

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: The British School

Wortley Road, The British School, Wotton-under-Edge, Gloucestershire GL12 7JU

Inspection dates:

7 and 8 May 2025

Outcome

The British School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils come to school happy and eager to learn. In history, for instance, they enjoy learning about the Egyptians, Victorians and local historic figures. Pupils receive a high-quality education and achieve well as a result.

The school has a warm, positive atmosphere. Pupils live up to the school's high expectations of their behaviour. They behave well during lessons and get on well during social times. Pupils know the school's values well. They are very motivated to demonstrate support, courage and resilience, for example. The school celebrates when they do. Pupils are keen to earn points for their 'house'. This develops their sense of teamwork and belonging.

Pupils benefit from a range of clubs and extra-curricular activities. They readily take part in sports, arts and crafts, and gardening club, for example. Older pupils take part in a 'mock trial'. This develops their understanding of the rule of law and how to discuss and debate ideas. Pupils of all ages take part in voting for books to read and 'captains'. This helps them develop their knowledge of democracy. Pupils chosen are proud to hold these positions and make a positive contribution to school life.

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

Pupils learn a broad and ambitious curriculum. The school has carefully ordered what pupils learn and when. For example, pupils apply their understanding of number gained in the Reception Year when learning mathematics later. In most subjects, pupils deepen their knowledge and understanding. Teaching typically presents new information clearly. Pupils benefit from useful opportunities to discuss their ideas. However, some children in Reception Year do not develop their language sufficiently. This is because teaching sometimes does not focus sharply enough on building children's vocabulary.

Staff carefully check what pupils know and can do. For instance, they identify gaps in pupils' learning and adapt the curriculum effectively to remedy these. In a few subjects, however, teaching lacks the subject expertise to deepen pupils' understanding. In art, for example, teaching does not always develop pupils' artistic skills or their depth of knowledge about artists.

Most pupils become confident readers. This is because the school implements an effective early reading programme. Pupils gain the phonics knowledge they need to read with increasing accuracy and fluency. The school matches books well to the sounds the pupils are learning. It provides appropriate support to any pupil who needs it. The school has thoughtfully planned the range of texts that pupils read. For example, pupils learn poetry from diverse authors and perform poems that they have composed themselves.

The school meets the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. It adapts the curriculum to build from pupils' starting points and checks precisely how well pupils are developing their knowledge and skills. The school ensures that parents and carers are part of its process to review the impact of support. It has strong links with pre-school providers to identify and assess pupils' needs early. Consequently, pupils with SEND learn the curriculum well and build their independence.

Pupils have good attendance. The school identifies patterns in pupils' absence and provides effective support to help raise pupils' attendance when necessary. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and usually sustain their concentration well. On occasion, however, routines in the Reception Year are not strong enough to ensure that children listen intently.

The school prepares pupils to be responsible and active citizens. Pupils contribute to the local community. For example, they sing in a local care home and help with litter picking. The school has designed a successful personal development programme to help pupils understand difference and diversity. For example, pupils learn about different religions and the different characteristics protected in law, such as race and age. Through the curriculum, they study important people in history from a range of backgrounds.

Pupils learn to care for themselves and each other. Older pupils are 'buddies' to younger children. Pupils, of all ages, learn about how to keep themselves safe in an age-appropriate way. For example, they learn how to assess risks in forest school and about online safety.

Governors perform their role effectively. They have a strong understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Leaders provide them with valuable information. As a result, they gain an accurate insight into the school's work. Governors and leaders are highly reflective and make necessary improvements to enhance the school's effectiveness. They are mindful of the impact of changes to teaching on staff workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, teaching does not have the subject expertise to deepen pupils' understanding effectively. As a result, pupils do not always gain detailed knowledge and skills. The school should ensure that teachers have secure subject knowledge so that pupils gain detailed knowledge and understanding in all subjects.
- Teaching in Reception Year does not have a sharp focus on the vocabulary that children should learn. Consequently, they do not have enough opportunities to develop their language. The school should ensure that teaching in Reception Year deepens children's vocabulary so that they are well prepared for key stage 1.

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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in March 2020.

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	115739
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10378901
Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	170
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Peter Lee
Headteacher	Jonathan Abel Roche
Website	www.thebritishschool.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	10 and 11 March 2020, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school uses one unregistered alternative provider.

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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held discussions with the headteacher and other senior leaders, governors and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector met with pupils to talk about their experience of school life and listened to a sample of pupils reading to a familiar adult.

- The inspector evaluated school documentation, including leaders' evaluations and plans for improvement, and scrutinised a range of policies and procedures, including those relating to the curriculum, SEND, safeguarding and attendance.
- 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 responses to Ofsted Parent View and parents' free-text comments. The inspector met with some parents at the beginning of the school day.
- The inspector spoke with staff to gather their views about the school and evaluated their responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

Inspection team

James Oldham, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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