local academy committee, the chair of the board of trustees and the CEO.
- The inspection team carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, design technology and religious education. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, looked at curriculum documentation, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire, including the free-text comments. They also took account of the responses to the confidential staff survey and gathered the views of staff and pupils throughout the inspection.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of the school's documentation, including leaders' plans for improving the school, minutes of the local academy committee and trustee meetings, records of attendance and behaviour incidents.

Inspection team

Neil Pilsworth, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Lorraine Greco

Ofsted Inspector

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