

Widcombe Infant School

URN: 143010 | Inspected: 06 January 2026

Safeguarding

standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

Achievement

Expected standard

Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, achieve well in most curriculum subjects. From their starting points, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities progress well through the curriculum. Pupils consistently achieve above the national average in the phonics screening check. This reflects the school's determination to ensure that all pupils reach their full potential. As a result, pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education. Pupils develop accurate and fluent reading, spelling, handwriting and number skills, which they need to succeed. For example, children in Reception use their phonics knowledge to read letters and sounds and build words. Older pupils use this knowledge to write well-structured sentences with accurate spelling. Pupils generally develop appropriate knowledge and skills across the curriculum. They can confidently recall names of the continents and oceans in geography, for example. However, pupils do not achieve as well as they could in some wider curriculum subjects. This is because they are not supported fully to deepen their understanding and make links to their prior learning.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard

The school has an ambitious curriculum in place that is designed and sequenced well. It makes clear the important knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn and when. Leaders have an informed and accurate view of the quality of the curriculum and how effectively staff deliver it. They routinely reflect on the impact the intended curriculum is having on pupils, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This enables leaders to bring about necessary improvements. For example, in mathematics, the deliberate focus on number fluency ensures that pupils confidently recall facts and recognise patterns. The curriculum is generally taught well. Staff ensure that any gaps that arise in pupils' knowledge of spelling and reading or language development are quickly addressed. Most teachers use their subject knowledge to design engaging learning activities. They adapt their approaches so that pupils, including those with SEND, access the same curriculum as their peers. Most pupils learn the curriculum well because of this. In music, for example, they learn the correct names of notes and use terms such as 'dynamics' when performing two-part rhythms. However, on occasion, some learning activities do not match pupils' needs as well as they could. Consequently, pupils do not always develop a depth of knowledge. This hinders the progress for some pupils in a few wider curriculum

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subjects.

Early years

Expected standard

Leaders have an ambitious vision to provide high-quality education and care for children in the early years. Staff work in close partnership with families to ensure this vision is fully realised. They develop positive relationships, which helps them to understand each child as the unique individual they are and promote progress in all areas of learning. The early years curriculum is well designed. It sets out the important knowledge and skills children need to learn. For example, children develop their fine motor control when using play dough to create 'pizzas'. They build their understanding of materials using words such as 'freezing' and 'melting' to describe ice in the outdoor environment. As a result, most are well prepared for the Year 1 curriculum. Reading is a priority in Reception. Children learn to read from the outset. If they struggle with their letters and sounds, they receive the support they need to catch up. As a result, children develop confidence and a love of reading. Most interactions between adults and children are purposeful and extend learning. However, during some activities, this is not the case. Some teaching does not extend children's vocabulary and support them to practise the new words they have been taught. This hinders the language development of some children as they progress through the curriculum.

Inclusion

Strong standard

Inclusion is central to everything that happens at this school. Leaders and staff have high expectations for what the most vulnerable pupils can achieve and ensure that they flourish both academically and personally. They know these pupils as the individuals they are. This helps to create a culture where every pupil develops a clear sense of belonging. Staff use well-established systems to accurately identify pupils' needs at the earliest stage. Staff benefit from guidance provided by a wide range of external professionals, enabling them to deliver the bespoke support that individual pupils require. For example, staff use their training to expertly close language gaps for pupils with communication difficulties. Leaders build effective partnerships with parents and carers of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pastoral support is of a high quality. Trained staff ensure that pupils learn to manage their emotions in a caring and sensitive manner. Leaders rigorously monitor the impact the provision is having on pupils. Together with staff, they adapt strategies both inside and outside the classroom to close any gaps that exist. Consequently, pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, learn alongside their peers and progress well across the curriculum. Leaders ensure that the pupil premium strategy is implemented effectively. They share information with staff and routinely monitor its impact on pupils' academic and pastoral outcomes. This funding ensures that disadvantaged pupils achieve well and participate fully in school life.

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Leadership and governance

Expected standard

Leaders and trustees are aspirational for the school and community they serve. They make decisions that are in the very best interests of the pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and face barriers. This supports pupils to develop resilience, confidence and to take on new challenges. Leaders have a detailed and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas to develop. They rigorously evaluate the impact of their work in order to drive continuous improvement. Pupils' ability to write, read and calculate reflects this. Trustees fulfil their statutory duties effectively and robustly hold leaders to account at all levels. They ensure that the school's values are reflected in all aspects of school life. Leaders and staff benefit from the well-structured professional learning programme. This supports them to develop professionally and fulfil their roles effectively. Staff, including those new to the profession, are proud to work at the school. They demonstrate resolute appreciation for the leaders at Widcombe Infant School. Staff value the consideration given by leaders, including the trust to manage their workload and wellbeing. The compelling sense of belonging is a golden thread that runs throughout the school. Parents and carers express unanimous support and trust for the school. One parent, summing up the typical views of families, commented, 'The school is incredibly nurturing and puts children's development and learning at the heart of the school.'

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Pupils enjoy attending this highly inclusive and friendly school. They benefit from the warm welcome they receive from staff. Staff know pupils well. They forge positive relationships with pupils and their families. This ensures a positive start to the school day and that pupils are ready to learn. Pupils demonstrate the school's values of friendship, kindness, honesty, respect and perseverance. Pupils of all ages play well together during social times. They are adamant that any form of bullying does not occur. Pupils know they can talk to adults about any worries or concerns they may have. This helps pupils to feel safe. Pupils typically live up to the school's high expectations for behaviour. They follow the school rules and move in and around the school sensibly. This begins in the early years, where children respond well to the routines that are well established and understood. Pupils have a thirst for learning. They are keen to share their ideas with their peers and make a positive contribution during class discussions. Staff routinely identify and remove any challenges that the most vulnerable pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, face. This helps pupils to succeed in their learning. Most pupils attend well. Where attendance falls below the school's high expectations, leaders work closely with families to understand and overcome any barriers. This is having a positive impact on improving attendance for the pupils and families who need it the most. Pupils participate enthusiastically in a wide range of enrichment opportunities, including football, dance and gymnastics. Their learning is enriched by varied educational visits, such as trips to a bird of prey centre. These experiences broaden pupils' horizons and foster personal growth. Pupils take considerable pride in the leadership roles offered by the school, such as house captains, librarians and play leaders. Through these responsibilities, pupils develop confidence, teamwork and an understanding of how their contributions make a positive difference to the school community.

Next steps

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- Leaders should ensure that teachers design learning activities that consistently build and deepen pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills across the wider curriculum.
- Leaders should ensure that staff in the early years consistently maximise the opportunities they have to engage children in high-quality interactions, both inside and outside the classroom.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard

The school's programme for pupils' personal development is an integral part of its work. It is underpinned by the school's core values. There is a deliberate focus to provide all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, with artistic and creative opportunities to support them to become confident members of their school community. Pupils develop their understanding of fundamental British values as a result of the opportunities the school provides. Through a democratic process, pupils are elected to represent their peers in different roles and responsibilities, including the school council. Pupils develop a sense of citizenship and know they can make a difference to their community and beyond. For example, pupils take part in charity events, such as the 'Reindeer Run', to raise money for a local hospice. They also visit a local residential home where they form friendships with the residents. This broad range of experiences enriches pupils' understanding of their identity, while promoting empathy and social responsibility. The school actively promotes pupils' physical health and mental wellbeing. For example, pupils enjoy the daily mile and the range of extra-curricular clubs on offer. This helps to foster their interests and talents. Learning about mental health is embedded within the curriculum. From Reception, children learn key vocabulary that supports them to express their feelings. Pupils that require additional emotional support benefit from an individually tailored programme that builds self-esteem and social skills. The personal, social and health education curriculum equips pupils with essential life skills. They learn that relationships come in different forms. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including online, and understand what to do in emergencies, such as fire drills or becoming lost. This proactive approach ensures pupils develop the knowledge and confidence to stay safe inside and outside of the school. Expected standard

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard

Attendance remains a key focus for the school. Leaders routinely analyse patterns of attendance and use this information intelligently to identify where additional support is needed. They act quickly where any concerns about a pupil's attendance arise. The school works well with external agencies. Persistent absence is reducing, particularly for pupils who are disadvantaged. Pupils are polite and kind. They have positive attitudes to learning. Children in Reception learn to take turns and play collaboratively. Most pupils understand the school's high expectations and respond well to these both inside and outside of the classroom. They know that any form of discrimination is not tolerated. As a result, this creates a positive and purposeful learning environment. Pupils enjoy spending time with their peers from across the school during breaktime and lunchtime. They are

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particularly proud of the sensory garden and enjoy the range of equipment available to play with.

Staff consistently understand and apply the school's behaviour policy. This shared approach ensures a calm, orderly environment where pupils feel safe and ready to learn.

For detailed performance data including disadvantage gap analysis, historical trends, and comparison tables, visit the school's profile on WhatSchool:

<https://whatschool.ai/en/school/widcombe-infant-school-bath>