

Inspection of Wantage Primary Academy

Rutherford Road, Wantage Primary Academy, Wantage, Oxfordshire OX12 7GQ

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 May 2023

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Early years provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils love their school and are incredibly proud to attend. The never-ending ambition for every single pupil is echoed in the school's motto 'Belong, Believe, Achieve'. These goals are recognised and understood by all. The school is an oasis of calmness, where everyone is respected and valued.

Teachers give very well-planned support and advice that helps pupils become articulate and inspiring individuals. An extensive range of exciting visits help pupils to deepen their understanding of the curriculum. Pupils thrive academically, emotionally and socially, owing to the excellent quality of education and the help they receive.

Leaders have remarkably high expectations for the pupils. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve exceptionally well. Pupils' conduct around the school and on the playground is exemplary. They feel safe and happy in school. Bullying is not tolerated and leaders act on any occurrences of unkindness, resolving matters swiftly.

Pupils new to the school say that everyone is welcoming and friendly. They appreciate the support from their new school buddy and the friendship ambassadors. Leaders have established an excellent learning culture over a relatively short period of time.

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

This is an exceptional school at the heart of the community. Leaders are unwavering in ensuring that pupils get off to an excellent start to their schooling. When new pupils enter, teachers quickly determine the correct support needed to fill any gaps in pupils' knowledge.

Leaders are passionate about developing pupils' love of reading. Highly skilled teachers ensure that pupils get off to an excellent start when learning to read. Pupils read books matched to sounds that they know. Those who are struggling to learn to read receive highly effective support. This means that they catch up quickly. Pupils look forward to story time at the end of the day when they listen to high-quality, exciting stories. Children in the early years enjoy re-telling familiar stories and regularly use their imaginations to act out stories they have heard.

Leaders have designed an aspirational curriculum that is meticulously planned and well sequenced. Pupils learn through engaging activities that capture their interests and imagination. There is a consistent approach to teaching pupils to become self-assured mathematicians. For example, pupils use carefully considered strategies to understand mathematical concepts and to explain these using the correct mathematical vocabulary.

The curriculum ensures that pupils can make links in their knowledge across subjects. For example, younger pupils can recall key points in Florence Nightingale's life and her impact on modern day Britain with confidence. Teachers check pupils' knowledge across the curriculum regularly to identify gaps and misconceptions. They then address these with bespoke support. Leaders identify pupils with SEND swiftly. Plans to support these pupils are precise. Staff provide well-planned support that is subtle, but highly effective. This enables pupils with SEND to achieve exceptionally well.

Pupils are enthusiastic about their learning and keen to do their best. They experience an extensive and exceptionally well-planned personal development curriculum. Pupils learn about protected characteristics and equality in an age-appropriate manner. Fundamental British values are interwoven and carefully planned in the curriculum, so pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain. Developing pupils' leadership skills is a key strength. All pupils take on responsibilities. These include school councillors, eco-council members, friendship ambassadors and lunchtime helpers. Pupils appreciate and enjoy attending a wide range of school clubs.

Pupils experience a rich and varied cultural, sporting and horticultural programme. This includes working with local artists, performing at Wembley Arena and participating in inter-school sporting events. The school supports the local community. Pupils have drawn a portrait of someone special to them to be displayed outside a new elderly persons' care home. Pupils collaborated with pupils from a secondary special school and planted 300 trees in the local area. All pupils know how to stay healthy and active. Children in the early years learn how to brush their teeth and older pupils prepare and cook healthy foods.

Staff are highly positive about the support they receive from leaders. They appreciate the wide range of professional development opportunities to support their practice. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school.

The multi-academy trust provides a clear strategic direction. It offers highly effective support to school leaders. Trust leaders provide well-chosen challenge and support, which is instrumental in the school's success. Leaders make a substantial and positive difference to the pupils, regardless of their background or individual needs.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school has a strong culture where safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Leaders ensure that all pupils are safe and well looked after. All new staff have the required pre-employment checks and undergo effective induction. Regular training helps provide essential knowledge to the staff to identify when pupils are at potential risk.

Leaders are supported well with oversight of safeguarding by leaders from the multi-academy trust. Leaders involve outside agencies for professional support and advice straight away when needed. Record-keeping is thorough. Pupils learn about keeping safe, including online safety, through the school's computing curriculum.

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	147839
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10256265
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	155
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Jason Murphy
Principal	Leah Basilone
Website	www.wantageprimaryacademy.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected.

Information about this school

- The school opened in September 2020 and is part of Omnia Learning Trust. At the time of the inspection, there were no pupils in Years 5 or 6.
- The Nursery provision caters for two- and three-year-old children.
- The school runs a breakfast club. The school offers after-school care, led by an outside provider.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- This is the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors held a wide range of meetings and spoke with the principal and curriculum leaders, teaching and support staff.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of the board for Omnia Learning Trust and trustees. He also met the trust's chief executive officer and the chief operating officer.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, computing and history. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors also examined curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about some other subjects.
- Inspectors met with a range of pupils to discuss their views about the school and talked to pupils during playtimes and in lessons.
- Responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online survey for parents, and parents' free-text comments were considered. The inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's survey for staff. The pupil survey was available to the school but there were no responses.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the safeguarding arrangements in the school, the inspectors spoke to members of staff and pupils. The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead to discuss the school's policies and procedures. During these meetings, records were scrutinised, including those relating to the safer recruitment of staff.

Inspection team

Darren Aisthorpe, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Lorraine Greco

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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