

Inspection of a good school: High Wycombe Church of England Combined School

Loakes Road, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire HP11 2JU

Inspection dates:

25 and 26 April 2023

Outcome

High Wycombe Church of England Combined School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders, staff and pupils are proud of their friendly, welcoming school. There is a strong sense of belonging in this vibrant learning community. Pupils feel happy and safe. Bullying rarely happens. If pupils have a worry, they can tell any adult, who they know will help.

Classrooms are calm places where pupils focus on learning. Pupils listen respectfully and are well behaved in lessons. They are enthusiastic about their learning. They respond well to teachers' high expectations, enabling them to achieve well. Pupils value the trips they go on, which helps to make learning memorable and real. They enjoy the opportunities of performing in assemblies, at local theatres and churches.

Pupils enjoy participating in the wide range of clubs on offer. These include science, art and creative writing. They also value the football sessions run by Wycombe Wanderers Football Club. These provide opportunities for pupils to learn new skills and develop their talents.

Staff encourage pupils to take on areas of responsibility within the school. School councillors are active and have input in school decisions. Pupils relish being peer mentors, sports captains and a member of the pupil worship team. They feel valued and know that their voice is heard.

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

Leaders have maintained a good quality of education since the last inspection. Short-term staff turbulence, during the last academic year, impacted pupil outcomes in the summer of 2022. This has been addressed, and current pupils are now achieving well. Leaders have developed a broad and engaging curriculum. The curriculum identifies what pupils

need to learn and the order in which they need to learn it. It is ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). However, in a small number of subjects, leaders and teachers are at an early stage of establishing how best to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge. Assessment in these subjects needs to develop further.

Leaders have prioritised the teaching of phonics and reading. They are passionate about making every child a reader. The phonics programme, although only in place for a relatively short time, is already well established. Children in Reception and pupils in key stage 1 learn phonics every day. They build their knowledge of letters and sounds in carefully ordered steps. They read confidently, using their phonic knowledge to help them with tricky words. Any pupil falling behind is quickly identified and supported to catch up. Older pupils continue to enjoy reading and confidently talk about their favourite books from the school's carefully chosen book list. Pupils enjoy being 'Reading Champions'. They support the running of the library, organise reading competitions, like 'Book in a Box', and promote the love of reading within the school.

Teachers have good subject knowledge across the curriculum. In lessons, they provide a range of well-chosen resources and activities to support pupils' learning. Teaching is vibrant and engaging. Teachers identify pupils' additional needs quickly and accurately. Teachers make appropriate adaptations to the delivery of the curriculum. This ensures that pupils with SEND are well supported to fully access the curriculum alongside their peers. Pupils enjoy learning and behave extremely well throughout their lessons.

Leaders take care to consider pupils' wider development. They ensure that pupils have opportunities to learn about the different cultures and beliefs found in modern British society. Pupils appreciate the importance of treating everyone with kindness and respect. Leaders ensure that pupils' physical and mental health are promoted well and that pupils develop an age-appropriate understanding of considerate, healthy relationships.

Governors are knowledgeable and enthusiastic advocates for the school. They know the school extremely well and are ambitious for its future. Leaders and governors think about the well-being of staff when they make decisions about the school. Staff are happy that their views and workload are considered.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a positive, open culture for safeguarding. They do all they can to ensure that pupils are kept safe.

Staff understand that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. They have regular and up-to-date training. They know precisely what to do and who to contact if they suspect that a pupil may be at risk of harm. They know that concerns will always be addressed. Leaders promptly provide pupils and their families with the help they need.

The curriculum helps pupils to learn about how to manage risk. For example, they learn about how to be safe online and in life outside school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of foundation subjects, leaders and teachers do not always use assessment as well as they could. This slows down the identification of gaps in individual pupil's knowledge and hinders progress. Leaders need to develop effective ways of using assessment in these areas so that pupils learn and remember more.

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 3 and 4 October 2017.

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](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	110463
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10256440
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	209
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Carla Crighton
Headteacher	Celine Hawkins
Website	www.hwce.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	3 and 4 October 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is a Church of England school. The school was last inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 for schools of a religious character on 27 February 2018.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Oxford.
- There is childcare for pupils attending the school. It is available before and after school. It is run by a separately registered and inspected childcare provider.
- Leaders do not currently use alternative provision for any pupils.

Information about this inspection

- 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 leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector spoke with the headteacher, assistant headteachers, the special educational needs coordinator, subject leaders, the designated lead for safeguarding and other members of staff. They met with five governors, including the chair of

governors. They also held telephone conversations with representatives from the local authority and the school's diocese.

- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour around the school, during lessons, during collective worship and at lunch and breaktimes. The inspector also met with groups of pupils to hear their views.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and music. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, observed pupils reading to trusted adults, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector also looked at curriculum information for other subjects and reviewed samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector reviewed the policies and procedures that school leaders have put in place to keep pupils safe. They spoke to staff and pupils about these procedures. The inspector also looked at recruitment checks completed.
- The responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including written responses, were also taken into account.
- The views of those pupils and staff who completed Ofsted's surveys were taken into account.

Inspection team

Felix Rayner, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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