

Inspection of Warboys Primary Academy

Humberdale Way, Warboys, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire PE28 2RX

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 May 2024

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Good

The principal of this school is Stuart Mallott. This school is part of Thomas Deacon 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, Scott Hudson, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Mark Potter. There is a trust director, Jenny Brassington, who is also responsible for this school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are beginning to benefit from the necessary changes the school has made. They are safe and cared for. Pupils appreciate that staff want them to succeed, both academically and socially. However, much of the work to improve how well pupils achieve is still at the early stages. This means some pupils still have gaps in their knowledge.

Pupils enjoy much of their learning. Children in early years like their new topics. In lessons, most pupils listen and focus well. Pupils appreciate that bullying is rare and that adults deal with it well. Behaviour at lunchtime can be positive. This is in part due to the structured activities now available. However, some pupils still choose not to follow the school rules. Some disengage from learning or repeat unwelcome behaviours. There are instances where some staff do not consistently help pupils to manage their behaviour.

There are a range of wider opportunities that pupils benefit from. Sports clubs, choir, school performances and volunteering in the community helps to develop pupils' talents and interests. School councillors are proud of their achievements, such as raising money for new play equipment. Visits to places such as museums help to deepen pupils understanding of what they learn in school.

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

The school, supported by the trust, have accurately identified areas that need to improve. Work has started at pace to improve and update the curriculum. In most subjects, the knowledge pupils need to learn is set out in a logical order. There are some areas of the curriculum, including in early years and aspects of reading and writing, where this work is still being finalised. Staff have begun to have training to teach the curriculum as the school expects. However, these improvements are still new and staff are getting used to these higher expectations. Therefore, staff set work that does not always help pupils to extend their knowledge as well as they could, including in early years.

Staff do check pupils understanding. However, across the whole school, they do not use these checks to precisely adapt their teaching to meet the specific learning needs of pupils. This includes those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This hinders how well pupils fill gaps in their learning, including in reading and writing.

In reading, a new approach to teaching phonics is underway. This is because some pupils had not secured the knowledge of sounds they need to read fluently. There are still some pupils who are not catching up in reading as quickly as leaders want. However, the early signs of the new phonics programme are that it is starting to have a positive impact on addressing gaps for weaker readers. Most older pupils can read fluently.

The school has acted decisively to ensure pupils with SEND have their needs accurately identified. These pupils have targeted support plans and appropriate resources to access their learning. Staff have received specialist training about how to assist the pupils they work with. This training is helping some of these pupils manage their emotional needs more successfully. However, some staff are not fully confident in how best to support pupils with SEND to access their learning. As a result, some pupils with SEND disengage from learning activities and so do not achieve as well as they could.

The school has clarified the expectations for behaviour. This has resulted in a reduction of behaviour incidents in a short period of time. However, there are still occasions where some staff do not consistently apply these approaches. Some pupils choose not to comply with the school rules, especially if not with their class teacher or if they feel an adult is not watching. This does not disrupt learning yet does unsettle other pupils or they perceive that some pupils are treated less fairly than others. Most pupils attend school well. However, there are some pupils who are regularly absent. Leaders have started to address this, but there are still some pupils who struggle to attend or engage in learning.

All pupils follow a comprehensive personal development curriculum. In Reception, children are taught about respect and kindness through traditional stories. They can turn take and share. Pupils learn about other religions and cultures. Pupils debate and respect different viewpoints. They have an age-appropriate understanding of discrimination, healthy relationships and how to stay safe online. They are prepared for life in modern Britain.

The trust and the academy committee are effective at holding leaders to account. The trust provides leaders with expert support and challenge. Staff share the leaders' vision for the school and appreciate the consideration for their well-being in this period of rapid improvement.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school has not completed all its work on updating the curriculum. Staff are not clear yet as to how detailed knowledge builds in a few subjects, including in aspects of reading and writing. This means, sometimes, work is set that is not suitably ambitious or gaps in pupils' learning develop. The school should ensure that all staff have a clear understanding of what pupils must learn and to what standard so that work produced shows these high expectations and pupils secure the in-depth knowledge expected.

- Teachers do not consistently use their checks on pupils' learning to adapt activities. For some pupils, work is not accurately matched to their needs or targets are not precise enough. This includes pupils with SEND and children in the early years. As a result, these pupils do not have sufficient support to address gaps in knowledge, including in reading and writing. Sometimes, they disengage in learning. Staff need to use their checks on learning to provide pupils with work and targets that meet their specific learning needs so pupils catch up and engage in learning successfully.
- There are occasions where some pupils do not follow the school rules. There are inconsistencies in how effectively some staff use the behaviour policy when this happens. This leads to some pupils not improving their behaviour. They also miss out on important learning. The school should ensure all staff consistently apply the agreed approaches to behaviour. This is so these pupils learn to sustain good behaviour choices and participate in 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	146929
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10323788
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	322
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Mark Potter
CEO	Scott Hudson
Principal	Stuart Mallott
Website	www.wpa.education
Dates of previous inspection	29 and 30 March 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The current principal joined the school in September 2023.
- The school joined Thomas Deacon Education Trust in April 2019.
- Currently, the school does not use any alternative education provision.

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.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors held meetings with the principal, deputy principals, the special educational needs coordinator, subject leaders, phase leaders and teaching staff.

- The inspectors also held meetings with the trust director responsible for this school and with trust staff responsible for early years, special educational needs and human resources.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, history, physical education and science. For each deep dive, the inspectors spoke to leaders, visited lessons, spoke with pupils, looked at pupils' work and spoke with teachers and support staff. The lead inspector also heard a selection of pupils read to a familiar adult.
- The lead inspector had a meeting with the chief executive officer and the chair of trustees.
- The lead inspector had a separate meeting with all members of the academy committee who perform a governance role at the school.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of documentation including the school's own framework for self-evaluation, the school development plan and academy committee minutes and visit notes.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector 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 inspector considered the responses gathered through Ofsted's online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View, which included 68 free-text comments. There were 30 responses to the staff survey, 51 pupils answered the pupil survey. In addition, the inspectors also spoke with pupils from different year groups during the inspection, along with a range of staff.

Inspection team

Sara Boyce, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Julie Harrison	Ofsted Inspector
Karen Stanton	Ofsted Inspector

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