

# Inspection of Featherstone Wood Primary School

Featherston Road, Stevenage, Hertfordshire SG2 9PP

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Inspection dates: 18 and 19 October 2022

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Requires improvement

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils at Featherstone Wood feel happy and safe at school. They are proud to attend the school and enjoy their learning. Pupils are very enthusiastic when talking about their school.

Pupils have a positive attitude to learning. There are high expectations for what pupils can achieve in lessons and for their conduct around the school. Pupils are keen to become 'star learners' and receive recognition for their hard work. They are polite and courteous towards each other and to adults. They are taught to listen to and respect the opinions of others.

The school is a calm and orderly place in which to learn. Pupils have designated places where they can go to for quiet reflection time. Pupils say there is some bullying, but that it is dealt with quickly by staff. They trust staff to sort out any worries that they may have. Pupils say that 'there is never a problem a teacher cannot solve.'

Pastoral care for pupils and families has a positive impact. Pupils are well supported by staff who go out of their way to care for them. Parents and carers praise teachers' care for their children. Many members of the school community commented on how the school felt like a 'family'.

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

Since the previous inspection, leaders have worked effectively to improve the quality of education. Leadership across the school has been strengthened with the support of governors and the local authority. Leaders have put in place an ambitious and typically well-ordered curriculum. In most subjects, this supports teachers to introduce pupils to new knowledge in small steps. In a small number of subjects, leaders' plans do not include sufficient detail and are not clear enough to make sure pupils learn all the knowledge they need. Leaders are working with urgency to address this.

Teachers have good subject knowledge. In most areas of the curriculum, teachers regularly check what pupils know. They make suitable adjustments to lessons to give pupils extra practice, to embed important knowledge that is not secure.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have high-quality support. Leaders work with teachers to ensure that the curriculum is adapted so all pupils learn the same ambitious content. They identify pupils' needs well. Pupils with SEND have effective learning habits and develop strong social skills.

Leaders recognise how important it is for pupils to learn to read. Learning to read starts early in Reception. Well-trained adults use the school's chosen scheme to teach phonics effectively. Children are able to use their knowledge of sounds well as

they progress through the school. Adults explain new words to pupils to help them understand their meaning. This helps pupils to be active learners in lessons. There is a selection of interesting books available in every classroom, and pupils enjoy taking books from the 'Secret Library'. Leaders are continuing to widen the range of quality texts pupils can access.

Children in the early years make a good start to their education. Key persons focus on developing children's communication and language skills. The children enjoy listening to engaging stories during lessons. Children have opportunities to explore and play, and they are encouraged to be independent. Staff have a secure understanding of many of the learning needs of the children. However, there are occasions when adults do not check routinely whether all children have remembered the knowledge they are taught. For a small number of pupils, this leads to gaps in the foundation knowledge needed for learning in Year 1.

A well-planned curriculum for personal, social, health and economic education teaches pupils about a range of topics in an age-appropriate way. Pupils speak enthusiastically about their understanding of foods that are healthy to eat. Staff provide pupils with many opportunities to take responsibility for themselves. Pupils organise their games during lunchtime and share equipment willingly. Pupils reflect on their own beliefs and have respect for other people's feelings and values. They understand that others may come from different backgrounds and have varied experiences.

Leaders have made sure that all staff access appropriate subject training linked to the improving curriculum. Staff speak positively about the training that they have received and the impact this has had. Staff get the help that they need from leaders, including support to manage their workload effectively.

Governors have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Planned visits to school give governors a good grasp of the progress being made. They have the information they need to continue to support and challenge leaders.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that all staff are well trained in the school's safeguarding processes and procedures. Staff know how to identify pupils who might be at risk. They report any concerns quickly. A range of school-based and external support is available to make sure pupils and their families get the help they need.

Staff know different risks to pupils, including when online. They teach pupils effectively about how to keep safe outside of school.

Governors monitor safeguarding practices effectively and ensure that appropriate checks are carried out on all new staff.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There are some minor variations in the effectiveness of leaders' curriculum plans. This means that in a small number of subjects some key concepts that need to be taught are missed, leading to some pupils having gaps in what they know. Leaders should complete the work started to ensure all curriculum plans are detailed and well sequenced to support pupils to gain the knowledge they need ready for their next stage of learning.
- Assessment routines in the early years are not consistently effective. As a result, in a few areas of learning, children with gaps in their knowledge are not swiftly identified. Leaders should ensure that assessment practices are used consistently well across the school and that learning opportunities are adapted to allow additional practice in applying key knowledge, where needed. This will best prepare all children for their learning in key stage 1.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	131505
<b>Local authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10241110
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	184
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jason Brown
<b>Headteacher</b>	Louise Shuttleworth
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.featherstonewood.herts.sch.uk">www.featherstonewood.herts.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	12 November 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Leaders manage their own breakfast club provision.
- Leaders do not use any alternative provision to support the needs of pupils.

## Information about this inspection

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

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics, geography and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils about learning and looked at a sample of pupils' work.
- To inspect safeguarding, the lead inspector met with the school's designated safeguarding leaders. She looked closely at safeguarding systems, processes and records. Both inspectors spoke to a range of pupils and staff about safeguarding.

- Inspectors met with a range of leaders over both days of inspection.
- The lead inspector spoke with the representative from the local authority. They also held a meeting with the chair of governors and other members of the governing body.
- Inspectors considered the 18 responses made by parents to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including 18 free-text responses. Inspectors also considered the 16 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire and the one response to Ofsted's online pupil questionnaire.

### **Inspection team**

Bozena Laraway, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Joe Creswick

Ofsted Inspector

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