

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Wood Green School

Woodstock Road, Witney, Oxfordshire OX28 1DX

Inspection dates:

8 and 9 October 2024

Outcome

Wood Green School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Robert Shadbolt. This school is part of Acer Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Nathan Thomas, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Jill Cottee.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and enjoy coming to school. The school's own 'baccalaureate award' inspires pupils to work hard. Pupils make the most of every opportunity to be active, learn new skills and volunteer to make positive contributions to their community. Pupils all complete an annual personal project during each key stage while at the school. This teaches them vital skills of research, time management and how to present information confidently.

The school is ambitious for all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Everyone is encouraged to 'learn well'. Pupils rise to meet the school's high expectations.

Pupils are respectful and courteous to each other. Strong relationships exist between staff and pupils. Staff reinforce routines consistently well. This helps to create a positive and purposeful atmosphere. Lessons are industrious. Pupils work hard. Sixth-form students are highly self-motivated. They study independently and relish the myriad opportunities to be positive role models for younger pupils.

Pupils are proud of their school and are eager to take on responsibility. Older students aspire to represent the school as head students. They develop critical leadership skills by organising key projects each year. 'Student governors' contribute to their school's

improvement in a range of ways. The house system helps to promote a sense of belonging.

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

The ambitious curriculum is thoughtfully crafted to inspire and engage students. Pupils work hard in lessons and are determined to succeed. They demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. A growing number of pupils gain qualifications in the English Baccalaureate. The school has identified critical knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn and remember. Teachers use their subject expertise to present this information clearly. They check pupils' learning regularly. This is especially true in the sixth form. Sometimes, teachers' strategies for checking and deepening learning need finessing. Occasionally, pupils' misconceptions or gaps in learning are not identified or addressed as effectively as they could be. This is more evident in key stage 3.

Expert staff provide appropriate support for pupils with SEND. The schools' processes to identify pupils' needs are accurate. Pupils' needs are well known by all staff. Reading is given a high priority. Specialist support is given to pupils who have fallen behind in reading. This helps them to catch up quickly. The vibrant library, in the heart of the school, is a key feature. Knowledgeable library staff support pupils well. The weekly reading strategy in Years 7 and 8 inspires and challenges pupils to read widely. This helps pupils build a diverse vocabulary and increases their engagement in learning.

The school's high expectations ensure that pupils' behaviour is calm and orderly. Effective use of the schools' restorative approach ensures that relationships remain positive even when pupils' behaviour falls short of expectations. Most pupils attend school regularly. However, there are still some disadvantaged pupils who do not attend school frequently enough. The school is working hard to increase engagement and a sense of belonging in these pupils.

The school's coordinated approach to developing pupils' wider personal skills is a strength. Pupils actively engage in rich and varied experiences to develop and deepen their understanding of growing up in modern Britain. The school has thoughtfully designed its 'learning for life' programme to equip pupils with vital knowledge and skills. This incorporates personal, social and health education and age-appropriate relationships and sex education. A plethora of opportunities exist for pupils to develop their talents or interests. Many pupils represent the school in sports clubs and teams. Regular concerts and performances are highlights of the school year, where pupils relish the opportunities to act, sing, dance and share their musical talents. Some pupils make excellent use of their leadership skills by conducting musical ensembles. Pupils benefit from a wide range of opportunities, such as visits to other educational settings, to effectively prepare them for their next steps. Pupils receive relevant and timely advice to help them make informed choices. Most pupils in Year 11 take advantage of work experience. This gives pupils valuable insights into possible career aspirations and teaches them critical personal skills such as articulation and responsibility.

The trust and governors provide effective support and capacity to the school. Together with leaders, the trust and governors set and maintain the school's ambitious mission and vision. Governors know the school well. They ask leaders probing questions to challenge and support them. Regular visits to the school help them to check that the school is doing all it can to improve continuously. Staff are very positive and loyal to the school. They value the care and consideration that the school takes regarding their workload. Everyone speaks positively about the sense of community that exists in the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- While the school utilises robust systems and processes to improve attendance, some disadvantaged pupils still miss too much school. This means that these pupils lose out on vital learning and are at risk of falling further behind. The school needs to continue its work on reengagement so that the attendance of these pupils improves rapidly.
- The school continues to make appropriate refinements to teachers' pedagogical knowledge and skills but these are not yet embedded consistently. Consequently, not all pupils learn as well as they could across the curriculum. The school should continue to refine its coaching programme to improve teaching and ensure that all pupils achieve highly

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, of the same name, to be good for overall effectiveness in June 2015.

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	144008
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10341844
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1331
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	214
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Jill Cottee
CEO of the trust	Nathan Thomas
Headteacher	Robert Shadbolt
Website	wgswitney.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	12 March 2019

Information about this school

- The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, which provides support for pupils with moderate learning difficulties.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other senior staff.
- The lead inspector met with the CEO and the chair of the trust. She also met with three members of the local governing body (LGB), including the chair of the LGB.
- Inspectors focused inspection activity on the following groups of subjects: English and history; science, design technology and mathematics; and creative subjects such as drama and philosophy. For each group of subjects, inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors visited lessons in other subjects and considered the school's work to support disadvantaged pupils.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils and observed their behaviour at break and lunchtime.
- 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 took account of a range of other information, including the school's development plan, school policies and minutes from meetings of the governing body.
- Inspectors met with groups of staff and considered the opinions expressed through the staff survey.
- Inspectors took account of the views expressed in several letters and emails from parents as well as views expressed through Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Linda Culling, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Peter Fry

Ofsted Inspector

Alan Johnson

Ofsted Inspector

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